

# ECONOMICS (ECON)

## 100-Level Courses

### ECON-110 Introductory Economics

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 4*

Introduction to economic issues and the tools that economists use to study those issues: supply and demand, decision making by consumers and firms, market failures, economic output and growth, fiscal and monetary policy in relation to unemployment and inflation, and international economics. Topics include both the study of markets and the need for public policy/government action to address market failures.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Hartley, M. Lay, P. Mukherjee, J. Norling, M. Robinson, L. Wilson, J. Yuen,*

### ECON-165 International and Development Economics

*Fall. Credits: 4*

In this course we analyze the determinants and patterns of economic flows between countries (trade in goods and services, capital flows, foreign direct investment, labor) and their impact on economic growth, inequality and poverty in today's industrialized countries and developing countries. We study the theories behind different development strategies and their outcomes for structural transformation and well-being in the developing world.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*P. Mukherjee, E. Paus*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

*Notes: This course has been pre-approved by the International Relations department to count in place of ECON-213 or ECON-218 towards the International Relations major requirements.*

## 200-Level Courses

### ECON-201 Game Theory

*Spring. Credits: 4*

The course will illustrate and analyze the strategies used in making interrelated decisions. Concepts from game theory will be developed using examples and cases drawn from economics, business, politics, and even sports. Applications will include the Prisoner's Dilemma and related games, signaling, bargaining, voting and power, brinkmanship, and nuclear deterrence.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*P. Mukherjee*

*Prereq: Not open to first-year students in their first semester.*

### ECON-207 Special Topics

This 200-level course investigates a particular topic in economics at some depth without presupposing prior knowledge of economics. Many students may find one or more of these courses useful complements to majors and minors other than economics.

### ECON-207BF Special Topics: 'Behavioral Economics and Finance'

*Fall. Credits: 4*

Empirical research has located serious flaws in the concept of rational economic decision making and efficient markets. The evidence indicates that actual decision makers and markets deviate from expected rational outcomes frequently enough to require rethinking of the way decision makers think and markets behave, including unexpected market crashes and sustained market bubbles. This course is designed to examine new theoretical work that seeks to provide more accurate predictions of market behavior, improved assessments of underlying risk to portfolio holders, and better estimates of the underlying value of securities.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*S. Gabriel*

*Prereq: Not open to first-year students in their first semester.*

### ECON-210 Marxian Economic Theory

*Fall. Credits: 4*

Introduction to the Marxian theory of capitalism, as presented in the three volumes of *Capital*. Marxian theory is applied to analyze the causes of contemporary economic problems, such as unemployment and inflation, and the effectiveness of government policies to solve these problems. Comparisons made between Marxian theory and mainstream macro- and microeconomics.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*L. Wilson*

*Prereq: Not open to first-year students in their first semester.*

### ECON-211 Macroeconomic Theory

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 4*

Intermediate macroeconomic theory. Analysis of causes of long-run economic growth and short-run business cycles. Study of different macroeconomic models, consumption, investment, government spending, net exports, money supply, and money demand. Examination of fiscal and monetary policy and U.S. economic relations with the rest of the world.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Hartley, M. Lay*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-110 and MATH-101.*

*Advisory: Students who have taken the International Baccalaureate or A-Level exams in economics should consult the department before registering for the course. The department does not recommend taking this as the first course in Economics.*

### ECON-212 Microeconomic Theory

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 4*

Microeconomic theory explores the foundations of consumer and firm theory as well as their theoretical applications. We examine the assumptions of models, market structures, and explore topics such as game theory and public goods.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Norling, K. Schmeiser*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-110 and MATH-101.*

*Advisory: Students who have taken the International Baccalaureate or A-Level exams in economics should consult the department before registering for the course. The department does not recommend taking this as the first course in Economics.*

**ECON-213 Economic Development***Spring. Credits: 4*

Economic development is the study of the macro and micro dynamics that shape economic and social outcomes in low and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and transition economies. The outcomes we focus on in this course are human well-being, poverty, and inequalities as well as structural transformation, economic growth, sustainability, and the creation of decent jobs. We will pay particular attention to the implications of the nature of an economy's insertion into the global economy and the global economic context, and to the role of government policies in advancing economic development.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences; Multicultural Perspectives*

*E. Paus*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-215 Economics of Corporate Finance**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

An investigation of the economic foundations for investment, financing, and related decisions in corporations. Topics include capital markets and institutions; analysis of financial statements; sources and uses of funds; capital budgeting and risk; cost of capital; portfolio theory; the impact of corporate decisions on the economy. Some attention given to recent developments in the stock market, in the merger movement, and in international finance. See <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/sgabriel/215.html> for a more detailed description.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*S. Schmeiser*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-219 Environmental Economics**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

In this class, we will use the lens of economic analysis to examine how environmental problems arise and what can be done to resolve them. This will include an assessment of relevant environmental policies (e.g., carbon tax & cap-and-trade programs), how these policies function, and what impacts they have on people and the economy. Topics include market failures and externalities, pollution, climate change, management of renewable and nonrenewable resources, sustainability, biodiversity, and others.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*T. Gilliland*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-220 Introduction to Econometrics**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 4*

A study of statistical methods applied to economic and social data. Measures of central tendency and dispersion, point and interval estimation, hypothesis testing, simple correlation, and simple and multiple regression analysis.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*S. Adelman, T. Gilliland, J. Yuen*

*Prereq: ECON-110 and MATH-101. Coreq: ECON-220L.*

**ECON-228 Political Economy**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

This course introduces students to the modal interdisciplinary approach of political economy, an approach that de-centers economics from a narrow focus on optimization and hyper-rationality to a broader vision of how the behavior of homo sapiens acting as economic agents is shaped by social and psychological processes. Thus, the determinants of economic outcomes are similarly impacted by emotional and social context. This course will offer a critical exploration of how the works of Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx, Amartya Sen, and others have informed approaches to the study of political economy. Topics to be explored include: how socially constructed concepts of gender (as opposed to biological sex) and race/ethnicity impact value distribution; power dynamics in the workplace and larger society; and social investment thereby shaping the cultural architecture and economic processes that contribute to inequality. One of the objectives of this course is to specifically address the role of capital accumulation and mercantilist tendencies in modern capitalist economies in the diminution of productive self-employment, family businesses, and other alternatives to large-scale enterprises, leading to distorted forms of development resulting in catastrophic effects to the global ecology.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences; Multicultural Perspectives*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*S. Gabriel*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

**ECON-236 Economic History**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course provides an overview of important themes in the economic history of the United States and other countries. The goals of this course are to examine reasons for economic growth over time, to use economic analysis to understand history, and to study how history shapes economic institutions today. Topics covered include the Industrial Revolution, slavery, and changes in women's earnings.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Norling*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-249 Topics in Economics****ECON-249CY Topics in Economics: 'Economics of Cyberspace'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course explores the impact of the Internet, information technology, and the networked information economy on finance, markets, innovation and invention, intellectual property rights, public finance and taxation, security and cybercrime, media, and social networking. We investigate the implications of the networked information economy for the creation of new economic (and social) relationships. We also examine the continuing struggle over regulation of cyberspace and the definition and enforcement of intellectual property rights.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*S. Gabriel*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-249ED Topics in Economics: 'Economics of Education'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course is an introduction to the economics of education. We will apply basic economic concepts and empirical methods to the analysis of education. We will examine the U.S. educational system from preschool to higher education both as an industry and from a labor economics perspective. Topics include human capital theory (the relationship of education to earnings and other outcomes); the role of early childhood education; the structure, reform, and financing of elementary and secondary education (public, charter, magnet, and private schools); the market for teachers, teaching training and performance; and the economics of higher education with particular emphasis on liberal arts colleges.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*M. Robinson*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-249EN Topics in Economics: 'Global Entrepreneurship'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

We will explore and discuss the policies, procedures, demands, related data (costs, investment levels, success rates, etc.) and impacts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activity in a variety of countries and at the global level, making use of reports, case studies, data centers and organizations. Expect to explore comparisons such as: who are entrepreneurs? who tends to be successful? which governments, societies and economic systems are most supportive? which are least supportive? what are the varieties of entrepreneurial activity? has entrepreneurial activity had economic and social impacts?

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*T. Gilliland, R. Feldman*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-249ME Topics in Economics: 'Managerial Economics'**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

This course will introduce students to the field of applied economics in which microeconomic and macroeconomic theory and concepts are applied in real-world planning and decision making in a variety of business organizations having particular yet varying priorities and goals (for example, one question to explore is how do decision makers in a socially responsible Benefit Corporation, a worker-owned cooperative, a more traditional company and a startup apply economic analysis in their pursuit of having a successful enterprise?). Expect some lectures, multiple readings, projects, writing, presentations to class, class discussions.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*R. Feldman*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-249PA Topics in Economics: 'Applied Policy Analysis'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

An introduction to the empirical study of economic policies. This course will focus on quantifying the impact of policies through the lens of economics and statistics. Through research articles, reports, and other media, we will explore how economists measure the effects of policies and test economic theory. Policy applications may include labor and health policy, economic development, and other policies at the microeconomic level.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Yuen*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

*Advisory: Familiarity with statistical methods is recommended, but not required.*

**ECON-249PB Topics in Economics: 'Introduction to Public Economics'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Analysis of the role of government in the economy from both the expenditure side and the income (tax) side. Topics include public goods, externalities, social welfare, public choice, the U.S. "safety net," social security, budget deficits, the U.S. tax system, and the effects of taxation and government programs on behavior.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Yuen*

*Prereq: ECON-110.*

**ECON-270 Accounting**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

The course, while using traditional accounting techniques and methodology, will focus on the needs of external users of financial information. The emphasis is on learning how to read, interpret, and analyze financial information as a tool to guide investment decisions. Concepts rather than procedures are stressed and class time will be largely devoted to problem solutions and case discussions. A basic knowledge of arithmetic (+, -, \*, /) and algebra is suggested.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*S. Schmeiser*

*Prereq: Not open to first-year students in their first semester.*

*Advisory: Not open to students who have taken EOS-225.*

## 300-Level Seminars

**ECON-301 Advanced Game Theory**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

The course will illustrate and analyze the strategies used in making interrelated decisions. We will develop game theoretical tools and apply them to examples from economics, business, politics, and even sports.

Topics include the prisoner's dilemma, signaling, coordination, voting, and competition. We analyze games in static and dynamic environments with perfect and imperfect information.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*S. Schmeiser*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-211 and ECON-212.*

**ECON-307 Seminar in Industrial Organization**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Analysis of theoretical models and empirical studies on the economic performance of industries. Approaches studied include transaction cost economics, game theory, and pricing models. Topics include advertising, research and development, and relationships between government and business such as regulation and antitrust laws.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*K. Schmeiser*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-212.*

**ECON-308 Advanced Macroeconomics**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course provides an introduction to the micro-founded theories of modern macroeconomic research. The course will cover the workhorse models used to understand economic growth, business cycles, unemployment, consumption, and monetary and fiscal policy. Emphasis will be on mathematical models complemented by empirical evidence from academic articles.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*M. Lay*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-211 and ECON-212.*

**ECON-310 Seminar in Public Economics***Fall. Credits: 4*

This course provides an overview of the ways in which government policies on taxation and spending affect outcomes for individuals (e.g., poverty, health, income) and for society (e.g., inequality, social mobility, economic growth). Topics will include the theory of taxation, public goods, and externalities. Students will apply these theories to current policy debates. Possible applications include healthcare, education, TANF, unemployment insurance, and Social Security.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**M. Lay**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-212.***ECON-312 Seminar in International Trade***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Examines current events in international trade. The emphasis of this course is on current trade policy debates in the WTO agenda. It investigates topics such as the expansion of regional trade agreements, environmental and labor standards, the TRIPs agreement, agricultural protection and market access, trade in services, and electronic commerce.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**K. Schmeiser**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-212, ECON-216, or ECON-218.***ECON-314 Economic Development in the Age of Contested Globalization***Spring. Credits: 4*

Why have only few developing countries closed the income gap with industrialized countries? How does globalization affect the prospects for economic transformation and human well-being? How does the rise of China impact the development prospects for other latecomers? We study and discuss how orthodox and heterodox approaches answer these and other questions, and we assess proposed policies and their appropriateness in different contexts. Students have many opportunities to apply the knowledge acquired in class: in debates, simulations, quantitative and qualitative research, and discussions of authentic cases with embedded practitioners from international organizations and the private sector.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences; Multicultural Perspectives**Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive, Writing-Intensive**E. Paus**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-165 or ECON-213, and either ECON-211 or ECON-218.***ECON-319 Environmental Economics, Ecology and Conservation Policy***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Understanding and solving environmental problems requires interdisciplinary perspectives. This course links tools from economics with tools from ecology and environmental sciences to design effective policies for protecting the environment. We will examine topics such as the protection of rare and endangered species, rainforest conservation, climate change and others. We will also study important domestic and international policies related to these topics.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**T. Gilliland**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-212 or ECON-219.***ECON-320 Econometrics***Fall. Credits: 4*

A study of advanced statistical methods in quantifying economic theory. Emphasis on the practical application of regression analysis to test economic theory, especially where the assumptions underlying ordinary least squares analysis are violated. Examines several different subjects that illustrate empirical economic research.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement**M. Robinson, J. Yuen**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-211, ECON-212 and ECON-220. Coreq: ECON-320L.***ECON-325 Economics of Health Care and Health Service Organizations***Spring. Credits: 4*

Economic aspects of health and health care in developing countries. Topics cover measuring health outcomes for welfare analysis, economic determinants of health and health care demand, the contribution of improved health and nutrition on economic development, and considerations in designing and evaluating health care interventions. Additionally, the course will cover micro-economic topics related to specific public health problems in developing countries.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Adelman**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-212 and ECON-220.***ECON-326 Economics of the Digital Economy***Spring. Credits: 4*

This seminar explores the economic impact of the Internet, information technology, digitalization, and the networked information economy on manufacturing and manufacturing networks, global and local finance, goods and services markets, innovation and invention, intellectual property rights, public finance and taxation, security and cybercrime, media, and social networking. We investigate the implications of the networked information economy and digitalization, more broadly, for the creating of new economic (and social) relationships and the internet of everything. We also examine the continuing struggle over regulation of cyberspace across international borders and the definition and enforcement of intellectual property rights in a global context.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Gabriel**Prereq: ECON-211 and ECON-212.***ECON-335 Advanced Corporate Finance***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course allows students who have taken Corporate Finance to pursue more advanced topics in the field. Among the topics to be covered are hedging, options and derivatives, agency theory, behavioral finance, costs of financial distress, asset pricing for state-owned enterprises, and theories of corporate control and regulation.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Gabriel**Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors**Prereq: ECON-215 or ECON-207BF.*



**ECON-338 Money and Banking**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

Monetary theory and policy. Overview of financial markets and institutions. Explores the nature of money and the effects of changing money supply on the economy, theories of money demand, the various methods by which monetary policy can be conducted and the advantages and disadvantages of each, methods of banking regulation and the attendant problems that arise, and important episodes in monetary history (e.g., the Great Depression).

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Hartley*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-211.*

*Advisory: MATH-101 recommended.*

**ECON-345 Corporate Governance**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This seminar course studies the theory and practice of corporate governance. Topics include the legal and regulatory environment in which corporations operate, agency theory, executive compensation, the board of directors, debt covenants, corporate control, and stakeholder rights. We will analyze and evaluate current events in corporate governance using the tools discussed in class.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*S. Schmeiser*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-211 and ECON-212.*

**ECON-346 Economic Demography**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Demography is the scientific study of human populations, primarily with respect to their size, structure, and development. This course studies a variety of demographic topics, including fertility, mortality, migration, poverty, and inequality. The course also develops data analysis techniques that are helpful for conducting demographic research.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*J. Norling*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-220. Coreq: ECON-346L.*

**ECON-349 Advanced Topics in Economics****ECON-349AM Advanced Topics in Economics: 'Advanced Managerial Economics'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course will use an intensive case-study approach mixed with lectures, readings, and discussions. The focus is investigating the economics of management and enterprise (firms, organizations) decision-making in local/regional, national, and global settings, the intersections of economic considerations with social and political considerations, and the frameworks and tools for analyzing the behaviors and decisions of various enterprises. Class participation in the discussions is essential. Students will also develop and provide presentations of case analyses.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive, Writing-Intensive*

*R. Feldman*

*Prereq: ECON-110 plus at least one other upper-level Economics or EOS/Entrepreneurship course.*

**ECON-349CV Advanced Topics in Economics: 'The Economics of the Covid-19 Pandemic'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

The Covid-19 pandemic has manifested itself in a variety of micro- and macro-economic phenomena. In this course, we will examine several of these from the perspective of economics, attempting to understand what has happened and to identify possible policy options. We'll consider questions such as: Why are there shortages of certain consumer products? Which industries have been hurt the most/least? What permanent changes may result from workplace experiments during the pandemic? What is the nature of the recession and how does it differ from the Great Recession? What is the thinking behind the stimulus package? What are the anticipated impacts on higher education and on Mount Holyoke in particular? How does one do epidemiology modeling? How can we use econometric modeling to answer questions about the pandemic? How could economic incentives be used to improve our response? Each student will write two short essays and one longer paper to answer questions of their choice.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*M. Robinson*

*Prereq: ECON-211, ECON-212, and ECON-220.*

**ECON-349DE Advanced Topics in Economics: 'Advanced Economic Development'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course analyzes microeconomic concerns in less-developed countries, specifically economic behavior for agricultural households facing missing and incomplete markets. Topics include agricultural production and input markets, risk and uncertainty, microfinance, and health and education. This course will focus on developing microeconomic models and analyzing empirical evidence.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*S. Adelman*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-212 and ECON-220.*

**ECON-349PE Advanced Topics in Economics: 'International Political Economy'**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

The course will address international problems and issues that are multi-dimensional, including those shaped and shaped by political, cultural, economic, and ecological processes. Each issue or problem will be analyzed from multiple theoretical perspectives, drawing upon a wide range of theories in economics, politics, and sociology. The course will provide students with experience debating complex problems that have both global and local implications, including upon international trade and development, civil unrest, human rights, innovation in material and process technologies, inequality and political, economic, and cultural tensions between nation-states.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences; Multicultural Perspectives*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*S. Gabriel*

*Restrictions: This course is open to juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-211.*

**ECON-352 Advanced Economic Development**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course analyzes microeconomic concerns in less-developed countries, specifically economic behavior for agricultural households facing missing and incomplete markets. Topics include agricultural production and input markets, risk and uncertainty, microfinance, and health and education. This course will focus on developing microeconomic models and analyzing empirical evidence.

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive*

*S. Adelman*

*Restrictions: Course limited to sophomores, juniors and seniors*

*Prereq: ECON-212 and ECON-220.*

## **Independent Research**

**ECON-295 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

**ECON-395 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*