

ECON 4200-001 - Spring 2020
SENIOR SEMINAR: ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS
Friday 383 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. TR

INSTRUCTOR: Peter Schwarz, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, and Associate, EPIC (Energy Production and Infrastructure Center), UNC Charlotte

OFFICE: Friday 223A **OFFICE HOURS:** TR 10:00–11:30 am and by appointment.

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CANVAS: Grades, announcements, discussion board, email

Catalog Course Description

An integrative capstone course for the economics major that should normally be taken during the student's last semester of study. The primary objective is to provide a framework in which senior economics majors can review and solidify their understanding of economic concepts by applying those concepts to specific economic issues. Topics vary. Analytical ability and written and oral communication skills are assessed.

Course Prerequisites

ECON 3112 (Econometrics), ECON 3122 (Intermediate Microeconomics), ECON 3123 (Intermediate Macroeconomics), Grade of C or better; Economics Major, Senior Standing

Course Objective

The objective of the Senior Seminar course is to help you continue developing your analytical ability and your written and oral communication skills. This objective can be accomplished while studying any number of topics. Our topic for this offering of the Senior Seminar course is Environmental Economics, with a special focus on China. You will also gain exposure to urban economics, modern econometric techniques, and University of Chicago style free-market thinking.

Required Text: Matthew E. Kahn, *Fundamentals of Environmental and Urban Economics*, 2018, <https://sites.google.com/site/mek1966/> Item 4 under Kahn's books. Available through Kindle for \$0.99. You can download the Kindle App if you don't own a Kindle. All the information is on Kahn's webpage.

Also required, Matthew E. Kahn and Siqi Zheng, *Blue Skies over Beijing: Economic Growth and the Environment in China*, 2016. Item 5 under Kahn's books. Online copy free through UNC Charlotte Atkins Library <https://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/481835> or hard copy through Princeton University Press (\$32.95).

Required for Writing: McCloskey, *Economical Writing*

[http://stephenkinsella.net/WordPress/wp-](http://stephenkinsella.net/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2006/12/Economical%20Writing%20by%20Deirdre%20McCloskey.pdf)

[content/uploads/2006/12/Economical%20Writing%20by%20Deirdre%20McCloskey.pdf](http://stephenkinsella.net/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2006/12/Economical%20Writing%20by%20Deirdre%20McCloskey.pdf) _or

<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1297271739/fulltextPDF/6BD155CE1A8F4BA9PQ/1?accountid=14605> or you can purchase the 3e that came out in May 2019 for under \$10 or find an older edition

for less (possibly \$0) if you want to read more about economical writing

Optional: Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

<http://www.jlakes.org/ch/web/The-elements-of-style.pdf>

Required for Speaking: U.S. News and World Report, *15 Strategies for Giving Oral Presentations*
<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2010/02/24/15-strategies-for-giving-oral-presentations>

Optional: <https://go.owu.edu/~dapeople/ggpresent.html>

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class, on Canvas, and by email.

Outline of Topics and Reading Assignments

I. Theory and Tools of Environmental Economics

1/09 **Introduction**
Chapter 1

1/14, 1/16 **Externalities and the Environment**
Chapter 2

Martin Luther King Day 1/20 (Monday)

1/21, 1/23, 1/28, 1/30 **Government's Role in Providing Public Goods**
Chapter 3

McCloskey, *Economical Writing* (1/30)

2/4 Writing Project 1 distributed: Chapters 1-3, incorporating McCloskey

II. Environmental Benefits and Costs

2/4, 2/6 **Measuring Environmental Benefits**
Chapter 6

2/11 Writing Project 1 due.

2/11, 2/13 **The Economics of Green Business**
Chapter 10

2/18 **Reducing Global Greenhouse Gases**
Chapter 11

III. Economic Growth and the Environment

2/20 **Natural Resources and Economic Growth**
Chapter 13

2/20 Writing Project 2 distributed: Chapters 6, 10, 11

2/25 **Macroeconomic Growth and Environmental Quality**
Chapter 15
How to Do an Oral Presentation (2/25)

2/27 **Writing Project 2 due.**

Oral presentations on *Blue Skies over Beijing: Economic Growth and the Environment* assigned.
(I will do Chapters 1 and 10.)

Blue Skies over Beijing: Economic Growth and the Environment

2/27 **Introduction**
Chapter 1

Spring Break March 2-7

I. A Geographic Overview of Urban Pollution Production in China

3/10, 3/12 **Made in China**
Chapter 2

3/16 Last day to withdraw from course (Monday).

3/17, 3/19 **The Migration to Cities**
Chapter 3

3/24, 3/26 **The Causes and Consequences of Chinese Suburbanization**
Chapter 4

3/31, 4/2 **Private Vehicle Demand in Urban China**
Chapter 5

II. The Rising Demand for Green Cities

4/7 **The Rising Demand for Blue Skies and Urban Risk Reduction**
Chapter 6

4/9 **Recent Empirical Evidence on the Demand for Lower Pollution Levels**
Chapter 7

4/10-11 Spring Weekend (Friday, Saturday)

III. Promoting Environmental Accountability in a One-Party State

4/14, 4/16 **The Central Government's Increased Desire to Promote Environmental Sustainability**
Chapter 8

4/21, 4/23 **Will Local Governments Create Green Cities?**
Chapter 9

4/28 **Conclusion**
Chapter 10

4/28 Writing Project 3 distributed on Text Chapters 13, 15 and all of Blue Skies over Beijing

Wednesday 4/29 *Reading Day*

Thurs 5/7 2-4:30 pm **TURN IN Writing Project 3**

Determination of Grades: A = 90+; B = 80-89.99; C = 70-79.99; D = 60-69.99; F = < 60.

Course grades will be determined by your performance on three take-home writing projects, participation, including attendance, homework, quizzes and reading before class, and oral presentations from Blue Skies over Beijing. These components will have the following weights in the calculation of your final grade: 20% for each of the three writing projects, 20% for participation, and 20% for oral presentations. Each of the three writing projects will consist of discussion and analytical components.

As all of you are seniors, take your desire to graduate as planned seriously. Do not miss class, arrive late, leave early, or exit and return during class except under exceptional circumstances. If you know in advance that you will be absent, late, or will have to leave during class, please let me know in advance with a reason for the circumstance in order to minimize the effect on your participation grade or other grades that may be affected. This class is a seminar, which requires your participation. An unjustified absence results in a loss of 1% (maximum 19% for participation) from your participation grade. Arriving late, leaving early, or coming and going during class unless you have alerted me and I agree that it is justified results in an 0.5% deduction (maximum 19.5%) from participation. For example, if you have 2 absences and 2 lates, your maximum participation grade is 17% (85% of available 20% for participation).

Academic Integrity

Students are required to abide by the UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online at <http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html>.

Disability Accommodations

UNC Charlotte is committed to access to education. If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please provide a letter of accommodation from the Office of Disability Services <https://ds.uncc.edu/> early in the semester. For more information about accommodations, you may contact the Office of Disability Services at 704-687-0040 or visit the Office of Disability Services itself in Fretwell 230.

Religious Accommodation:

It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious observances on which they will be absent by submitting a [Request for Religious Accommodation](https://legal.uncc.edu/sites/legal.uncc.edu/files/media/UP409-ReligiousAccommodationForStudents) Form <https://legal.uncc.edu/sites/legal.uncc.edu/files/media/UP409-ReligiousAccommodationForStudents> to their instructor prior to the census date for enrollment for a given semester <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-409>. The census date for each semester (typically the tenth day of instruction) can be found in UNC Charlotte's Academic Calendar <http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendars/calendar.htm>.

The Belk College of Business Diversity Statement

The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.