ECON 223 Economics of Crime-DEAdd-2017-11-08

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Form Information

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*Indicates a required field

Proposer*	Dr. Alexi Thompson and Dr. Brandon Vick	Proposer Email*	Alexi.Thompson@iup.edu and Brandon.Vick@iup.edu
Contact Person*	Dr. Alexi Thompson	Contact Email*	Alexi.Thompson@iup.edu
Proposing Department/Unit*	Economics	Contact Phone*	357-2641

Course Level*	undergraduate-level

Distance Education Section

- Complete this section only if adding Distance Education to a New or Existing Course

Course Prefix /Number*	ECON 223
Course Title*	Economics of Crime
Type of Proposal*	*See CBA, Art. 42.D.1 for Definition* online
Brief Course Outline*	*Give an outline of sufficient detail to communicate the course content to faculty across campus. It is not necessary to include specific readings, calendar or assignments* *As outlined by the federal definition of a "credit hour", the following should be a consideration regarding student work - For every one hour of classroom or* *direct faculty instruction, there should be a minimum of two hours of out of class student work.* **1. Catalog Description** Economic analysis of criminal activity and its impact on the allocation of scarce resources. Uses fundamental economic models to explain crimes against people, property crime, "victimless crime," and organized crime. **2. Course Objectives**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Objective 1: Apply economic models and concepts to criminal activity and its prevention.
- Objective 2: Think critically about current crime-related topics including the War on Drugs, capital punishment, and gun control.
- Objective 3: Create informed arguments regarding crime trends, policy, and prevention issues.
- Objective 4: Communicate arguments, application of economic thinking, and logic through writing assignments.

3. Detailed Course Outline

Topic	Class Hours (running total)	Course Objective
Introduction to the Economics of Crime	3 (3)	1,3
The Rational Actor Model	5 (8)	1,3
Optimal Allocation of Criminal Justice Resources	3 (11)	1,3
Writing Assignment 1	0	1,2,3,4
Test 1	1 (12)	1,2,3,4
Supply & Demand in Crack Cocaine and Opiod Markets	5 (17)	1,2,3
Organized Crime	4 (21)	1,2
Writing Assignment 2	0	1,2,3,4
Test 2	1 (22)	1,2,3,4
Crimes Against Persons	3 (25)	1,2,3
Crimes Against Property	3 (28)	1,2,3
Crimes Against Society: Victimless Crimes	3 (31)	1,2,3
Writing Assignment 3	0	1,2,3,4
Test 3	1 (32)	1,2,3,4
Asymmetric Information	5 (37)	1,3
Crime Economics Depicted in Media	4 (41)	1,2,3
Writing Assignment 4	0	1,2,3,4
Test 4	1 (42)	1,2,3,4

Rationale for Proposal (Required Questions from CBA)

How is/are the instructor(s) qualified **in the Distance Education delivery** **method as well as the discipline?***	Dr. Alexi Thompson and Dr. Brandon Vick are jointly working on the content of this online course proposal. They will take turns offering the course. Dr. Alexi Thompson holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Kansas State University and has been a professor in the Economics department at IUP since 2013. Crime economics is one of Dr. Thompson's research interests. With regards to qualification in the discipline, Dr. Thompson recently had one co-authored publication, "Does Previous Marijuana Use Increase the Use of Other Dugs: An Almost Ideal Demand System Approach" appear in *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*. This journal is in the top 7% of economics journal according to the journal rankings site Research Papers in Economics (RePEc). Another crime related manuscript, "The Colombian Peso: Commodity Currency or Cocaine Currency?" is currently submitted to the highly ranked journal *IMF Review*. With regard to distance education, Dr. Thompson has taught Econ 121 Principles of Macroeconomics online. He uses the online platform MyEconLab to test students via chapter quizzes. In addition to the learning materials provided by MyEconLab, including videos, PowerPoint slides, and extra practice problems, Dr. Thompson has created his own set of PowerPoint slides available to students via MyEconLab that focus on the most important concepts from each chapter. Dr. Brandon Vick holds a Ph.D. from Fordham University and has been a professor in the Economics department at IUP since 2013. Dr. Vick teaches Labor Economics at IUP which emphasizes socioeconomic issues confronted by individuals in the labor market. These same socioeconomic issues are discussed in crime economics, so Dr. Vick is well versed in the appropriate literature. With regards to distance education, Dr. Vick has a tremendous amount of experience. He has implemented a number of online tools in his face-to-face courses, including several "reverse-the-classroom" strategies. Course websites present the course syllabus, calendar, lecture outlines, readings, and review questions for students to access. In ECON 122: Principals of Microeconomics, he utilizes an online learning management system (Sapling) to challenge and test students. For both ECON 122 and ECON 330, he requires students to work with a number of online platforms, all of which can be successfully integrated with a distance-learning course: • Khan Academy videos to prepare students for problems and case studies • Prezi.com slides with voice-overs to introduce topics and present material • D2L to turn in writing assignments, and • Pinterest.com to direct students toward topic-related readings and initiate discussion. Additionally, having previously worked in information technology performing user support and software testing, he has taught non-traditional students elementary computing skills. He has rich experience working with students (or computer users) to avoid and solve technical problems. Finally, he participated in a semester-long graduate seminar focused on implementing experiential, reflective, and action-oriented pedagogy in today's educational system utilizing new technologies. He has participated in discussion panels on the same subject.
DFor each outcome in the course, describe **how the outcome will be achieved using** **Distance Education technologies.***	*Objective 1: Apply economic models and concepts to criminal activity and its prevention.* The course website will be used to deliver theoretical components of the course to students. Each topic has a web page serving as an outline and additional subpages that branch off the main page. The first subpage will include designed PowerPoint slides, practice problems, and 10-15 minute lecture videos that detail economic theory and its application to criminal activities and prevention. Students are expected to carefully study all materials, as exam questions will be based on these materials. The second subpage will include case studies and links to other articles (news and academic) designed to give economic theory some real-world application. *Objective 2: Think critically about current crime-related topics including the War on Drugs, capital punishment, and gun control.* As mentioned under Objective 1, the second subpage will include case studies and links to other current event and academic articles. The articles discussing the current crime-related topics will be carefully chosen as to present both sides of certain debates. For example, students will be expected to read news and academic articles advocating stricter gun control and articles against gun control. They will be required to make arguments about crime policy that are backed by empirical and theoretical evidence. *Objective 3: Create informed arguments regarding crime trends, policy, and prevention issues.* As mentioned under the first two objectives, students will access course content and outside readings via the course website. After being introduced to economic theory and its relationship to crime and its prevention, students will be expected to read several articles (news and academic) per topic including policy and prevention issues. After exposure to theory, students will have the necessary tools to think critically and create informed arguments regarding topics covered in class. *Objective 4: Communicate arguments, application of economic thinking, and logic through writing assignments*. Students will have four writing assignments to complete over the course of the semester. A third subpage will include detailed directions for each writing assignment as well as links to various references and databases to help students complete the assignment.

How will the instructor-student and student-student interaction take place?* (if applicable)	Instructor-student interaction will take place through interactive components in the learning management system and IUP email. The instructors will be available for video/audio chat (via interactive components of the LMS) at pre-determined days and times. In these sessions, the instructor will be able to talk directly to students to help students accomplish tasks related to course assignments or to review material. The instructor will also respond to student emails and communicate a daily time that they can expect responses. The "virtual office hours" where student can contact the instructor via interactive learning management tools and the more frequent times where students can expect a quick email turnaround will be posted on the course website and may vary by semester. Specific grade information will be communicated via the D2L Gradebook. Instructor feedback and grades for written assignments will be accessible through D2L Assignments. Students will be encouraged to ask questions related to material or assignments by making comments on the D2L message board, where other students can see these questions and replies from the instructor. Students will be directed to the Student Handbook Classroom Policy for rules around proper conduct.
How will student achievement be evaluated?	**4. Evaluation Methods** • Tests (50%): Four tests (each 12.5% of the total grade) will evaluate the student's ability to understand concepts/models and apply them to crime topics. Tests will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Tests will be timed and be completed via D2L. • *Test 1:* Sections 1-3 • *Test 2:* Section 4-5 • *Test 3:* Section 6-8 • *Test 4:* Sections 9-10 • Writing Assignments (50%): There will be four short writing assignments (250-500 words) during the course each worth 12.5% of the final grade. Grading will be based on the following: 1) Accurate use of economic theory and application to actual situations (50%); 2) APA-style references and Author/Date citations (25%); and, 3) Grammar and Clarity (25%). Late assignments will receive up to a 50% penalty. • *Writing Assignment 1:* Students discuss how opportunity costs, expected costs/benefits of criminal activity, probability of being caught, and social environment affects the decision to engage in crime. They will research how the social/economic context in which one is raised may affect such decisions. • *Writing Assignment 2:* The current opioid crisis in the United States is causing serious health concerns in several states including Pennsylvania. Students will use supply and demand analysis studied in Topic 3 to illustrate the trends in the health crisis and research academic articles or news sources to identify variables related to supply and/or demand. • *Writing Assignment 3:* Students will be introduced to the Uniform Crime Report Index (UCR), which records various property crimes and crimes on persons. Students will learn how to identify patterns in the data, analyze potential causes for changes, and clearly communicate the data and arguments. • *Writing Assignment 4:* The instructor will present examples of economic concepts applied to criminal activity depicted in popular culture. Students will come up with their own examples of criminal activity in pop-culture and clearly and thoroughly describe the economic concepts related to that work.
How will academic honesty for tests and assignments be addressed?*	The course will include four exams students will access via D2L. Each of the exams will be timed. Each question will be pulled from a pool of similar-like questions covering the various learning objectives. This will make it very unlikely that two students will have the same exam, while controlling for difficulty. For writing assignments, Dr. Vick and Dr. Thompson will use *D2L/Turnitin* to check for plagiarism.

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