

Spring Advising Schedule:

Marie Villefranche is the Economics Department's undergraduate adviser for Liberal Arts students. Ms. Villefranche's walk-in advising hours are 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon on Mondays, 1:00–3:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, and 1:00–4:00 p.m. on Fridays. You can schedule an appointment by going to www.la.psu.edu/advising-appt/. More information is available on the department's Web site <http://econ.la.psu.edu/index.html> — click on Undergraduate Program and then Advising Hours. Ms. Villefranche's office is 605 Kern and her e-mail address is mev11@psu.edu.

Important Dates:

April 10	Late drop deadline
May 1	Withdrawal deadline
	Classes end
May 4–8	Final exams
May 15–17	Commencement

Fall 2009 Writing-Intensive Seminars

During fall 2009, there will be three writing-intensive seminar courses offered by the Department of Economics. These courses are a great opportunity for you to take an undergraduate-level field course taught by some of the most influential researchers in economics, and receive your writing credit at the same time! These advanced writing-intensive seminars will provide excellent opportunities to take courses with senior faculty and explore course material in greater depth. Your experiences in small seminar classes are likely to provide you with cutting edge material to discuss job

interviews as well as material to include in Graduate School application Statements of Purpose.

Dr. Bee-Yan Roberts will teach Econ 413W: World Poverty. This course will first consider economic growth and the spread of economic prosperity in historical perspective. Then contemporary success stories, including the East Asian miracle and growth in China and India, will be studied. The last part of the course focuses on the poor worldwide, and examines poverty traps in Africa, why aid does not work, and why globalization has not helped.

Dr. Ed Green will teach ECON 445W: Health Economics. The health care sector comprises a set of markets that differ in some significant ways from the textbook model. In the U.S., this sector performs well in some respects and questionably in others. Notably, there has been sustained improvement over time in life expectancy and other indicators of the effectiveness of health care for most people, but the resources devoted to producing this improvement have been growing considerably faster than GDP. The goal of this course is to examine several broad questions raised by these facts. Prerequisites include ECON 302, ECON 315, or ECON 323.

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Dr. David Shapiro will teach ECON 463W: Economic Demography. Economic demography is concerned with the interrelationships between economic phenomena and demographic phenomena. Fundamental demographic variables—fertility, mortality, migration, age composition—are related to economic factors, as both consequences and determinants. This course uses an economic perspective to study population phenomena and issues, with a focus on both theoretical and empirical analysis of demographic questions. Prerequisites include either ECON 412 or ECON 471 or 9 credits in demography.

Economics Association

The Economics Association (EA) is the Penn State Department of Economics club. The EA promotes activity among students, faculty, and the community. The club offers its members many opportunities to get involved, including a yearly trip to the Fed, sponsoring the Great Debate, golf tournaments, a stock market challenge, and sponsoring lectures. The winners of the EA golf tournament last semester were (left to right): Mark Theiss, Austin Taylor, Tim Markward, and Kyle Kozlowski.



The Economics Association will be sponsoring a lecture by former Fed Governor Frederic Mishkin on April 17. For more information about the club and membership, see www.clubs.psu.edu/up/econ/.

Faculty Profile—Dan Goldstein

Dan decided that he wanted to be an economist in tenth grade. “Don’t try this at home!” He was doing a project for a history class about the economic origins of the Russian Revolution and was introduced to some of the basic premises of economics—that individuals consistently act in ways that further their own interests. He found this to be a very intellectually satisfying way of explaining why people do what they do.

Dan received his B.A. from Carleton College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from University of Michigan. He is particularly interested in behavioral economics and public policy.

When asked about his teaching philosophy, Dan has the following to say: “I take a long view here. In 10 years, heck, even 2 years, the vast majority of the material we learn in any class is going to be forgotten. However, the skills, thought patterns, and perspectives that we develop along the way can last forever. This is what I (implicitly) try and push in my courses: ways of thinking about and attacking problems we’ll encounter in the world beyond Penn State.”

“This is not to say the specific content of a course is unimportant. Hardly, but I see the goal of undergraduate education as developing thoughtful, conscientious members of society. As much as I love econ, from my teacher's perspective I think of economics as some particularly beautiful scenery we pass on our way to this destination.”

Outside of Economics, Dan pursues interests including golf, piano, cooking, and poker.

Student Profile—Elizabeth Kernion

Liz Kernion is a senior economics Liberal Arts B.S. major with minors in geography and psychology— and was selected Homecoming Queen this year! Liz is from Wexford, PA, which is near Pittsburgh. She chose to major in economics after taking ECON 002 with Professor McLeod and realizing how applicable economics is to everyday life, “Economics is everywhere.”



Liz’s favorite economics course so far was ECON 471, Growth and Development, in which she particularly enjoyed learning about microfinance. Her senior thesis paper deals with microfinance and renewable energy systems (chiefly photovoltaic systems) in Appalachia and their applications as a way to combat rural poverty in this area.

After graduating in May, Liz plans to spend a year teaching in Asia—hopefully in Singapore. Then, she anticipates attending graduate school with a focus on urban studies and regional planning.

The most valuable things that Liz has learned in her economics courses at Penn State are the basic tools and how to apply them to everyday life. Economics really is “common sense!”

Great Debate V

Great Debate V, the fifth annual Penn State University Economics debate, will take place on April 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in Eisenhower Auditorium. The topic will be “Is the Government Making Things Worse or Better? Students versus Professors.”

In the past, attendance has been over 2,000! Be sure to mark this day on your planner for some exciting and informative economics sparring!

Study Abroad Opportunities

Many study abroad programs are open to you. Imagine going to Brussels, Belgium, to observe how the European Union operates; or traveling to England or Australia and observing the central banks of those and other countries. Study Abroad in Economics allows you to gain first-hand experience with the operations of foreign economies, and facilitates an understanding of currency exchange rates and international trade.

For more information about Study Abroad in Economics, go to www.la.psu.edu/CLA-LAUS/education_abroad/Study_Abroad_Handouts.shtml and click on “Economics.”

This Web site includes information on planning for a study abroad trip, how to pay for study abroad, academic considerations, as well as a list and description of many recommended programs. You may also contact the department’s Study Abroad Faculty Adviser, Mark McLeod, at mam63@psu.edu.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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