

## Econ 281 Syllabus, Fall 2012

TA: Stephie Fried, email: [sfried@ucsd.edu](mailto:sfried@ucsd.edu), Office: Economics 117, Office hours after discussion section and by appointment

Professor Mark Jacobsen's office hours Thursday 11am-noon and by appointment

Lecture time: Tuesday and Thursday 6:30-7:50pm Center Hall 101

Discussion: Wednesday, 5:30 - 6:30pm

This session will apply the ideas from the lectures to marine biodiversity and global change. The session will be driven by student discussion of assigned materials listed below – about 30 pages per week.

Each week, students will be assigned to lead a discussion about one of the assigned papers. The discussion leader should summarize the main ideas of the paper, raise a handful of critical points about the paper, connect the paper to the material discussed in class, and generate two or three questions for discussion. Everyone should come to class prepared to participate, however; the discussion leader is merely a provocateur. During the first class we will allocate duties for the following weeks.

We will spend the last 15 minutes of each session going over an exam type question or homework problem. I will give hints, but you will have to walk me through the problem until we agree on an answer. This will be a group exercise, not the responsibility of the presenter. You may choose the problems we discuss, but please e-mail your requests a few days early so I have a chance to think about them. If there are lots of questions, I will be available for an hour or so after the session to continue discussing problems.

Grading will be as follows: Everyone will take the quiz (10%) with the larger undergraduate class. The midterm (20%) will be an hour and 15 minutes and arranged separately in a room at Scripps. Graduate (281) students will also take a separate, short final (20%) and write a 10-page (double-spaced, not including graphics or references) paper (40%). Participation in the discussion section will count for 10% of your grade. Your participation score will be based on both your performance as a discussion leader and a discussion participant. For students who wish to focus more on the paper there will be an option to increase the grading weight to 55% (reducing the importance of the exams) but we will expect a stronger paper. The paper is due December 10th by email to both Stephie and Mark and a hard copy to Stephie. A portion of the paper can be preliminary work and background information on your Capstone project, but at least half of the paper must develop a well-reasoned economic argument about the issue you are discussing. One option for the paper is to identify a problem, discuss previous literature on the issue, propose a research question, methodology, and/or data (existing or yet-to-be gathered by you) to address the problem, and discuss how topics from this course are relevant. In other words, your paper may be a modified Capstone proposal that focuses on aspects of economics that are important for your topic. Alternatively, you may choose a course topic that interests you, and explicate that topic using further examples from the literature. You may use the papers listed below as a jumping-off point. Either way, your paper must convey that you understand the basic concepts of resource management, optimization, etc., that are covered in this course. During our second to last meeting we will not discuss new readings or material, but instead take that opportunity to discuss paper topics and/or go over exam-type problems.

The goal of this course is to get you thinking about how economics can be useful for your Capstone projects as well as your careers. Please feel free to give me feedback during and after the quarter to make sure we are going in that direction, and feel free to approach me with questions, comments, concerns, ideas, etc.