Short Syllabus

The full syllabus for this course is on my homepage at http://unr.edu/homepage/elliottp/ec301 (you can go to google.com and type “Parker EC301 homepage”). You will also need to subscribe to the ec301@unr.edu e-mail list, and if you have a spam feature you may need to explicitly allow messages from this list.

Course Description:
This course examines the major economic systems of the world, in both theory and practice. The approach will generally focus on encouraging a general understanding of how economic systems work and how economic theory interacts with government policy, history, and culture to explain economic performance. Economies examined in some detail will include several advanced market capitalist countries (e.g., the U.S., Japan, France, Sweden, and Germany), the former socialist economies (e.g., the former Soviet Union, Poland, and China), and other East Asian economies (e.g., South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore).

Prior study in economics is required (EC 101 and EC 102), but this course will be less quantitative than other theory courses. As a course which spends substantial time focused on the diversity of economies, EC 301 meets the diversity requirement of the University Core Curriculum. One component of the diversity requirement is a rigorous writing requirement.

Books:
• Olson, Mancur (2000), Power and Prosperity, Basic Books.

These books are available at the ASUN Bookstore in Jot Travis Student Union (JTSU), or online. See the class website for details. The Olson book can even be read online, for a fee. Other readings listed in the online schedule are available for Getchell library use only at the reserve desk, next to the main checkout desk.

Grading:
This course requires a significant amount of writing, and your ability to express yourself clearly in writing will significantly affect your grade. Grading will depend on in-class questions of the week - 10%, three examinations (two midterms and a final) - each worth 20%; a first paper - worth 10%; and a second research paper - worth 20%. The exams will be long, in-class, closed-book, and mostly essays, requiring both an ability to express yourself in writing and a good understanding of the lectures and the assigned readings. Papers will be assigned at least three weeks in advance of their due dates, and are expected to be in formal academic style; the first paper is 6-7 typed pages requiring minimal outside research, whereas the second paper is a more formidable research paper of 12-15 pages in length. Samples are available on the course webpage.

Schedule:
Details of the lecture schedule and reading assignments are given on the course webpage. Major topics include:
I. Introduction to Comparative Economic Systems (5 Lectures)
II. The Economic Theory of Capitalism (4 Lectures)
III. Models of Capitalism (8 Lectures)
IV. Socialism and Transition (10 Lectures)

The first and second exams are tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 20, and Tuesday, April 1. The final exam is scheduled by the University for Thursday, May 8, 7:30-9:30 A.M. It is your responsibility to be in class