

**DePaul University -- School for New Learning**  
**Spring 2009**

**Course** Economics for Decision Making  
Tuesdays, O'Hare Campus, 6:30-9:30

**Instructor** Ludovic Comeau Jr, Ph.D.  
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**Instructor's biographical abstract**

Dr. Ludovic Comeau Jr. has more than 29 years of teaching experience. He is Associate Professor at the School for New Learning. He holds a Ph.D. in business economics, an MBA in finance and an MA in economics from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a Bachelor in business administration and a Law degree from the State University of Haiti, and an MA in French Literature from the University of Chicago. He has taught various business and economic courses in the U.S. and in Haiti. He was awarded a *Fulbright Scholarship* to complete graduate work in the U.S. in the early 1990s. He received the *Oscar Miller Award for Teaching Excellence* and the *Winifred Geldard Award for Outstanding Commitment to Excellence in Education* while teaching at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He currently conducts research about the use of innovative teaching techniques in economics, and about the political economy of economic policy. He serves as Academic Director for the School for New Learning at the O'Hare Campus. He is also a francophone writer (he writes in French) whose first novel, *Bâtisseurs du lendemain* (Builders of the morrow), came out in September 2007.

**Competences**

- H-1-C:** Can explain the emergence, maintenance, or evolution of an economic or political system.
- H-2-E:** Can compare one social, cultural, economic, or political institution in a society to a comparable institution in a different society.
- H-5:** Can analyze issues and problems from a global perspective.
- F-X:** Can understand and apply basic principles of economics, and analyze economic issues that affect policy making and private decision making in a changing environment.

**Course contents**

The purpose of this course is to provide the modern individual living in a context of a challenging economic crisis with basic tools to understand the path that led to our overall prosperity and to today's challenges. The focus is on enabling agents to make decisions throughout the life cycle. Basic economic methodology and the economic way of thinking will be presented.

There will be two modules: a microeconomic module and a macroeconomic module. Micro topics such as scarcity, opportunity cost, the mechanism of the price system, the laws of demand and supply, as well as macro topics such as the productive capacity of the economy, inflation, unemployment, the workings of money and banking, the impact of government policy will be analyzed. Throughout our study, we will keep in mind the idea that economics can significantly contribute to making informed decisions that are optimal (i.e., cost minimizing) and, yet, down-to-earth.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND OUTCOME

### Learning will occur through a variety of channels:

**Reading:** You should read the chapters and other materials assigned on the Aplia site in a timely manner. Such readings must be performed in ways that effectively enhance the understanding of topics covered. You should be able to do a brief and yet exhaustive summary of what you read.

**Writing:** We'll use writing fairly extensively as a tool for learning and formative assessment that is, assessment that helps improve student's grasp of topics studied. We'll utilize writing both in the classroom and outside of the classroom; and such writing will be reviewed either by the writer him/herself, by his/her peers in the class, or by the instructor.

**Lectures:** Main points of theory will be reviewed in classroom lectures, often with the support of PowerPoint presentations. Lectures will offer a great opportunity to run confusing points read outside of the classroom by your classmates or the instructor.

**Debates:** We'll draw on the wealth of experiences usually gathered in the typical SNL classroom to engage in discussions of points of theory or headline issues related to the economy or to economic policy making.

**Textbook:** Required: N. Gregory Mankiw: *ESSENTIALS OF ECONOMICS*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 2009, South-Western / Cengage Learning Publishers, Mason, OH, (800-354-9706). Please read (next page) the information regarding how to register for Aplia BEFORE PURCHASING THE TEXTBOOK. Most likely, you will find it much more economical to use the electronic version of the book, online.

### At the end of the course, you should be able to:

**Gain a better comprehension of the world in which you are an economic agent, a world where many events and decisions by public authorities are undergirded by economic realities. By studying fundamental economic tenets, by understanding the underpinnings of critical economic issues, you can gain an understanding of the "big picture" and become a savvier participant in both the political and the economic games, a more effective decision maker, and a more efficient manager of your household's resources.**

## WORKLOAD AND GRADING

The best way to succeed in an economics course is to study and practice the material covered in class on a **lecture-by-lecture basis**. That is very important since **course grading is continuous through weekly homeworks** and since, again, such material is cumulative.

**Attendance and class participation** are very important. Every student is expected to:

- read the assigned chapters of the textbook in a **TIMELY** manner (that is, following the schedule provided in the "Course Outline" section of the Aplia site);
- come to class prepared to participate actively in **all lectures**.

**Being late is very disruptive** of the class. It also makes you miss important aspects in the study of a subject where every point builds on the previous ones. I advise you to always come to class, and on time, to really maximize your learning experience in a very interesting and intuitive field.

**10% of class grade goes to attendance, at one point per session, for the full session (i.e. for not being more than 10 minutes late, and for staying for the ENTIRE three hours).**

**Grading:** Aplia assignments (90%) PLUS Attendance (10%) = 100%

**Final letter grades** for the course will be assigned according to the following distribution:

**A:** 90 to 100 points      **B:** 78 to 89<sup>+</sup> points (78-80: B-; 81-84: B; 85-89: B+)

**C:** 65 to 77<sup>+</sup> points (65-68: C-; 69-73: C; 74-77: C+)

**D:** 55 to 64<sup>+</sup> points (55-58: D-; 59-61: D; 62-64: D+)      **F:** 0 to 54<sup>+</sup> points

**PASS/FAIL grades** (latest deadline: 2<sup>nd</sup> week, April 7): PASS requires **at least C.**

**COURSE OUTLINE: See the Aplia course site**

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**Information regarding how to register for Aplia (provided by Aplia): Course Start Date: 03/30/2009**

**You can begin working on your homeworks as soon as you register**

- In this course, you will use a textbook and Aplia's website.
- Typically you save money if you buy Aplia and your textbook together (about \$175 for the physical textbook alone, versus \$70 for both the Aplia site and the digital textbook). See payment options below.
- You will have access to a digital version of your textbook using Aplia.

**Registration : If you have never used Aplia before...**

- Connect to <http://www.aplia.com>
- Click the New Student link and enter your Course Key: **4T3N-KLE6-UKW7**. Continue following the instructions to complete your registration.

**If you have used Aplia before...**

- Connect to <http://www.aplia.com>
- Sign in with your usual e-mail address and password and enter your Course Key when prompted: **4T3N-KLE6-UKW7**. If you are not prompted for a new Course Key, click the Enter Course Key button to enroll in a new Aplia course. Enter your Course Key when you are prompted.

**Payment : Option 1: Digital Textbook with Aplia Access:**

Purchase an Aplia Access Card from your campus bookstore.

**Option 2: Physical Textbook with Aplia Access (also includes digital textbook):**

Purchase an Aplia Access Card and a physical book together as a bundle from your campus bookstore.

**You will have access to your digital textbook until the end of this course.**

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## **Addenda**

### **DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

## **DePaul University Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

NB: The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

## **Protection of Human Research Participants**

[For courses with a student research component only.] This course may involve research activities intended solely for classroom learning outcomes. Collecting data from human beings for such activities do not require institutional review if there is no intent to generalize, publish, or otherwise disseminate the findings. However, students must still abide by federally-mandated guidelines for the protection of human beings who may be the sources of such data. These include, but are not limited to, keeping persons' identifiable characteristics confidential and taking care to minimize or entirely remove the possibility of mental, social, financial, or physical harm. If findings from your research activities may be disseminated beyond classroom discussion, your activities carry risk of harm to the participants, or the identities of the participants are ascertainable, students must obtain approval from the SNL Local Review Board and DePaul Institutional Review Board. Please consult with the course instructor and visit the website of the Office of Research Protections at DePaul University (<http://research.depaul.edu>) for additional information and guidance.

## **For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

## **Chronic Illness Initiative**

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by chronic illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations. At SNL, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. Contact CII at [CII@depaul.edu](mailto:CII@depaul.edu).

## **Writing Help**

For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>. [In addition, consider adding the Writing Centers' syllabus supplement available here

<http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/fac/supplements.html>