SYLLABUS

Course Objectives

My primary objective for this course is to show you how economics can help in understanding fisheries and the seafood industry—including fisheries management, fish prices, fish marketing, aquaculture and important current fisheries policy issues. My other objectives are to introduce you to some fundamental principles and tools of economics, to help you learn how to read and evaluate economic studies of fisheries, and to teach you about the Alaska, U.S. and global seafood industries.

Who is this Course For?

This course is designed for anyone interested in commercial fishing, the seafood industry, or fisheries management. In particular, I have designed it for (a) students majoring in fisheries programs; (b) students majoring in any field who have a background or interest in fishing or the seafood interest; (c) people working in fishing, fish processing, fisheries management or other industries related to fish and fish processing.

Do You Need Prior Background in Fisheries or Economics?

No. You don’t need to have any prior education or experience in fisheries or economics. All your really need is to be interested in learning about fisheries and economics. If you already know something about fisheries or economics, some of the course may be easier—but you can still learn a lot.

All Course Materials Are Online

All materials for this course will be posted online. You don’t need to buy anything.
An Entirely Online Course

The course is an internet-based “asynchronous” distance education course. That means:

- You can do the entire course *over the internet*. You don’t need to go anywhere or have any special equipment other than a computer and an internet connection.

- You can do the work *at times that are convenient for you*. Although there are deadlines for some of the assignments, you can do the work on your own schedule—in the middle of the day or the middle of the night, weekdays or weekends.

The course will use the University of Alaska’s “Blackboard” distance education software. All of the readings, videos, homework, and other course materials will be posted online in Blackboard. We’ll have class discussions in Blackboard.

The only things you will not do online the midterm and final exams. You will take these exams either at a University of Alaska campus or somewhere else under the supervision of a proctor.

At the beginning of the semester, after you’ve enrolled in the course, to get started you’ll go to the UAA Computer Services “Blackboard Login” website:

http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/classes/

This site has all the information you’ll need to know about using Blackboard, including how to find out your UAA username and password.

The easiest way to understand how the course works is to get started doing the work. The first homework is designed to teach you how to use Blackboard and how to do the course assignments.

Advantages and Disadvantages of an Online Course

I teach this course online to make it possible for anyone living anywhere to take it—not only regular students but also people working in the fish business, and not only people living in Anchorage but also for people living in other communities, other states and other countries. I also want people to have the flexibility to do the work on their own schedule instead of having to be somewhere to listen or participate at a particular time.

But online courses aren’t an ideal way to learn! We have less direct interaction with each other than if we were in the same room. We don’t get to know each other as well. I can’t necessarily answer your questions immediately.

I encourage you to try to make up for this by participating actively in the online class discussions, calling me up by telephone, and coming by to visit if you’re in Anchorage.
### Course Topics

The table below summarizes the broad topics the course will be covered and the approximate amount of weeks (out of 15 weeks total) we will spend on each topic. All of these are big topics that could easily be the subject of an entire course! My goal in the course is to introduce you to each topic in sufficient detail for you to understand what the topic is about and how economics can help to understand the topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Approximate number of weeks spent on the topic</th>
<th>What the topic is about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting started</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>What the course is about; how to use Blackboard; how to do homework, how the course is graded, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Facts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The most important facts you should know about fish and the fish business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of Economics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>What economics is about and the most important concepts that are the foundation of fish economics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Fisheries</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Economic issues that arise with wild fisheries and the economic implications of different ways of managing wild fisheries. (These topics are traditionally known as fisheries economics.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquaculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Why aquaculture (fish farming) is developing, the factors that affect whether it is successful, its economic implications, and the policy issues associated with regulating aquaculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Seafood Industry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Other industries in the seafood “value chain”: processing, transportation, distribution, retailing and food service, and how they are affected by fisheries management and aquaculture regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>What determines the prices of fish and seafood products in the short-term and the long-term, what determines relative prices in the seafood value chain, how different factors affect fish prices, and why prices change over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The importance of marketing for the fish business, marketing strategies, and new developments in fish marketing such as ecolabeling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Significance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>How the fish business affects the broader economy, and approaches for measuring the economic significance of the fish business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Fisheries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Economic benefits and effects of sport fisheries, and issues associated with managing sport fisheries and allocating fish between sport and commercial fisheries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Topics.</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>Other important topics in fish economics including fish habitat protection, fish trade, and share payment systems for fishing crew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Science and Art of Fish Economics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Practical issues in doing and using fish economics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Tasks

The course will be divided into a variety of tasks. These will include readings, videos and audio recordings, homework, two research assignments, games, discussions, quizzes, exams, and surveys. All materials and instructions for these tasks will be posted in the “Course Materials” folder in Blackboard.
Readings

I am writing a book on *An Introduction to the Economics of Fish*. The book is organized the same way as this course. I’ll include selected chapters from the book as readings for the course.

I’ll also assign a wide variety of other readings, including press articles, academic journal articles, presentations, government publications, economic reports, and websites. Part of my goal is to expose you to a variety of ways in which people write about fish economics and to show you different places and ways you can get information about fish economics.

Everyone enrolled in the course will receive a complementary subscription for the semester to the online seafood industry news service [SeafoodNews.com](http://www.seafoodnews.com). Part of the assignments will be to read news articles posted during the semester which help to illustrate topics covered in the course.

The readings are intended to give you a variety of perspectives on each topic and about fish economics. Some readings will be short, simple and easy to understand. Others may be longer more complicated, and harder to understand. Don’t worry if you don’t understand everything in the readings: you won’t be expected to. I’ll provide clear instructions about what parts you need to read carefully and understand and what parts you can skim or ignore.

All readings will be posted online in the Blackboard folder for the unit. You can read them online or print them out.

Video and Audio Recordings

I will assign some video and audio recordings. Some of these will be on Youtube or other websites and others will be posted in Blackboard.

Homeworks

There will be a number of homework assignments for the course. The homework is the core of this course. The purpose of the homework is to focus your attention on the most important points and to give you practice in using different concepts covered by the course.

All of the information you will need to do the homework will be in the readings or other course materials. For each question, the homework will tell you specifically where in the readings or other materials you can find the answer.

Each homework assignment will be in a “Word” document which you can download to your computer from Blackboard. There is space in the homework document for you to answer each question. After you have filled in the answers, you “upload” the completed assignment back into Blackboard. The first reading for the course will explain how to download and upload homework assignments.
I will post answers for each homework shortly after the homework is due. If you submit homework after the due date, do not use the posted homework answers to do your assignment. If it appears that you are copying answers from posted homework answers, I will grade this as a “less than a good faith effort.”

Don’t ask someone else to do your homework! If someone else does your work you won’t learn from it and you won’t be prepared for the exams. Having someone else do your homework is cheating. The University of Alaska Anchorage policies regarding cheating are stated very clearly in the catalogue. Please don’t make me have to apply those policies.

I encourage you to study together with other students—but your homework answers should be your own. If you have similar answers to a homework assignment because you studied with other students, explain this in the box at the top of the homework where you write your name.

Research Assignments

There will be two “research assignments” for this course: a “store survey” and a “consumer survey.”

For the “store survey” you will visit two stores in your community which sell fish and collect information and the fish products they sell and the prices they charge for them. We’ll compile the information collected by all the students and analyze it for a homework assignment.

For the “consumer survey” you will interview several people you know about how often they eat fish, how much fish they eat, where they buy fish, and what influences what fish they buy. We’ll compile the information collected by all the students and analyze it for a homework assignment.

Neither of these “research assignments” will take very long or be very hard. I think you will find them interesting. It is very important that everyone do these assignments and do them on time! The more information we collect and the more carefully we collect it, the more interesting it will be and the more we can learn from it.

I will post detailed instructions for these research assignments early in the semester. They will be due in the middle of the semester.

Games

In the middle part of the semester, we will play two online “games”: the “Fishing Game” and the “Price Game.”

In the “Fishing Game” you will each be a “fisherman.” Your objective is to make as much game money as possible! You’ll make a series of choices about how much fishing gear to use (which costs you game money) and how much fish to catch (which earns you game money). The goal of the “Fishing Game” is to help you understand how choices of individual fishermen have “feedback effects” on other fishermen and how individual choices affect collective harvests, fish stocks, prices, revenues, costs and profits in a fishery over time.
In the “Prices Game” you will each be either a “fisherman” or a “processor.” Your objective is to make as much game money as possible! You’ll make deals with each other to buy or sell fish. The goal of the “Prices Game” is to help you understand how different factors affect prices.

These two games are fun and effective ways to learn about fish economics. But to work well, they depend critically on students’ active participation! Like any game, they aren’t any fun unless the other players are paying attention and trying!

Your course grade will be based partly on your participation in these games. However, as an extra incentive, there will be extra real cash prizes for the students who earn the most “game money” in each game.

In the middle of the semester, before we start the games, I’ll post detailed instructions for the games in Blackboard. For about three weeks, you may need to log onto Blackboard several times each week to make your game choices.

**Discussions**

There will be class discussions using Blackboard’s “Discussion Board” feature.

The “General Class Discussion” is for asking questions or sharing observations relating to the course. Examples of how you might use this discussion include: (a) asking about how to answer a homework problem or an exam question; (b) commenting on or debating a point in the readings; and (c) commenting on or asking about current fisheries issues. I will try to respond to all questions and comments.

The “Practice and Introductions” discussion is intended to give you practice in using the discussion board and to introduce yourself to other students in the course, as part of the “GETTING STARTED” homework.

The remaining discussions will be about specific readings, topics and policy questions facing the fish business. There are no “right” answers for these discussions. My goal is to help you form your own informed opinions.

**Exams**

There will be proctored midterm and final exams. You will be able to take these exams at any University of Alaska campus somewhere else under the supervision of a proctor that you arrange for. I will post more information online about options for taking exams and arranging for proctors.

During the course, I will post a number of sets of “exam study questions” for different readings and topics. With these exam study questions I will either provide short answers to the questions or information about where you can find the answers.
All of the questions on the midterm and final exams will be based on posted exam study questions! There won’t be any surprises! The questions on the exams won’t necessarily be exactly the same as the exam study questions, but they will be similar. If you study the exam study questions and understand them and can answer them, you can be confident that you will do well on the exams.

If you don’t understand an exam study question, you should ask about it in the General Class Discussion. I will be glad to help explain the answer. My goal is for you to understand all the questions.

**Surveys**

Over the course of the semester, I will ask you to do several kinds of short online surveys. Your answers on surveys will not affect your grade in any way. However, as an incentive to do the surveys, I will give you one point towards your course grade for each survey you complete.

The “pre-test” and “post-test” surveys at the beginning and end of the semester are identical. They will not count towards your grade. The purpose is to help me understand better what students know at the beginning of the semester and how much they learn while taking the course.

The purpose of most of the other surveys is to give me feedback about each of the course units. I will use your answers to help me improve the course for the rest of the semester and for future years.

**How Much Work is this Course?**

My goal is that the amount of work for this course, the level of difficulty of the material, and the grading standards should be similar to those for an on-campus course. You should expect to spend about the same amount of time as you would for an on-campus 200-level course. Note that if you were taking an on-campus course, you would spend about 2 ½ hours per week in class. Thus, you should expect to spend more time working on homework and reading than you would for an on-campus course. In general, I would expect the work to take between 4 and 8 hours per week for most students.

Taking a course online is different from taking it on campus. There are advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage is that you will have much greater flexibility. You can do the work when and where you want. You also have the opportunity for a continuing online discussion with me and with other students.

But you will also have to take more responsibility for your learning. You can’t sit back and listen to lectures: you will have to get most of what you learn by reading. What you get out of this course will directly reflect what you put into it. A lot will depend on the effort you make to do the readings, homework, discussions and games, and to interact with me and with other students in the discussions to share your questions, knowledge, and opinions.
Grading

The grading for this course is based on “points” that you earn over the course of the semester. There will be 1000 possible points. The grading scale is 900-1000 = A, 800-899 = B, 700-799 = C, 600-699 = D, and less than 600 = F. You will be able to keep track of your grades using the “gradebook” feature of Blackboard.

Each homework assignment, research assignment, game, discussion, and exam will have a point value. I will post information about the point values in the “Course Materials” folder in Blackboard. In addition, you will get 1 point for each completed survey.

**Homework and research assignment grading.** Each homework and research assignment will have a point value. I will grade homework as follows: Good faith effort for all questions: 100% of point value. Less than a good faith effort: less than 100% of point value; homework turned in late: 80% of what the grade would have been if the homework had been turned in on time. Homework not turned in: 0% of point value.

What I am looking for in the homework, and what I base homework grading on, is a “good faith effort.” To get full credit for a homework, you don’t have to answer the questions correctly. You just have to show that you tried—that you gave each question some thought and effort. This means that it’s OK to have homework answer like I looked where you said the answer would be on page 17 and I couldn’t find the answer,” or “I don’t understand which formula I’m supposed to use” or “my computer wouldn’t play the Youtube video the question asks about.” My goal in this course is to help you to learn about the economics of fish! My goal is not to waste your time trying to do questions you can’t understand or which I may have worded poorly.

**Discussion grading.** Each discussion (except for the “General Class Discussion) will have a point value. I will grade discussions as follows: Good faith effort to participate in the discussion: 100% of point value. Less than good faith effort to participate in the discussion: less than 100% of point value; No participation in discussion: 0% of point value. By a good faith effort to participate I mean that you show that you thought about the topic, read the previous postings, and tried to share something. I do not expect you to necessarily have profound insights or demonstrate huge knowledge about the topic. I fully expect that students will have widely varying levels of experience with and knowledge of different topics. Many of the discussions will ask for your opinions about different policy issues. There isn’t any “correct” answer to these kinds of questions: my goal is to get you to think about your own opinion. Just make a good-faith effort to participate in the discussion at whatever level you can.

**Game grading.** I will post information about game grading with the game instructions in Blackboard. In general, your grade will be based on participation—we really need everyone to participate or the games don’t work! But I’ll also base the grading partly on how well you (and others) do in the games, to give you an incentive to think and take the games seriously.

**Survey grading.** Doing each survey is worth one point. How you answer surveys will have no effect on your course grade.
Keeping Track of Your Grades

As you begin to submit homework and discussion contributions, I will begin posting grades in Blackboard. You will be able to look at your grades using the Tools/My Grades feature of Blackboard. I will post an announcement once I have begun posting grades. It will usually take me at least several days and sometimes 1-2 weeks to grade homework and discussion contributions.

Due Dates

The homework and research assignments for this course will have due dates. Most assignments will be due on Sundays at 11:59 p.m. (one minute before midnight).

The purpose of the homework due dates is to keep you from falling behind on the work during the semester. However, I realize that people sometimes get sick or have travel or other commitments (including fishing) so they can’t meet homework deadlines that I set.

For this reason, you may, without penalty, change your deadline for submitting any homework assignment as long as you do so in advance of the deadline (sort of the way the IRS lets you file for an extension to file your income tax return after April 15—but you have to file for the extension before April 15!). I will provide instructions in Blackboard about how to change the deadline for a homework assignment. You will need to tell me (a) your reason for changing the deadline; and (b) a deadline which works for you.

In other words, I want you to have flexibility in scheduling your homework for this course in a way that meets your needs (including the needs of students at campuses other than Anchorage that are on different semester schedules). But I don’t want students to let all the work pile up till the end of the semester and then find themselves unable to do it in time—which is why if you can’t meet the deadlines I set I want you to choose and meet deadlines that do work for you.

Scheduling and Taking Exams

This course, like all UAA distance education courses, is administered by the UAA Distance Education Office. Although I write and grade the exams, the Distance Education Services Office administers them. You may take the exams either in Anchorage or at another location under the supervision of a proctor.

All the information you need to know about taking exams can be found on the Distance Education website:

http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/distanceeducation/

Each semester, the Distance Education Office sets a midterm exam week and a final exam week for distance education courses. Information about the exam week dates is posted in the distance education calendar which is posted on the Distance Education website (look on the left side under “Fall Semester/Important Dates.”
Most students who live in Anchorage take their exams on the Saturday of the exam weeks at a location on campus announced by the Distance Education office. However, you can take the exams any day during the exam weeks at the Distance Education office. If you plan to do this, you should telephone the Distance Education Office in advance (at 907-786-4646, option 3) to make sure that they will be open and will have the exam ready for you to take. Be sure to bring an ID card when you go to take your exam!

If you won’t be taking the exams in Anchorage, you need to make arrangements for an exam proctor in advance with the Distance Education Office. Information about how to make exam arrangements and other important information related to taking this course is in the “Distance Education Student Guide.” This document is available online at the Distance Education website. You can also download it directly from:


You are responsible for deciding where and when to take the midterm and final exams, and making any necessary arrangements with the Distance Education Office. If you have any questions about when and where you may take exams, or how to make the arrangements, please contact the Distance Education Services Office at distance@uaa.alaska.edu or 907-786-4646 or toll free at 1-877-633-3888 (for both numbers, choose option #3).

Please do NOT contact me about exam arrangements. I can’t make them for you. You need to contact the distance education office!

Announcements

Whenever you log onto the course in Blackboard, you should check for new announcements on the “Announcements” page (usually this is the page which comes up first). You are responsible for reading all announcements.

Incompletes

I strongly discourage students from requesting grades of “Incomplete.” I am reluctant to give them. I have found that many students who receive grades of incomplete never complete the course, and after a period of time the University automatically changes their grade to an F. However, I realize that circumstances sometimes arise which make it necessary for students to request an incomplete. If you wish to request an incomplete, you should first contact me by e-mail and explain why you are requesting an incomplete. If I decide to give you an incomplete, I will e-mail you an Incomplete Grade Contract which you will need to fill out and send back to me.

About Myself

I am a Professor of Economics at the University of Alaska Anchorage Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER). I grew up in Maryland and received my B.A. in Economics from
Yale University in 1975 and my Ph.D. in Economics from Yale University in 1981. In 1981, I moved to Alaska and have been working in my present job at ISER since that time.

Since 1981, I have been involved in research on the Alaska economy and Alaska resource management and market issues. Since the early 1990s, I have specialized in research on Alaska fisheries markets and management. I have written numerous papers and reports about fisheries topics, many of which are posted on my website: www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/iser/people/knapp.

I have visited fishing, fish farming, and fish processing operations in many parts of Alaska and other states, as well as many other countries including Canada, Chile, Norway, Spain, Iceland, New Zealand, Japan, Russia, China, Vietnam, and Thailand.

**Contacting Me**

Feel free to contact me directly at any time by e-mail or phone.

My e-mail address is: Gunnar.Knapp@uaa.alaska.edu. If you send me an e-mail, always start the “Subject” header with “ECON294.” This is how I will know the message is from a student in this course. I receive hundreds of e-mail messages each week, many of them spam. If you neglect to write “ECON294” in the subject header, I may delete your message without reading it.

My work telephone number is 907-786-7717. If I am not in, please leave a detailed message. Tell me what you are calling about, any questions you may have, and how I can reach you.

You are welcome to drop by my office for a visit. My office is located off-campus at the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), on the fifth floor of the Diplomacy Building. The Diplomacy Building is located at 4500 Diplomacy Drive, off of Tudor Road near the Alaska Native Medical Center. (Detailed directions for how to find the Diplomacy Building are posted on my web site.) It is best to call in advance to confirm that I will be there. I will be traveling out of state several times during the semester, and I often work out of my home, particularly in the mornings. Every morning, I try to record a voice-mail announcement about when I will be in the office and how to reach me if I am not in the office.

There are three reasons for which you should NOT contact me directly:

- **If you are having problems with your computer or with Blackboard, don’t contact me!** Contact the Computer Services “Call Center” at 907-786-4646 or callcenter@uaa.alaska.edu. They will be much more helpful than I can be! I know a lot about fisheries economics. I know very little about computers and Blackboard—so you will be a lot better off asking the people who do.

- **If you have questions about how or where you can take an exam, don’t contact me!** Contact the Distance Education Services office at 907-786-4646 or 1-877-633-3888 (toll free long distance) (select phone option 3) or distance@uaa.alaska.edu. They administer the exams and they are the ones who can help you.
• If you want to ask me about something for which my answer is likely to be of interest to other students, don’t contact me directly! Instead, use the class discussion. For example, if you want to ask how to do a homework question, comment on a reading, or debate my interpretation of a particular topic, you should do so in the class discussion.

Support for the Development of this Course

Support for the development of this course was provided by the Icicle Fisheries Fund, which was established by a generous grant from Icicle Seafoods to the University of Alaska Anchorage. The long-term purpose of the fund is to strengthen the capacity of the Institute of Social and Economic Research to engage in research and instruction on Alaska’s fishing industry and Alaska’s seafood markets. Short-term priorities are to support development of expanded instruction about the fishing industry and seafood markets, and to support active involvement of students in research about Alaska’s fishing industry and Alaska’s seafood markets.

Although the Icicle Fisheries Fund provided support for the development of this course, Icicle Seafoods has no involvement in the design of this course or how I am teaching it. All decisions about the course are entirely my own.

Selected University Calendar Information for Fall 2011

Below is selected information from the UAA fall semester 2011 calendar which is relevant to this class.

August 29. Instruction begins; Add/drop period begins

September 6. Start of requirement for faculty approval to add classes

September 9. Payment deadline; Deadline for 100 percent tuition and fees refund; Add/drop deadline; Credit/no credit deadline;

September 12. Credit-to-audit period begins; requires faculty signature; Withdrawal period begins online; $125 late payment fee assessed

October 17-22. Midterm exams can be taken at Distance Education regular proctored sites or at other locations from other proctors by special appointment during this week

October 22. Midterm exam open testing (no appointment needed) on the UAA Anchorage campus in the Social Sciences Building lobby, 9:00am-5:00pm. Bring a photo ID!

November 2. $175 late payment fee assessed

November 18. Credit-to-audit deadline; Withdrawal deadline.

December 5-10. Distance Education Final testing week.
**December 5-10.** Final exams can be taken at Distance Education regular proctored sites or at other locations from other proctors by special appointment during this week.

**December 10.** Final exam open testing (no appointment needed) on the UAA Anchorage campus in the Social Sciences Bulding lobby, 9:00am-5:00pm. Bring a photo ID!

*Note: Some course work may be assigned and/or due after the final exam. This is because distance education final exams are scheduled one week before the end of regular on-campus classes and the start of regular final exams. The last week of the semester, after the final exam, is needed to cover all the material for a full 15-week class.*

**December 22.** Grades available on UAOnline.