**Current Events Project (50 points)**

Principles of Economics with Dr. Beck

Module 6

Due on either Jan 15th or Jan 23nd (depending on your group)

# Description

Guided by the topics we learn about in class, you will research an economic topic of your choice and create a brief document discussing it.

You will identify at least two recent news articles from reputable sources as a basis for your discussion. Peer-reviewed academic journal articles are encouraged as well, but not required.

In writing your report, you should do the following.

*Apply relevant concepts and terminology from our class to your report*.

Examples of this include demand and supply, consumer/producer surplus, government’s role, taxes, innovation, market structure, externalities, GDP, inflation, econ growth, Fiscal/Monetary Policy, the business cycle, etc. Indeed much of this project will be you making the connection from our class material to the real world. Showing me that you can “translate” news articles into the language of economics will be something I’ll be looking for.

*Use only articles from reputable sources.*

It is getting more difficult all the time to sort through the reputable vs. unreputable, but this is a valuable skill to develop. Of course I am happy to help you.

*Attach the source articles, or a link to them, with your submission*.

*Source articles should be in English, if possible.*

Since English is the only language common to everyone in the class, I’d prefer the articles you use to be in that language. But if you find something in your native language that you’d really like to use, ask me about it and perhaps we can work something out.

*The primary articles used should be “straight news”, i.e. not opinion pieces.*

You may reference opinion pieces by reputable authors (preferably economists) to augment your discussion, but your project should be centered on non-opinion pieces. Projects that only use opinion pieces, even if they were written by well respected experts in the field, will receive a poor grade.

*The primary news articles you use should have been published in the last year.*

Supporting news articles, opinion articles, or academic articles can be older if they support (or refute) a more recent news article. For instance, you could use a news article from this year and contrast it with an academic article that is older.

*Avoid unsupported assertions and including your opinion without evidence to support it.* Using your own critical thinking skills to analyze a situation is a wonderful thing, but the primary focus of this project is to synthesize information from sources rather than create much new information. Some original analysis is acceptable but should be carefully done and must be supported with facts and solid economics to explain how you came to your conclusion. Avoid normative statements throughout the paper.

*The paper should be 1-3 pages of text, double spaced, 12 point font.*

You may include a cover page if you wish, and you should have a separate reference page. Thus, under no circumstances should the report require more than 5 pieces of paper to print.

# Project grade

Projects will be awarded anywhere from 0 to 50 points toward your final course grade.

A grade of 50 requires that you demonstrate a well above average ability to find and synthesize good information on a topic and apply solid economic thinking to it. An array of sources would likely be used, all of them cohesively brought together to provide the reader with an excellent, and up-to-date, understanding of the topic.

Students generally feel that lots of hard work and a nicely written report deserves a 50. Most professors (including me) do not feel this way. A 50 is for a report that far exceeds, not just meets, expectations.

50 points: This grade represents a truly excellent effort. This level of work greatly **exceeds** project objectives and demonstrates genuine initiative. As the highest grade possible, this grade is reserved for performance that is exceptional and thus is not achieved easily.

40 points: This grade represents a consistently good effort that clearly achieves the project goals. This level of work includes **doing all that was asked, in correct form,** and that work being very solid. A grade of 40 means the group worked well and did a good, strong job. Students should be proud of this grade.

30 points: This grade represents an acceptable effort that partially attains the project goals. Characteristics of this level work include meeting some but not all of the project goals; and writing a **readable but average report** requiring a number of faculty corrections.

20 points: Characteristics of this level of work include doing very little throughout the project, turning in substandard work, showing little or no initiative and originality, and/or not following the guidelines discussed above.

10 points: This grade means that a group’s performance is unacceptable.

As a default, it is assumed that all members of the group will receive the same grade. In special circumstances where large imbalances in group member activity can be documented, I am willing to discuss other options.

# Academic Integrity

Individual integrity is vital to the academic environment because education involves the search for and acquisition of knowledge and understanding, which are, in themselves, intangible. Evaluation of each student's level of knowledge and understanding is an essential part of the teaching process, and requires tangible measures such as reports, examinations and homework. Any act that interferes with the process of evaluation by misrepresentation of the relation between the work being evaluated (or the resulting evaluation) and the student's actual state of knowledge is an act of academic dishonesty.