PSY 6330
Applied Economic Psychology
fall, 2017
James Forbes, PhD
Course & Number
PSY 6330

COURSE TITLE
Applied Economic Psychology

CREDITS
Three Semester Credit Hours (3-0-0)
Online Class: Meets completely online using Blackboard

PREREQUISITE COURSES
Graduate Status

FACULTY
JAMES FORBES, PhD
Office: Academic 204B
Phone: (325) 486-6120
Email: James.Forbes@Angelo.Edu

OFFICE HOURS
MTWRF 10:00-11:00 am & 1 – 2PM; or by appointment

COURSE DELIVERY
This is an online course offering. The course will be delivered via the Blackboard Learning Management System. The course site can be accessed at http://blackboard.angelo.edu

COMMUNICATION
I will typically respond to your questions posted on Bb or sent via email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend and holiday questions messages may not be returned until the next school day.

ONLINE COURSE ISSUES
This course will be taught entirely on-line. We will not meet in person, unless you choose to visit me in my campus office. Consequently, much responsibility for learning about Applied Economic Psychology and its applications rests with you. I will give you a schedule of events (viz., readings, applications, discussion topics, assignments, and due dates); you will have to ensure that you keep pace with the schedule. If you manage your time effectively and focus your interests and energy on the course objectives, you will fare well in this online course.

Your challenge is to make Applied Economic Psychology and its applications more immediate and relevant to your professional and personal goals. Your informed imagination, your curiosity about the world, and your conscientious effort will allow you to derive a meaningful experience.
COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

This course focuses on how psychological principles, empirical findings, and research methods are used to address a wide variety of economic behavior, solve practical economic problems, and inform public policy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

You will have opportunities to:

1. Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in fields related to this course.
2. Learn to apply course material to improve thinking and address practical problems.
3. Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
4. Develop skill in expressing ideas and arguments in writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING ASSESSMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Describe, explain, and apply key terms and constructs from economic psychology.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, interpretive review paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Apply psychological research findings and methods to address personal, applied, and professional economic issues.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, interpretive review paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Write an interpretive review paper for addressing an applied economic issue important to you.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, interpretive review paper</td>
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REQUIRED BOOKS AND MATERIALS

• The Upside of Irrationality: the unexpected benefits of defying logic at work and at home, by Dan Ariely, Harper Collins, 2010, ISBN 7980061995033. (Ariely's personal views and experience as a leading economic psychologist, which is also an entertaining and informative best seller.) See Table of Contents; visit the blog)

• Nudge: improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness, by Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein. ISBN (Richard Thaler, an economist, along with Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, two psychologists, pioneered a new approach to economic theory that included social and emotional factors influencing economic decisions).

These books can be ordered through the ASU bookstore. Alternatively, you may purchase them elsewhere (viz., Amazon or elsewhere online). The books give an informative and enjoyable introduction to much of Economic Psychology and are written by the leading practitioners of economic psychology and behavioral economics. Plan on obtaining them immediately and begin reading.

You will also read articles that I will post on Bb on specific topics to give you greater depth of understanding of Economic Psychology, especially in areas of particular interest with the MS Applied Psychology Program (viz., increasing prosperity, enhancing decision making, and informing public policy).

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS

• Computer with MAC or Windows Operating System
• High Speed Internet Access
• Webcam (recommended)
• Refer to Angelo State University’s Distance Education website for further technology requirements: http://www.angelo.edu/distance_education/

EVALUATION AND GRADES

Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes.

Final course grades will be calculated as follows: Course Grade = Assignments Score (35%) + Discussion Board Score (20%) + Blog (15%) + Interpretive Review Paper (30%).

The grading scale for the course will be as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
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### ASSESSMENT/ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSESSMENT/ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive Review Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COURSE GRADE</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

Students are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved (beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course) in discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and experiences with their peers.

### METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes will be assessed via a variety of assignments, weekly discussion posts, and one interpretive review paper.

1. **Assignments (35% of your course grade).** Assignments are embedded within four learning modules (Module 1, Module 2, Module 3, Module 4). All of the assignments will help you understand economic psychology, relate course material to your own experiences, and give you an opportunity to construct (belief architecture) or reveal (belief archeology) your own beliefs about economic psychology and its applications. Some of the assignments will help you learn skills needed to write an interpretive review of empirical research.

   Scoring & Grading. Assignments will be graded using a 5-, 10-, or other point scale, where a 5, 10, or other point total are the highest scores obtainable. Please note that assignment scoring and grading are separate processes. Your assignment score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain. At the very end of the semester, I will sum your assignment scores, evaluate the class assignment score distribution, then assign assignment grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise. The highest total assignment scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your assignment grade will be based on your performance relative to your peers rather than to some arbitrary standard of excellence.

2. **Discussion Boards (20% of your course grade).** Discussion forums posted on the Discussions tab. I will add forums as we progress through the semester. Participating in the discussion forums will help you relate topics from the Economic Psychology to your own experiences and encourage you to examine your own understanding about Economic Psychology. Reflecting on others’ posts, and posting your thoughts about these issues will help you clarify and enrich your thinking.

   Scoring & Grading. Discussion forum posts will be evaluated using a 10-point scale. The highest scores will be awarded to those who make insightful comments or responses. Echoing others' opinions and comments made only at the very end of the discussion forum due date will be awarded the lowest scores. Scoring and grading are separate processes. A single discussion score is not a grade. Your cumulative discussion boards score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain (e.g, 96 of 115). At the very end of the semester, I will sum your discussion forum scores, evaluate the class discussion forum score distribution, then assign discussion
boards grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise. The highest total discussion boards scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your discussion boards grade will be based on your performance relative to your peers—not to some arbitrary standard of excellence. Your discussion boards grade will count as 15% of your final course grade.

**Blackboard Location:** Discussion board forums are posted under the Discussion Boards tab on Blackboard. Each forum will have availability dates posted during with time the forum will be open and accessible.

3. **Blog – Mashups in MIS-Behaving (15% of your course grade).** At least once a week you will post a blog entry to the course blog. You may post to the course blog more often, or as often as you like. Blog entries can be about anything course content related, broadly interpreted, and linked to one of these two widely read blogs [http://marginalrevolution.com/](http://marginalrevolution.com/); [http://freakonomics.com/](http://freakonomics.com/) or to the Wall Street Journal. Be sure that your blog entry explicitly links your comment or opinion to course content and something found in [http://marginalrevolution.com/](http://marginalrevolution.com/); [http://freakonomics.com/](http://freakonomics.com/) or the Wall Street Journal.

**Reason for the blog:** Much of what is known about economic psychology and behavioral finance is locked up in academic forums such as peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, classroom activities, and empirical research projects. Most of the content of economic psychology shows how people (MIS) behave in ways not predicted by standard economic theory. Blogging also helps get the lessons and applications of academia to a broader audience.

**Blog grading (satisfactory/unsatisfactory).** Individual blog entries and not scored or graded. So you are not blogging for points. Ideally, you would be blogging to express an interesting opinion or comment on topics related to economic psychology. I will read all of your blog entries as you post them. At the very end of the semester I will assign a blogging grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

4. **Interpretive Review Paper (30% of your course grade).** You will write an interpretive review paper summarizing published research relevant to an applied economic question, problem, or topic of interest to you and attempt to explain your current state of understanding of the topic. Your review will also evaluate, explain, compare, combine findings and methods from published research that have been or could be used or revised or adapted to better address your question, topic, or problem. Your review should also propose a solution(s) or make recommendations for research or interventions that would better or more completely address your topic.

**GENERAL POLICIES RELATED TO THIS COURSE**

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in the following documents:


**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**

**ON-LINE:** This class is asynchronous, meaning you do not have to be on-line at a certain time. There are readings which you will have to complete to be able to adequately participate in individual and group assignments. In order to complete this course successfully, you do have to participate in all course activities i.e. discussion boards, course projects, assignments, etc. Students are expected to engage in course activities and submit work by due dates and times. The hope is that students will make substantive contributions which reflect integration of assigned materials as well as any outside readings as appropriate. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. For planning purposes, this class will probably require a minimum of 6-9 study hours per week on average.

**LATE WORK OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS POLICY**
Due dates and times for assignments are posted in the course schedule. **Late assignments are not accepted without my prior approval.** I may deduct points for late assignments that are accepted past the original due date.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code](http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code). The University "faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."
PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word for word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. We use the APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Bb Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
1. “Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.”

2. The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

STUDENT ABSENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS
“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.”

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY (OP 10.11 Grading Procedures)
ASU policy is that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact me if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required.

COPYRIGHT POLICY
Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

SYLLABUS & COURSE SCHEDULE CHANGES
I may make changes as necessary to this syllabus, the course content, or the course schedule. If changes become necessary during this course, I will notify you by email or course announcements. It is you responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a regular basis.