

Syllabus

August 25, 2009

Law and Economics
Economics 4550
Classroom: GAB 206
Fall 2009
email: miken@unt.edu

Dr. Michael Nieswiadomy
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Required text: *Law and Economics*, Robert Cooter, Thomas Ulen, 5th ed., Addison Wesley, 2008

Course objectives: Law and economics is a young and emerging field in economics. In addition, it is used as a major theoretical model at major law schools. This is an excellent course for any student considering enrolling in law school or any economics student interested in the economic analysis of the law. The purpose of this course is to demonstrate how to apply economic analysis (marginal analysis, opportunity cost, demand and supply, the importance of incentives, etc.) to legal and political issues.

This course will analyze topics in “private” law rather than “public” law. Private law covers the areas of property, contracts, and torts (accidental harm). Criminal law and regulation are also examined. If time permits, we will examine some public law topics.

Prerequisites: The only required class is Economics 1100: Principles of Microeconomics. If you have taken intermediate micro (Econ 3550 or Econ 5030) you will have an easier time grasping some of the applications. However, the necessary theory will be covered in class. If you sense that you are experiencing difficulty please contact me immediately. I usually can assist you in covering any deficiencies.

Grades: Your grade will be based on the percentage of 600 possible points as follows:

Exam 1	100 points	(16.67% of your overall grade)
Exam 2	100 points	(16.67% of your overall grade)
Final Exam	200 points	(33.33% of your overall grade)
Homeworks & pop quizzes	100 points	(16.67% of your overall grade)
Paper (due Dec 1)	100 points	(16.67% of your overall grade)

The short paper is approximately 6 pages. You may choose the topic, subject to the approval of the professor. It must be double spaced and typed (approximately 250 words per page).

The grading scale is:

A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 60-69% F: below 60%.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at **every** class meeting is essential to understanding the material. Unless you are an exceptional gifted student, your grade will be positively related to the number of times you attend class. To encourage your attendance, I will give pop quizzes. These pop quizzes will determine if

you know the general topics that will be lectured on that day. A few pop quizzes will be dropped. If you miss a quiz you will receive a zero and most likely it will be dropped unless you miss a significantly large number. It is to your advantage to take all of the quizzes so that you will be able to drop your lowest scores.

Also, please note that in accordance with university policy I will give students a WF for non-attendance on Oct. 7, 2009. This applies only to students who have missed 50% or more of the scheduled classes.

If a student misses an exam without a university excuse, the student will receive a grade of zero. To the extent possible, please inform me in advance if you must miss an exam.

Pagers and Cell Phones

If you feel compelled to carry a pager or a cell phone with you to class, please turn it off or put on “vibrate” mode. I will grant you the same courtesy. It is disrespectful for any student’s phone or pager to ring during class. Please be courteous.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATES	CHAPTER	SUBJECT
Aug 27	Ch. 1	An Introduction to Law and Economics
Aug 27	Ch. 2	A Review of Microeconomic Theory
Sept. 1	Ch. 2	
Sept. 1	Ch. 3	An Introduction to Law and Legal Institutions
Sept. 3	Ch. 4	An Economic Theory of Property
Sept. 8	Ch. 4	
Sept. 10	Ch. 4	
Sept. 15	Ch. 5	Topics in the Economics of Property Law
Sept. 17	Ch. 5	
Sept. 22	Ch. 5	
Sept. 24	Ch. 8	An Economic Theory of Tort Law
Sept. 29	Ch. 8	
Oct. 1	Exam 1	
Oct. 6	Ch. 8	
Oct. 6	Last drop day for "W" if not passing	
Oct. 8	Ch. 8	
Oct. 13	Ch. 9	Topics in the Economics of Tort Law
Oct. 15	Ch. 9	
Oct. 20	Ch. 9	
Oct. 22	Ch. 6	An Economic Theory of Contract Law
Oct. 27	Ch. 6	
Oct. 29	Ch. 6	
Oct. 30	Last day to drop	
Nov. 3	Ch. 7	Topics in the Economics of Contract Law
Nov. 5	Ch. 7	
Nov. 10	Ch. 7	

Nov. 12	Exam 2	
Nov. 17	Ch. 10	An Economic Theory of the Legal Process
Nov. 19	Ch. 10	
Nov. 24	Ch. 10	
Nov. 26	Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class	
Dec. 1	Ch. 11	An Economic Theory of Crime and Punishment
Dec. 3	Ch. 11	
Dec. 8	Ch. 12	Topics in the Economics of Crime and Punishment
Dec. 10	Ch. 12	
Dec. 17 (Thursday)	10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Final Exam

The departmental policy on cheating and plagiarism is to be attached to this syllabus.

Disability Accommodation

If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation under the terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, please discuss your needs with me after class or at office hours.

The Economics Department cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have not registered with ODA, we encourage you to do so. Please present your written accommodation request on or before the 4th class day.

Cheating and Plagiarism

The Economics department of the University of North Texas adheres to the University's Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism. To view this policy go to www.vpaa.unt.edu.