

READINGS IN FREE ENTERPRISE (ECON 485)

Buena Vista University, January 2011
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This syllabus represents the constitutional contract between student and instructor. Please read it carefully and sign the last page to indicate understanding and agreement. Minor changes may be made at the instructor's discretion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a reading, writing, and discussion seminar focusing on free enterprise and its relationship to human well-being. You will read several works about the theory and history of free market economies, and discuss them critically. An interdisciplinary approach to the discussion is encouraged. Students should draw on ideas beyond economics, such as history, philosophy, and political theory.

PREREQUISITE

ECON 205 and 206, or instructor permission

READINGS

There are three required books for this course: *The Commanding Heights* by Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislaw, *The Road to Serfdom* by F.A. Hayek, and *Competition and Entrepreneurship* by Israel Kirzner. Additional readings from the internet are listed in the Course Outline below.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is expected, and a portion of your grade will be determined by class attendance and participation. The Course Outline below lists the days you are required to be in class and several days that are reserved to you for reading and writing ("Reading Days").

GRADES

Three Short Papers (20% each): You will write three short papers (1,400-1,600 words each), one related to each book. The comments you post on the forum (see below) can serve as the basis for your papers. The topics are up to you, but each paper should have a clear thesis. Avoid summarizing or reviewing the book.

Online Comments and Questions (15%): For each set of readings, you are required to post 3 comments on Angel. Look for the "Discussion Questions" forum under the "Course Content" tab. The comments can be about anything from the readings that you choose, but they should be substantive and clear. Possible examples include: ideas that are new to you; points where you disagree with the author; or parts of the reading that confused you (be specific, and don't ask

about something that can be easily checked on Wikipedia). Each day you do not post your comments will result in a 10% reduction of your grade for this component.

In-Class Discussion (15%): The instructor will assign you a grade based on the quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussions.

Daily Attendance (10%): Each class period that you miss will result in a 10% reduction of your attendance grade. You are allowed one excused absence.

The grading scale is:

≥ 90%	A
≥ 80%	B
≥ 70%	C
≥ 60%	D (lowest passing grade for P/NC)
< 60%	F

NOTICES

Academic Honesty: As stated in the Academic Catalog, “Buena Vista University believes that personal integrity and academic honesty are fundamental to scholarship. ... Any attempt to cheat, misrepresent someone else’s work as one’s own, receive credit for work one did not do, obtain an unfair advantage over other students, or aid another student to do the above will be considered a breach of academic integrity.” This statement is taken seriously in this class. You are encouraged to read the academic honesty policy in the Academic Handbook (page 20-22, <http://www.bvu.edu/academics/catalog/>), though most of this is common sense to a responsible adult such as yourself. Violations result in a failing grade for the course.

Disability Accommodations: BVU complies with Section 504 granting accommodations for students with disabilities who have appropriate documentation. If you have a disability, contact the Director of the Center for Academic Excellence for assistance or to fill out paperwork requesting accommodations. Also please see me in private within the first week of class.

Laptop Policy: Laptops are only permitted in class for note-taking purposes, unless otherwise instructed during lecture.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Activity	Readings (comments due by 11:59pm)	Papers Due
January 3	Reading Day	<i>Commanding Heights</i> , Intro & Chs. 1-4	
4	Reading Day	<i>Commanding Heights</i> , Chs. 5-9	
5	Discussion Day		
6	Reading Day	<i>Commanding Heights</i> , Chs. 10-14	
7	Discussion Day		
10	Reading Day	"Use of Knowledge in Society" "Socialist Calculation" <i>Road to Serfdom</i> , Intro & Chs. 1-2	
11	Discussion Day		<i>Commanding Heights</i> Paper
12	Reading Day	<i>Road to Serfdom</i> , Chs. 3-9	
13	Discussion Day		
14	Reading Day	<i>Road to Serfdom</i> , Chs. 10-16	
17	Discussion Day		
18	Reading Day	<i>Competition and Entrepreneurship</i> , Chs. 1-3	
19	Discussion Day		Hayek Paper
20	Reading Day	<i>Competition and Entrepreneurship</i> , Chs. 4-6	
21	Discussion Day		
24			Kirzner Paper

Instructor

Student