COURSE TITLE: Seminar in Economics (Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-10:45 am, Miller 1308). Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and an updated syllabus will be posted on CourseDen. Lecture notes will also be made available in CourseDen.

INSTRUCTOR: David Boldt dboldt@westga.edu, Office Phone: (678) 839-4771

OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Wednesday 8:30 am-11:30 am; Tuesday and Thursday 8-9 am; and other times by arrangement. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail also. Please use my regular email address (dboldt@westga.edu) for communication. I do not utilize the email function in CourseDen.

REQUIRED BOOKS (UWG Bookstore):
1) *Big Business: A Love Letter to an American Anti-Hero*, Tyler Cowen, St. Martin’s Press, 2019
2) *The Invisible Hook*, Peter Leeson, Princeton, 2009

OTHER READINGS/RESOURCES: Provided in CourseDen (under “Readings”) or via a hyperlink. These readings (resources) are listed under the Course Outline section of the syllabus.

PREREQUISITES: Economics 2105, 2106 and Senior Major Status

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:
The senior seminar is a capstone course for economics majors. This course requires that economic majors integrate and synthesize what they have learned in other economics courses. The course places significant emphasis on writing and oral communication skills. Specific objectives include:

- Comprehension of microeconomic concepts and the application to decision making
- Possess a basic knowledge of current monetary and fiscal policy issues
- Possess a basic knowledge of international economics concepts
- Making an effective oral presentation on an economics-related topic
- In class presentations by guest speakers on job search strategies, graduate or professional studies, and other professional topics

ACADEMIC POLICIES:
Please carefully review the information in the link below concerning academic support services, mental health services, UWG Email Policy, UWG Credit Hour Policy and the UWG Honor Code.

https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php

During the semester, students in this course will generally spend 150 minutes per week of direct faculty instruction in the classroom. As a guide, students should expect to spend about 300 minutes per week outside the classroom on various assignments, reading the textbook, and in studying the course material.
ASSESSMENT:
Learning objectives are assessed based on your performance on the following:

Examinations- During the semester, there will be three in-class examinations (in addition to the Exit Exam). Exam #1 (scheduled for Feb. 11) will count for 20 percent of the grade, Exam #2 (scheduled for March 24) will count for 20 percent, and Exam #3 (scheduled for April 23) will count for 16 percent. In total, these in-class exams will count for 56 percent of your grade.

Oral Presentation- Each student will be making an oral presentation. In this presentation, each student will summarize results of a research project/paper/topic of interest. The presentation (using powerpoint) may be on a current topic or on a topic developed in another economics class. The research may be either quantitative or qualitative in nature. I need to know the topic of your presentation by March 10 at the latest. Presentation dates will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis. In this presentation, you will summarize the key results of a research-related paper/project. You will also need to include references for your research. The slide presentation should contain approximately 10 slides. Be sure to forward me a copy of the slideshow by 8:30 am of the day in which you will be making your presentation. The presentation should be about 10 minutes long. Factors impacting the grade include organization/content, knowledge/preparedness, quality of slides, and presentation flow/pace/voice/eye contact. These presentations will count for 12 percent of the course grade. Non-presenting students will be asked to provide feedback on each of the presentations. Note: due to the tight scheduling of presentations, it will not be possible to move your presentation to another day once the schedule has been set.

Exit Exam---Students will take an “exit exam” as part of this seminar course. This exam will test your knowledge of four areas of economics: microeconomics, macroeconomics, international economics, and basic business/economics statistics. The exam is scheduled for March 12. This short answer portion of the examination will be graded by a committee of economics faculty. This examination will count for 10 percent of your grade. No notes or other materials may be brought into this exam.

Class Participation and Discussion--- This portion of your grade will be based on contributions to class discussion, quizzes, attendance for student/guest speaker presentations, and other class activities. You will be required to provide written feedback on each student research presentation. Details will be provided closer to the date of the presentations. Seven in-class quizzes have also been scheduled. Class participation will count for 20 percent of your grade. There are no makeups for missed in-class assignments, quizzes, or other activities.

Resume ---A professional resume must also be turned in by the end of the term (April 23). Please follow the format outlined by Career Services. This will count for 2 percent of your grade.

Extra Credit Possibilities: These can be earned by attending/participating in up to two approved extra credit opportunities. Approved options are listed below. Up to 1.5 extra credits points may be earned for participating in an approved extra credit activity. Other extra credit options must be approved by the instructor.

- RCOB BB&T Lecture. Kelly King, CEO of BB&T. The lecture is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10 at 5:30 pm at the Townsend Center (I will confirm the time closer to date of lecture). To receive extra credit, please turn in a one page (typed) response paper which summarizes the talk and provides a few personal reflections on the presentation. Additional details will be provided at a later date.

- Career Services options include:
  a) Externship Fair, Tuesday, January 28, 12-3pm, Campus Center 108
  b) Government and Public Service Industry Night, Tuesday, February 18, 4:30-6:30 pm, location TBD
  c) Career and Internship Expo, Tuesday, March 10, 12 noon-3pm, location TBD
To receive credit for a career services event, you must submit a "response paper" summarizing the event (with your feedback also)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part I Pricing, Behavioral Economics, Incentives, Information Economics, Labor Economics and Career Services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>Lecture Topic: Introduction to Course/Overview/Discussion of Markets</td>
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<td>Jan 9</td>
<td>Lecture Topic: Pricing Issues/Elasticity. Please read the following articles: <em>Simple Pricing</em> and <em>Price Discrimination</em> (both posted in CourseDen)</td>
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<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Ian Houston, UWG Career Services. Presentation on resumes and job search strategies.</td>
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<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>No class meeting. Watch The PBS NOVA film <em>Mind over Money</em>. The film is available on YouTube at the following link: [<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ32EsB9Ms">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ32EsB9Ms</a>]. If the link doesn’t work, conduct a search for the video. Also listen to the Planet Money podcast featuring Richard Thaler. Here is the link for the podcast: <a href="https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2017/11/01/561421807/episode-803-nudge-nudge-nobel">https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2017/11/01/561421807/episode-803-nudge-nudge-nobel</a>. There will be a quiz on this film and podcast in class on Jan. 21.</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Quiz #1 (in class) based on <em>Mind Over Money</em> and the Richard Thaler podcast (see Jan. 16 for details). Lecture Topic: Behavioral Economics</td>
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<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>Lecture Topic: Behavioral Economics. We will view and discuss the following Ted Talks 1) <em>Are We in Control of Our Own Decisions?</em> (Dan Ariely) and 2) <em>Why We Make Bad Decisions</em> (Dan Gilbert)</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Quiz #2 (in class) will cover the following readings: 1) <em>When and Why Incentives (Don’t) Work to Modify Behavior</em>, JEP, Fall 2011, 2) <em>Wells Fargo and the Slippery Slope of Sales Incentives</em> and 3) <em>How Incentive Pay Affects Employee Engagement, Satisfaction and Trust</em>. All three articles are posted in CourseDen. Lecture Topic: Incentives</td>
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<td>Jan 30</td>
<td>Lecture Topic: Labor Economics Look over the charts in <em>Charting the Labor Market</em> (which will be posted in CourseDen).</td>
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<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>No Class Meeting Instead of a class meeting, watch two Ted Talks on Labor Economics/Motivation: 1) <em>What Makes Us Feel Good About Our Work</em> (Dan Ariely) and 2) <em>The Puzzle of Motivation</em> (Dan Pink). These are available at <a href="http://www.ted.com">www.ted.com</a>. Questions based on these two Ted Talks will be on the exam scheduled for February 11.</td>
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<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>Exam#1 Topics: Lectures, guest speakers, and all assigned readings, materials, etc. listed in the syllabus from January 7-February 6.</td>
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Part II  Government and Business, Monetary Policy, Fiscal Policy, World Economy, Guest Speakers and Exit Exam

Feb 13  Lecture Topic: Market Structure and U.S. Antitrust Policy.  1) Read From Perfect Competition to Monopoly, Timothy Taylor, 2012 (available on CourseDen) and 2) Listen to the BBC podcast titled Time to Break up Big Tech? Available at https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csy9tp. Also, you should be reading the assigned book (Big Business, Tyler Cowen).

Feb 18  Quiz #4 (in class) on three articles 1) Now Donald Trump Calls the Fed’s Chairman an “Enemy” (The Economist, 8/23/19), 2) Interference Day (The Economist, 4/13/19); and 3) Wells Fargo Economics Annual Manual (focus on discussion of the Federal Reserve) 12/18/19. The articles will be posted in CourseDen.  Lecture Topic: Monetary Policy.

Feb 20  Guest Speaker: Roy (Blake) Johnson, BLS, U.S. Department of Labor

Feb 25  Guest Speaker: Kenneth Shiver, Economist, Southern Company

Feb 27  Guest Speaker: TBD


Mar 5  Quiz #6 (in class) on the following readings: 1) World Economic Outlook (Executive Summary), IMF, October 2019, and 2) 2020 International Outlook, Wells Fargo, December 11, 2019). The articles will be posted in CourseDen.  Lecture Topic: U.S. and Global Economy.

Mar 10  Guest Speaker: TBD

Mar 12  Exit Exam.

Mar 16-20 Spring Break (No classes)

Mar 24  Exam #2 (on topics covered from Feb 13-March 10 and on the assigned book Big Business)

Part III  Game Theory, Student Presentations, and Invisible Hook

Mar 26  Quiz #7 (in class). Read the following articles on game theory (and watch the associated videos): 1) Game Theory https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gametheory.asp and 2) Prisoner’s Dilemma https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/prisoners-dilemma.asp Lecture Topic: Game Theory

Mar 31 Student Research Presentations (TBD)

Apr 2  Student Research Presentations (TBD)

Apr 7  Student Research Presentations (TBD)

Apr 9  Student Research Presentations/Guest Speaker (TBD)

Apr 14 Student Research Presentations/Guest Speaker (TBD)

Apr 16 Student Research Presentations/Guest Speaker (TBD)

Apr 21 Discussion of Invisible Hook

Apr 23  Exam #3 Topics: The Invisible Hook, Game Theory, and MC questions based on the student research presentations