Course Syllabus: Economics

Stephen Albrecht

2025-2026

Instructor's Email: salbrecht@northphoenixprep.com

Room: 626 (second period) 523 (sixth period)

Tutoring: By Appointment

Course Description:

The Economics course aims to deepen students' understanding of human nature by exploring human action in a world of scarcity. As in all Great Hearts courses, students study Economics as part of their continual pursuit of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. There is a beauty to the surprisingly orderly patterns of people's dispersed actions that tend to satisfy human wants and needs without any overall direction or planning. However, the discipline of Economics is most naturally suited to explore questions of truth and goodness – the truth of human nature as revealed through actual human choices and the goodness of well-being resulting from social cooperation.

Course Objectives:

This semester-long survey course seeks to introduce students to the "economic way of thinking" through an exploration of foundational concepts in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and the history of economic thought. The economic way of thinking shows that social occurrences are not brought about by vague "economic forces" or relations among things outside man, but rather by the definite values and choices of real individuals. By striving to understand causes and effects of human action, including incentives, trade-offs, and consequences, both intended and unintended, students will discover that aspects of the world around them which previously seemed arbitrary or mysterious become obvious consequences of familiar principles.

Required Materials:

Students will need a copy of the Great Hearts Economics Course Reader.
(This will be provided by Mr. Albrecht on a chapter by chapter basis.)

A notebook (spiral, legal, binder, etc) dedicated solely for Economics.

Pens and/or pencils for notetaking

Students are expected to take notes during class. The first week of class will be devoted to providing students with a review of how to take lecture notes.

Grading:

- **Participation: 30%**

  Student participation includes but is not limited to the following: responding to questions asked during class, asking clarifying questions, completing in-class assignments, contributing to class discussion and seminars, active engagement during lectures and class discussions.

- **Assessments: 40%**

  Formal writing assignments: These are any assignments that will have a corresponding Assignment instruction handout. The basic expectations for academic writing are as followed: typed/printed, 12 pt. Times New Roman Font, double-spaced, paragraph indents and must follow MLA style for citations and sources. **Handwritten formal writing assignments will not be accepted.**

  Quizzes, tests, projects, checks for understanding: Students will complete presentations on the budgeting project (end of quarter 1) and the stock market project (end of quarter 2).

- **Homework: 30%**

  Homework will consist of reading and annotating assigned readings and completing the budgeting project and the stock market project.

Semester breakdown:

- Quarter 1: 45%
- Quarter 2: 45%
- Final Exam/Project: 10%

Open Gradebook:

Assignments will be posted in the gradebook and viewable to parents to assist students in building strong academic habits by turning in homework on time, completing homework with effort and care, being a constructive contributor in class (participation), and by actively seeking to grow in an understanding of the material through assessments. Gradebooks will be viewable following the second week of the quarter.

Note: *The summative grade for the course is determined at the end of an evaluation period by the teacher. The summative grade will include an overall assessment of the students' growth in habits*

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of inquiry, habits of discussion, and growth according to the course syllabus. See the Family Handbook for our philosophy of grading, under the category of Evaluation.

Protocol for Resolving Gradebook Questions:

All assignments are due on the assigned due date; however, I do recognize that life happens. If a student is unable to complete assignments due to unforeseen issues, **it is their responsibility** to communicate that to me prior to the due date. Such communication can be either a brief email, or a face-to-face conversation before 8:20am on the day the assignment is due.

Assignments turned in **one day** late will receive 50% credit; assignments turned in **two or more days late** will receive zero credit.

Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas as your own without giving the original source proper credit.

- **Plagiarism can seem harmless.** For instance, a student forgets to provide a citation for a paraphrase; however, without a proper citation, a paraphrase is in fact plagiarism as it presents another's ideas as your own.

- **Plagiarism can occur because of good intentions**. For example: A student, Jane, shares her work (an essay, or other writing assignment) with a friend she really wants to help, let's call him Bob. Without her knowing it, Bob copies some of Jane's essay and submits it as his own work. Unfortunately, that is plagiarism. The teacher easily discovers the clear similarities in both assignments and applies a consequence to **both** students.

- **Plagiarism can be more blatant**. A student, who is rushed for time might simply copy-and-paste content from an electronic source (like a website) and present it as their own writing. Again, this is easily discovered, and a consequence is applied.

- **Plagiarism is stealing**—it is the theft of ideas and words from someone else without giving them proper credit—and as such will not be tolerated in Economics.

- If a student plagiarizes (see the above examples) **part**, **some,** or **most** of an assignment, a zero will be assigned and will be required to complete a plagiarism assignment for partial credit.

Use of AI:

In the case of all essays and research papers, I will carefully cite all external sources. I will not represent someone else's work as my own, nor use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate any part of my work. I will do my very best to learn from my teachers the clear distinctions between appropriate research and plagiarism, intentional or unintentional.

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Parent Signature Sheet

I agree to work hard, do my best, prepare in advance, and bring my best attitude to class.

I, ________________________, have read and understand this entire syllabus
(Print student's full name)
for Mr. Albrecht's Economics class.

I, ________________________, have read and understand this entire syllabus
(Print parent's full name)
for Mr. Albrecht's Economics class.

______________________________ Date: _____________
(Student's signature)

______________________________ Date: _____________
(Parent's signature)

***Please take special note of Great Heart's policies on use of technology, AI, and plagiarism in the Family Handbook.**

<u>Questions for parents/guardians:</u>

Please share any information that I should know about your student that would help me understand him / her.

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