

Eugene International High School
IB Economics, 2015-2016

Kyle Yamada

E-mail: yamada@4j.lane.edu

Telephone: 541-790-6636 (Sheldon), 541-790-8030 (South)

Blog: <http://blogs.4j.lane.edu/yamada>

Office hours: 8:00-8:20 at Sheldon, 3:30-4:00 at South, and by appointment

Rationale: Why Economics?

- Is it fair that some people are incredibly rich while others starve?
- How should we respond to climate change?
- Should fast food workers make at least \$15 an hour?
- How long will it take my parents to find jobs?
- How will you earn a living once you finish high school?

The study of economics can help us answer all of these questions and many more. In fact, almost every problem that we face in the world today, from what toothpaste we buy to the dangers of melting glaciers, has an economic component. Throughout this year you will learn how to think like an economist and apply the tools of the trade to problems affecting you and society as a whole.

Major Topics and Subjects

We will begin the year by establishing basic economic concepts and principles. We will then determine what these principles can tell us about the prices and availability of the goods and services that we buy and the impact they have, for better or for worse, on the larger community. Once we have an idea of how economics works on a small scale, we will turn to the rise and fall of entire countries' fortunes. We will also question the methods nations use to divide their wealth among citizens in the most fair and efficient manner. Finally, we will explore the challenges and opportunities that global trade poses and evaluate strategies for bringing the majority of the world's population out of poverty.

This class is structured around the International Baccalaureate program's standard level syllabus in Economics. This course will appear on your transcript as an IB-level course regardless of whether you decide to take the IB test or not, so all students will be responsible for learning the same concepts.

Academic Policies

Grading Procedures

Your grade will be based on five major categories with their approximate percentage weight listed below:

Current events commentaries – Analytical essays based on the news	30%
Tests and quizzes	30%
Long-term group projects	20%
In-class activities and mini-projects	15%
Participation and citizenship – Discussion and respect for others	10%
Day-to-day homework – Mainly exercises from the textbook	No specific percentage, but may be used as notes on tests

You will earn final grades at the end of each trimester according to the following grade scale:

A = 93-100%, A- = 89.5-92.99%, B+ = 87-89.49%, B = 83-86.99%, B- = 79.5-82.99%, C+ = 77-79.49%, C = 73-76.99%, C- = 69.5-72.99%, D = 59.5-69.49%, F = 0 – 59.49%

I may make mistakes on occasion, so **keep graded assignments for your records**. They are your proof that you have completed the work. Besides, these materials will help you study for the IB and in-class tests.

Homework Grading Policy

I am experimenting with a new grading system this year. Your day-to-day exercises from the textbook will not have a specific point value as they have had in the past, but completing these assignments is important skill-building practice for tests, quizzes and essays. We will also go over the solutions to these exercises in class as a way to learn new concepts, so you will learn the concepts better if you do the exercises beforehand. It is my hope that this system will give you more flexibility in showing what you know and streamline the grading process.

Academic Integrity

Naturally, I expect you to turn in your own work, as opposed to work copied from friends, the Internet, or other sources. If I find that you have cheated or plagiarized on any part of an assignment or test, you will receive zero credit for the work. There may also be other consequences depending on the seriousness of the violation. This policy applies equally to those who help someone cheat/plagiarize. The objective is not to punish, but to ensure that the vast majority of students who do exercise integrity are not put at an unfair disadvantage.

For the purposes of academic integrity, you may think of the day-to-day homework as notes rather than regular assignments. You may share your solutions with friends, but bear in mind that it is often the process of solving the problems that helps you learn more than having the notes themselves. Problems that you solve on your own will serve you better on tests and essays than answers that you copy.

Participation and Citizenship

Spirited discussions of controversial issues are a vital part of learning in our class. To receive full credit in the citizenship/participation category, you will need to jump into the arena and get your ideas out there on a regular basis in a way that is respectful to others in the class. Expressing your brilliant ideas can be counterproductive if you do it in a way that makes others too uncomfortable to speak up. I will not tolerate put-downs or harassment of others in the class, and participation/citizenship grades will reflect this policy. The goal is to make all students feel confident in sharing their views.

Electronic Devices

Students may not use smart phones, iPods, tablets or any electronic devices that distract from the business of class unless I give explicit approval for educational use. A student using one of these devices in class without my permission will forfeit it for the rest of the school day. A parent will have to pick up the device after school each additional time the student uses it in class. The purpose of this policy is to create an environment that allows everyone to concentrate on economics. Research shows that the human brain cannot learn as effectively with distractions.

Absences, Tardies and Late Work

It's important to show up on time so you can get credit for reading quizzes that we will take and homework we will correct at the very beginning of class. Regular, timely attendance also contributes to the participation/citizenship portion of your grade.

Assignments are due at the beginning of the period on the due date listed. Assignments will lose up to 10% of their value each class they are late until only half credit is possible. I will accept late work only up to one week before the end of each semester.

If you think you will be unable to turn in an assignment on time, the important thing is to **talk to me before the due date**. The earlier you approach me, the more sympathetic I will be to your request for an extension. I may also grant extensions when situations arise that you are unable to control and/or predict.

If I do grant an extension, you may still receive reduced credit for the assignment depending on how early you contacted me and on the validity of the reason.

All work turned in past the original due date must have a completed **“due date extension form”** attached or it will not receive credit. These slips are available in the classroom and on the class blog.

Assignment Blog

If you are absent you are responsible for checking the class blog at <http://blogs.4j.lane.edu/yamada>. This page will tell you what homework is due for the next class and will also give a brief description of what we did in class that day. You will be able to download some handouts in Adobe Acrobat or MS-Word format, but not all handouts will be available online, so make sure you have your homework partner pick up copies of any materials you are missing.

Homework Partner

Find a person you can rely on to be your homework partner. Homework partners are responsible for providing each other with information about homework and missed lessons if one them is absent.

Homework partner: _____ Phone #: _____ e-mail: _____

Check the assignments page and ask your homework partner for any handouts you may have missed while gone before asking me. I will also make extra copies available in the classroom from time to time. See me only once you have exhausted these other options. This will save us valuable time in class.

Day-to-Day Procedures

Beginning Class

It's important to be in your assigned seat and ready to go when class starts, since you will frequently be showing me your homework for completion or taking a short quiz. Right before class is not a good time to ask me questions, as I will be focusing on the day's activities. However, I'm more than happy to talk to your heart's content if you drop by at other times or make an appointment.

Materials

Your textbook is the *IB Diploma Programme Economics Course Companion*. You do not need to bring it to class each day. I do expect you to **bring your own ruler** pens, pencils, paper and notebook.

Food and Drink

You may bring food and beverages to class as long as you clean up after yourself.

Bathroom

Please take care of business before class. If you need to go during class, wait until a group activity or a transition between activities in order to keep distractions to a minimum. Let me know you are stepping out before you go so I don't accidentally mark you absent.

End of Class

At the end of the period **you will be responsible for copying down any assignments** listed on the board and **turning in any homework due that day** that I didn't collect at the beginning of class. I also expect you to return seats/desks to their original positions, put away any materials that you use during class and clean up any messes you may have made.

I'm looking forward to the year ahead!

Appropriate accommodations will be made for special needs students.