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# Economics

## Economics Elective for Sophomores

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### CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES

*term course/sophomores*

This term course will expose students to current issues as viewed through the economic perspective. By taking a theme-based approach to relevant global topics, students will critically analyze the world around them, seeking to understand the underlying economic problems. The subject matter will purposefully vary from year to year to incorporate contemporary issues; likely topics include social policies and policy making, international trade and development, and business and finance (including the stock market). Regardless of the specific issues, the course will intentionally examine, discuss, and debate multiple perspectives to help students learn and understand the complexities of real-world decision-making.

## Economics Electives for Juniors and Seniors

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### INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS

*fall term/juniors and seniors*

All citizens face an essential problem: There are not enough resources to satisfy all our wants and needs. Such scarcity requires difficult choices in the United States and the world, and this course examines the mechanisms for making these choices and their consequences. After an introduction to the basic principles of economic thinking, the course examines real and complex problems in the United States and throughout the world. In looking at the characteristics of the market system, supply and demand, successes and failures of markets, and the role of government in the marketplace, students will learn how to analyze, think critically about, and debate these issues from an economic perspective in order to better understand current economic decisions. Of special interest to those interested in history, politics, and public affairs, this course emphasizes discussion and debate, and welcomes students of all mathematical abilities.

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### APPLIED ECONOMICS: FINANCIAL MARKETS **GESC**

*term course/juniors and seniors*

This course examines methods of economic analysis to address and solve real world issues and dilemmas. Investment topics include analysis, diversification, asset allocation, portfolio optimization, the relation between risk and return, trading, and passive (e.g., index-fund) and active strategies. In addition, students will compare investing through the lens of Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) versus Environmental, Socially Responsible, and Governance (ESG) based investments in their portfolios. The course uses case studies that begin locally and then expand to state, national, and international levels. Students conclude the class with a project that focuses directly on a specific American industry of their choice. There are no mathematical prerequisites, and students with a strong interest in current events will excel in the course.

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### BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS **PPR**

*term course/juniors and seniors*

Traditional economic theory assumes people have rational, well-defined preferences that drive their decision making. However, psychological research has found that in reality, people are often influenced by emotions. Behavioral Economics aims to reconcile economic and psychological theory in order to explore why people behave the way they do in the real world. This course will study the various heuristics (or cognitive shortcuts) humans use in decision making that result in biases. Are people's buying decisions dictated more by preference or by price? Are people more driven to seek gains or avoid losses? Why do retailers raise prices just to then markdown items to a sale price? Diving into topics such as herding, nudging, price anchoring, and prospect theory, students will begin to understand why people make decisions that are not always in their self-interest. Applying these theories to real world contexts, including possible examples in sports, healthcare, and social media, students will be able to appreciate their practical significance. This course fulfills a psychology, philosophy, and religious studies diploma requirement.

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### MACROECONOMICS **GESC**

*term course/juniors and seniors*

This course takes a deep dive into the US economy as well as the economies of various countries around the world. Students will use the basic economic concepts of scarcity and opportunity cost to explore economic growth and the major macroeconomics problems of inflation and unemployment. In asking questions about the powers and limits of government, students will be introduced to policy to analyze current economic events. This course is taught with the use of real case studies and places emphasis on critical thinking, discussion, and presentation. Real data will be used throughout the term to enhance understanding, and students of all mathematical abilities are welcome. No prior economics background is required.

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### CL ECONOMICS **GESC**

*year course/juniors and seniors*

CL Economics explores micro and macro-economic topics in greater depth and with significantly greater rigor than the economics term series. In microeconomics, the focus is on understanding individual and business decision-making within the constraints of limited resources and how markets determine prices and the distribution of goods. We will also include the study of labor markets, environmental and justice issues, and the role of the government in the economy. Macroeconomic emphasis will be on unemployment, inflation, gross domestic product, growth, policy decisions, and international economics. Graphical models are stressed throughout the course, and data interpretation is integrated. Therefore, although no previous economics knowledge is required, students must have a strong mathematics background and a commitment to actively engaging in critical thinking and problem solving. Note: this course will mostly prepare students to take both the AP Macroeconomics exam and the AP Microeconomics exam, with some additional preparation required on the part of the student. Prerequisites/Co-requisites: Calculus AB or permission of the department

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# Political Science

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS **GESC**

*term course/juniors and seniors*

While providing a background on global issues and diplomacy, this course puts students in the seats of public policy leaders and other decision-makers. Students will study many different international issues and perspectives through the lenses of economics, geography, history, and political science. The course encourages students to develop critical thinking, writing, and debating skills by asking nuanced questions about complex global problems, such as war, human rights, trade, healthcare, energy, or food. Prerequisite/Co-requisite: United States History or CL United States History

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## JURISPRUDENCE: AMERICAN LEGAL HISTORY

*term course/juniors and seniors*

Using historical works, case law, and recent articles, this course introduces the legal system in the United States with a particular focus on constitutional and criminal law. Students explore the background of international systems, the constitutional framework for the judicial branch of the government, and the Bill of Rights to learn how legal systems have evolved from the teachings of Hammurabi to present day cases. Class exercises will include delivering an oral argument and engaging in the process of jury selection for a hypothetical capital murder case. In addition to historical analysis, students will also investigate the ways in which the legal system affects students in schools, especially in terms of the first amendment and freedom of speech. Prerequisite/Co-requisite: United States History or CL United States History

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## CL SOCIAL SCIENCE SEMINAR: GLOBALIZATION **GESC**

*term course/juniors and seniors*

Globalization, the growing interconnectedness of peoples, cultures, and economies, has brought a dramatic increase in both opportunity and competition. While some theorize that globalization is synonymous with Westernization and is inherently tied to processes of colonization, others pose that globalization has been happening for centuries, is multidirectional, and adds to the global fabric. Regardless, it has become the principal system shaping

international relations, economic systems, culture, and the environment. Mixing history with current events, students will study and debate fundamental questions of globalization and its consequences. Prerequisites/Co-requisites: United States History or CL United States History; permission of the department

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## CL COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS **GESC**

*year course/seniors*

This course introduces students to comparative politics, the study of political processes and institutions within countries (whereas international relations focuses largely on interactions among and between countries). A comparative study of six nations — the United Kingdom, Russia, China, Iran, Mexico, and Nigeria — serves as the core for this course, with students first considering the historical development of each state, before moving on to an investigation of factors such as elections, political parties, revolutions, and economic and judicial systems. The course aims to illustrate the rich diversity of political life outside the United States, guiding students to an understanding of why countries and regions organize their institutions differently. Recent topics include Brexit and the United Kingdom's changing relationship with Europe; power and authority in Putin's Russia; economic growth and industrialization in China;

the nuclear program in Iran; NAFTA and Mexico; and Boko Haram vs. democratization in Nigeria. This course will prepare students to take the AP Comparative Government and Politics exam. Prerequisites: United States History or CL United States History; permission of the department

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## CL SOCIAL SCIENCE SEMINAR: THE U.S. PRESIDENCY

*fall term/juniors and seniors*

What did the Founding Fathers consider when establishing the American presidency? How has democracy been retained and challenged in the last couple of centuries? In what ways have money, the media, and polarization impacted presidential politics? While addressing these questions and others, this multidisciplinary course explores the dynamic state of U.S. presidential elections, the American electorate, and the role of President. After an exploration of democracy, students will use history, political science, and psychology to examine partisanship, polarization, and social identities and their roles in determining presidential voting trends and policies over the last century. Furthermore, students will analyze both the news media and social media and their role in impacting American presidential elections. Prerequisites: United States History or CL United States History; permission of the department



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# Psychology

## Psychology Electives for Freshmen and Sophomores

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### INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS IN PSYCHOLOGY PPR

*term course/freshmen and sophomores*

Likely a student's first formal exposure to both philosophy and psychology, this course will appeal to those looking to hone their argumentation skills, refine their individual moral compass, and learn more about what drives thinking and behavior. After a brief introduction to ethical theories and principles, a case study approach will take students on a tour of famous studies in the history of psychology, including modern-day dilemmas. For example: is it okay to deliberately mislead participants in research to ensure unbiased results? Is it ethical to prescribe placebos? When should someone's autonomy be restricted for the purpose of mental health treatment? Students will learn frameworks to analyze ethical dilemmas and ultimately argue for the most moral course of action; in addition, they will examine the methodology and findings of each case. This discussion-based class relies on student engagement and encourages productive

disagreement. Major topics/themes include deception, informed consent, animal rights, beneficence and non-maleficence, and confidentiality. Students may leave with a better sense of what further coursework they want to pursue within the philosophy, psychology, and religious studies offerings.

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## Psychology Electives for Juniors and Seniors

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### DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY GESC PPR

*term course/juniors and seniors*

This course will investigate the myriad ways that nature, or genetics, and nurture, or experience, interact to shape a person's development. Students will explore development across the lifespan in the following areas: personality and social relationships; cognition and neuroscience; and gender, sex, and sexuality. The class will introduce the frameworks of foundational theorists in the field and critically examine their applicability today. Students will build arguments around modern-day issues in development using evidence from relevant theorists, case studies, and primary sources. While there is an emphasis on self-reflection and interpreting one's own experiences through the lens of psychology, students will also consider how differences in genetics, experience, and culture may result in others having different developmental trajectories than their own.

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### NEUROPSYCHOLOGY PPR

*term course/juniors and seniors*

How is it possible that the human brain, a three-pound physical organ in our body, can be responsible for all our behavior and cognition? Neuropsychology focuses on the complex relationship between the brain and the mind. Students will study fascinating cases of brain damage in order to discover the principles of typical brain organization. The course will highlight the structures and functions of the nervous system as they relate to the psychological processes of sensation, perception, attention, memory, learning, and emotion. Other topics to be covered include neural communication and psychoactive drugs as well as clinical conditions such as concussions, CTE, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease. In addition to case studies, students will use labs, activities, and clinical assessment tools to gain familiarity with principles of neuropsychology as well as variations in neuropsychological development. By the end

of the course, students will be able to dispel common myths about the brain, appreciate the brief but rich history of neuropsychology, and ponder the new directions that technological innovations might take the field.

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### POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY PPR

*term course/juniors and seniors*

Whereas historically psychology has emphasized human deficit, the emerging field of Positive Psychology is the study of human flourishing. After establishing a framework for what it means to flourish, students will explore the cognitive biases that make it so difficult to accurately predict what will help us achieve that state. An emphasis on research methods will help students understand how psychologists are arriving at a set of empirically-based practices that can improve well-being. Throughout the term, students will implement a selection of these practices into their own lives and reflect on their impact.

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### SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY PPR

*term course/juniors and seniors*


Our social interactions can influence our individual behavior, perceptions, and beliefs in unpredictable ways. This course will examine classic experiments in social psychology that have demonstrated the observable ways that humans think, feel, and behave in social situations. Students will have many opportunities to practice recognizing social psychology concepts at work in their own lives, in current events, and in the media. Additionally, the course aims to give students a more empathetic framework through which to interpret the actions and experiences of others. Major topics will include cognitive biases, conformity, persuasion, and prejudice as well as research design and ethics.

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### INDEPENDENT STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

*term course/seniors*

Students who have fulfilled both their history and philosophy, psychology and religious studies diploma requirements may undertake an Independent Study Project. The student must arrange for a project advisor from within the department, **submit a written proposal**, and obtain approval from the academic advisor, project advisor, department head, and dean of faculty.



Laura Schulte's Neuropsychology class at the Meadows using aerial drones, 360 cameras, and Go-Pros to simulate different animals' perception.