

*A course in which I learned a lot...*

## The secret of my success: was it the textbook or the news?

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I am a student in semester five, majoring in Information Systems and Technology Management (College of Business Sciences & College of Information Technology). My favorite course was Macroeconomics. I have finished this course carrying in my heart a very nice memories . In this course, we didn't worry about grades: more important for us were the knowledge we would get and the information that would benefit us for our entire lives. This course was taught by Dr. Declan McCrohan, Assistant Professor, College of Business Science; the course was very informative and the professor was very knowledgeable and helpful. I took the course because it is a course in my curriculum plan that I have to take in order to complete my credit hours to graduate.

This course introduced us to the tools necessary for macroeconomic thinking and analyzing, and gave us possible ways to solve economic problems. We studied macroeconomic policy and its goals, unemployment and the business cycle; and we also learned the meaning of money and monetary policy. Inflation was an important issue to understand in this course, including its causes and effects and how to solve the problem. We studied the theory of Absolute Advantage and Comparative Advantage and how it is related to international trade. Other topics included tariffs and their effects on consumers, producers and the government; the effect of international trade on importing and exporting countries; and capital account outflows and inflows.

I learnt many important things in this course. Regarding the subject matter, the course allowed us to develop the analytical skills necessary to question and analyze the choices made by individuals. Personally speaking, it provided me with skills of economic analysis that will be relevant for my studies and my life. The course opened a gate in front of me to look at many different resources in order to know what is going on in the economic world. We didn't depend just on the textbook, but we learned also from CNBC: we returned to this channel or the CNBC website whenever we had exams, assignments and projects. Knowing what is going on in the world was more important than knowing just the theories in the book, because we had to practice the economic theories on what is happening in developed and developing countries. The course also introduced us to famous people in this subject area, and we started to discuss the accomplishments of Ben Bernanke (the chairman of the American Central Bank) with other students and teachers. We started to talk about this course with other students who have not taken this course yet, and described how important this subject is and how helpful it is in order to be able to discuss economic issues happening around us.

Many things helped me to learn in this course. The teacher gave us the key points which allowed us to know how to study this course. At the beginning of each class he would ask us questions about what was going on in the news: by doing this he supports the students to read the economic news every day. Sometimes we used to review the economic news before the class and leave the textbook. Also, he always connected the subject with recent economic issues that happened in the world; and he always wrote on the board a list of important websites that may help us to know the subject very well. In the exams he would bring an economic issue and ask us to practice what we were studying in the course

with this issue: this pushed all of us to know the subject very well and to improve our general knowledge. He always reviewed the lesson and asks questions; and he allowed us individual discussion in the class, so that each student could talk and express her thoughts with him. He often used new techniques to present the theory, like showing pictures, presenting graphs and generally making the lessons more attractive: sometimes the class became full of lines, graphs, curves and tables.

I benefited a lot from doing the course projects and presentations. The teacher believes that doing the course projects is the best way to learn information and by doing so you will not forget it as long as you live. His projects are unique: in my whole time in Zayed University I have never seen projects done with this approach: a very helpful approach that allows you to understand the subject very well even if you didn't get it in the class the first time. Dr. McCrohan's approach is that the project should involve:

- working in a team.
- creating your own data to analyze.
- studying your data and thinking.
- reporting your observations and writing everything, regardless of wrong or right.
- searching for facts.
- drawing your own graphs and getting graphs that may help you in your studies from different resources.
- including your own opinions and suggestions.
- drafting and discussing the assignment with the teacher.
- understanding and correcting any mistakes yourself.

By doing this, the information really will stick in your mind forever! And by doing this, you can feel that you are a leader now, and what you do should be perfect in order to provide your community and the world with your solutions and ideas, because these may improve the societies or harm them depending on your actions. So, I learned how to be an independent person with the responsibility to act in a positive way by doing the missions. Of course the teacher provided us with guidelines for each task because he doesn't want the students to be lost, and everything with him is step by step. You follow the teacher's guidelines; do the course projects, assignments and homework; do your best and read economic news as much as you can; think, analyze and discuss; then you will be able to excel in the course and in your life as well. I noticed that the teacher was always pleased with the students' output, especially if they came with different and meaningful ideas or solutions for a real economic problem and applied these in the exam. The teacher is definitely very knowledgeable and knows very well how to present the subject with effective explanations.

The course challenged us in a very positive way: it was a great course to arrange or strengthen the whole group. This course required cooperation and teamwork from each member of the group to accomplish the activities. We always had to highlight the strengths and obligations of group members and the advantages of working in a team. We didn't face serious difficulties as if we had any question or struggle at any point the teacher was willing to help during his office hours and to respond to our questions in Blackboard and Groupwise. He pushed the students to do their best, and we were always able to achieve it. In the end we were able to gain many skills like being on time, self-confidence, individual achievement and trust within a team environment. Each student would discuss what she faced with her partner and others would benefit by learning how she got over challenges while working on the projects and assignments. By doing this, we could do many creative projects and we could

produce something meaningful. The teacher made this more flexible for us by giving students the opportunity to choose their team.

This course taught me how to contribute to the economic development of the United Arab Emirates in the future. In addition, I gained many skills that will definitely help me to be a good leader in the future. The course taught me how important it is to know about other people's news to benefit from their experiences whether they are negative or positive. Now I can think globally, analyze things internationally and create helpful solutions for many economic problems. I have the ability to discuss many economic issues with others and I have now the full background about macroeconomics that may help me in the future to create a good business environment. I have built a good understanding of business websites and channels, so I am more familiar with all these. I have become more interested in global issues like poverty, the falling prices of housing in many parts of the world, increases in the price of goods and economic globalization. I have become more aware of the Great Depression that happened after World War One, and how the global economy recovered from it. Hopefully, I will apply all that I have learnt in this course in my future job, to achieve success and to develop my country as well as pushing my community towards prosperity.