

Econ 101: Enlightenment, Fall 2019

Northwestern University, 2019 Fall, Mon/Wed 3:30 - 4:50 am; Annenberg G30

Professor Scott Ogawa (sogawa@northwestern.edu)

Description

We will read Steven Pinker's *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*. We will discuss reason, science, humanism, and progress. (We will also read individual chapters from other selected works.)

Evaluation

- Class participation and in-class presentation (10%)
- Quizzes and pre-class assignments (10%)
- In-class writing assignments (10%)
- Three writing assignments (35%)
- Final paper (35%)

Expectations

Class attendance is required and active participation is expected. Throughout the quarter you will be given reading assignments. Please make sure these are complete when you get to class and that you are willing and able to contribute to a discussion. If you cannot meet any of these expectations then please send me an email in advance.

Office Hours

There are no official office hours for this class but my door is always open: Just send me an email to set up a time to meet. Also, we will have scheduled meetings to discuss your papers.

Assignments (due at the start of class on Monday)

If one of these due dates looks problematic, let me know. If you email at least three full days in advance, you can push the due date back (subject to approval). You can do this exactly once during the quarter.

- Assignment 1 due Monday, Oct 7 (Start of third week of school)
- Assignment 2 due Monday, Nov 4 (Monday after drop deadline)
- Assignment 3 due Monday, Nov 25 (Week of Thanksgiving)
- Final Paper due 3:00 pm, Friday, Dec 13 (Scheduled final exam)

Reading

In addition to *Enlightenment Now*, we may read individual chapters from the following books:

- *The Sense of Style*, Steven Pinker
- *The Righteous Mind*, Jonathan Haidt
- *Thinking Fast and Slow*, Daniel Kahneman
- *The Selfish Gene*, Richard Dawkins
- *Collapse*, Jared Diamond
- *New Ideas from Dead Economists*, Todd Buchholz
- *Why the West Rules--For Now*, Ian Morris
- *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, Robert Gordon