Purpose and theme:

The purpose of this course is to discuss some of the issues at the foundations of economics as a social science. It will cover topics like the following (the numbers behind the titles refer to the reading list):

- Economics as moral philosophy (1, 13, 15, 20).
- Welfare economics and political economy (2, 3, 4).
- Methodological and normative individualism (14, 22).
- Subjectivism and opportunity costs (9, 12, 30).
- Utilitarianism and contractarianism (5, 16, 18, 19, 24).
- Agreement in exchange, in politics and in science (10, 29).
- Liberty, voluntariness and efficiency (7, 26).
- Justice as fairness and distributive justice (6, 11, 21, 23, 24).
- Homo economicus, rational choice and rule-following (8, 25, 27).
- Economics and morality (17, 19, 28).

Organization:

The constituting meeting for this course will be held on January 23, 7:20 p.m., in room R 2600. The core part of this course will be taught during the two-weeks period February 19 through March 2 in the library of the Center for Study of Public Choice, George's Hall, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (daily Mon. through Fri.).

Grading:

Grades will be determined on daily (one page) protocols during the 'core-period' and a longer (15-20 pages) paper on a subject to be chosen between student and instructor.

Reading List:

(A set of xerox-copies of the following titles will be available from Kinko's Copies, University Mall).


(14) "The Foundations for Normative Individualism" mimeographed, Center for Study of Public Choice.


Readings suggested for further study:


