EcoEnt 312: Economics of Technology

Dr. Albert Link, Virginia Batte Phillips Distinguished Professor
Spring 2020
Tu, Th: 9:30am – 10:45am
Bryan 104

Description of the Course

• This is an economics/entrepreneurship course. The entrepreneurship elements reflect the course’s focus on entrepreneurial dimensions reflected in current U.S. technology and innovation policy. If one views entrepreneurship in terms of a person or a firm perceiving an opportunity and acting on that opportunity, then it follows that the public sector can as well be entrepreneurial in its development of policy—technology and innovation policy in our case.
• The elements of economics stressed in this class related to “market failures” and how those failures have brought about a less than socially optimal level funding – R&D funding – for the development of new technology.
• In this course we will focus primarily on the economics of U.S. technology and innovation policy with an eye toward identifying new public sector opportunities for providing incentives for firms—entrepreneurial firms as well as traditional firms—to develop new technology and to bring it to market (an innovation is a technology put in use).
• Please see the course syllabus on CANVAS in Files.

Learning Objectives

• Understand the economics/entrepreneurial foundations of U.S. technology and innovation policy
• Understand the social implications of U.S. technology and innovation policy
• Understand the relationship between public sector entrepreneurship and the policy focus of U.S. technology and innovation policy
• Be aware of the international dimensions of U.S. technology and innovation policy

Lectures and Online Learning Modules

• The Department of Economics is moving toward selected graduate and undergraduate classes being taught online. This course will be taught as an online course beginning in Spring 2021. To help with this transition, there will be online modules of this course throughout the semester. I have attempted to forecast factors that require me to be out of town (generally in DC), and I have built these obligations into the dates for the online assignments as much as possible. Because the online modules are, in a sense, experimental, I would very much appreciate one-on-one feedback and suggestions for improvements.
• The lecture portion of the class will be reflected through PowerPoint presentations. All PowerPoint lectures will be placed on CANVAS in Files after the class in which the lecture is given.

• A fluid class calendar is also on CANVAS in Files. It will change during the semester due to unforeseen circumstances.

• All readings are on CANVAS in Files.

Grading

• 2 in-class exams – 25 points each
  – If you choose not to take the first in-class exam, or if you miss the first exam for any reason at all, your online final exam will be valued at 45 points (25 points + 20 points). There is absolutely no exception to this policy.
  – If you take the first in-class exam but choose not to take the second in-class exam, or if you miss the second in-class exam for any reason at all, your online final exam will be valued at 45 points. There is absolutely no exception to this policy.
  – If you choose not to take either of the in-class exams, or if you miss them both for any reason at all, your online final exam will be valued at 70 points. There is absolutely no exception to this policy.

• Online modules throughout the semester – 6 assignments valued at 5 points each = 30 points. Follow carefully the online assignment format. Late online written assignments will be not be accepted; assignments that do not follow the written assignment format will automatically lose 1 point. There is absolutely no exception to this policy.

• Online final exam (due not later than 12:00 noon on May 5) – 20 points

• Grading is on a 10-point scale with +/- at 2-point intervals (88-89 = B+; 80-81 = B-)

• Illustration of grading:

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Class Expectations

• I expect that you be in class on time (with your cell phone off) and prepared to participate in the class discussion

• You should expect that I am in class on time (with my cell phone off) and prepared to deliver an organized lecture and to be receptive to questions from you

• You should also expect that the in-class exams and final exam will be fair and will reflect the important points made through the in-class lectures and online modules.
Office Hours
• Bryan 461
• The best and most efficient way to contact me with questions or to arrange an office appointment is by email: anlink@uncg.edu. Please put EcoEnt 312 in the subject line to avoid the email from going into SPAM.
• PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT ME THROUGH CANVAS.
• I am generally in my office from 8:45AM to 9:30am on Tu and Th, but I will accommodate your schedule.

UNCG Honor Code
• Please familiarize yourself with the University honor code. http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/

Faculty and Student Guidelines
• Please familiarize yourself with the Bryan School’s Faculty and Student Guidelines. These guidelines establish principles and expectations for the administration, faculty, staff, and students of the Bryan School of Business and Economics. http://bryan.uncg.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Faculty-and-Student-Guidelines-2018-2019.pdf