

Curriculum Development  
In the Fairfield Public Schools

**FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

**ECONOMICS**

Board of Education Approved 03/25/2008

# **ECONOMICS**

## **Social Studies Department Scope and Sequence**

This one-semester elective is intended for students with strong interests in business, entrepreneurship, personal financial planning and stock market investing, competing economic systems, and international trade. Economics is open to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Economics is a one-semester, one-credit elective course. The prerequisite for this course is the successful completion of required social studies courses in Highlights of Western Civilization, Justice in America, and Modern Global Studies.

## **Statement of Purpose**

Economics is the study of the choices people make in an effort to satisfy their wants and needs when time and resources are scarce. As a social science it is concerned with the production, distribution, and consumption of scarce resources among individuals, societies, and nations. An understanding of these difficult choices helps students better understand their own current and future financial situations as well as our nation's economic history.

## **Design and Description**

This course in Economics deals with fundamental economic theories, methods, and modes of expression. It introduces students to laws of demand, supply, production possibilities, diminishing returns, and the traditional graphs which express these concepts. It teaches the specialized vocabulary of financial planners and investors such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and deferred income funds within the context of the Federal Reserve System and stock and bond trading. It explores the theories of Adam Smith and Karl Marx as well as the methods and successes of American entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates and Oprah Winfrey.

## **Course Goals**

Students should:

- identify and explain how scarcity requires individual, business, and government to make choices about the goods and services they use.
- understand and explain how supply and demand influence economic systems.
- evaluate the role and function of fiscal and monetary policies.
- analyze and utilize the tools of financial markets and institutions in today's economy.

## **Essential Questions**

- How do limited resources affect choices by individuals, households, business and governments? (CT)
- How do different economic systems affect the allocation of goods and services? (CT)
- How does economic interdependence affect the economic lives of people? (CT)

## **Units of Instruction Outline**

- I. Fundamental Economic Concepts
- II. The Microeconomics
- III. The Employment, Labor, and Wages
- IV. The Federal Reserve System and Monetary Policy .
- V. The Financial Investments, Markets, and Equities
- VI. Personal Financial Investing and Planning

## VII. International Trade and Developing Countries

### **Connecticut Social Studies Standards**

Connecticut State Standards are met in the following areas:

**CCS13: *Limited Resources***

**CCS14: *Economic Systems***

**CCS15: *Economic Interdependence***

### **Course Materials**

#### **Main Text**

Clayton, Gary. Economics: Principles and Practices. New York: Glencoe, 2003.

#### **Main Supplementary Texts**

Students are encouraged to read a supplementary book as part of a research project, such as Eric Schlosser's Fast Food Nation.

### **Information and Technology Standards (to be added)**

# **UNITS OF STUDY**

## **I. Fundamental Economic Concepts**

### **Core Topics**

- Scarcity & resources
- Consumers & producers
- Goods & services
- Factors of production
- Production possibilities
- Utility
- Trade off
- Adam Smith & capitalism
- Karl Marx & communism
- Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

### **Essential Question**

How do different economic systems affect the allocation of goods and services? (CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 14.11-12.1 will evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

### **Unit Objective**

Students will be able to:

- identify and apply fundamental economic concepts to local, national, and international situations.

### **Focus Questions**

- What are fundamental economic concepts?
- What are the similarities and differences between capitalism and communism?

### **Sample Assessment**

Capitalism vs. Communism Chart

### **Pacing**

1-2 weeks

## **II. Microeconomics**

### **Core Topics**

- Demand
- Supply
- Favorable and unfavorable shifts in demand and supply
- Market equilibrium
- Elasticity
- Surplus
- Shortage
- Price floor
- Price ceiling

### **Essential Questions**

- How do limited resources affect choices by individuals, households, business and governments? (CT)
- How do different economic systems affect the allocation of goods and services? (CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 13.11-12.1 analyze the impact of economic choices on the allocation of scarce resources.
- 14.9-10.1 identify and explain the factors that determine and cause changes in demand, supply and the market-clearing (equilibrium) price.

### **Unit Objective**

Students will be able to:

- create, explain, and interpret graphs depicting microeconomic situations.

### **Focus Question**

What is microeconomics?

### **Suggested Activity**

- Graphs on supply, demand, surplus and shortage

### **Sample Assessment**

Diminishing Returns Graph

### **Pacing**

5-6 weeks

### **III. Employment, Labor, and Wages**

#### **Core Topics**

- Labor
- Management
- Union objectives
- Union history
- The Wagner Act
- Minimum wage
- Collective bargaining
- Arbitration, strike

#### **Essential Questions**

- How do limited resources affect choices by individuals, households, business and governments? (CT)
- How do different economic systems affect the allocation of goods and services? (CT)

#### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 13.11-12.1 analyze the impact of economic choices on the allocation of scarce resources
- 14.11-12.4 analyze the impact of specific government actions in the economy on different groups, including consumers, employees and businesses

#### **Unit Objective**

Students will be able to:

- analyze major employment, labor, and wage issues from different points of view.

#### **Focus Question**

What are major employment, labor, and wage issues?

#### **Suggested Activity**

- Interviews on labor unions

#### **Sample Assessment**

Persuasive Essay on Labor Unions

#### **Pacing**

3-4 weeks

## **IV. The Federal Reserve System and Monetary Policy**

### **Core Topics**

- Federal Reserve System
- Monetary policy
- Money supply
- Open market operations
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
- Money as a medium of exchange
- History of money

### **Essential Question**

How do different economic systems affect the allocation of goods and services? (CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 14.11-12.4 explain reasons for government action in the economy, including providing public goods and services, maintaining competition, redistributing income, promoting employment, stabilizing prices and sustaining reasonable rates of economic growth.
- 14.11-12.5 analyze the impact of specific government actions in the economy on different groups, including consumers, employees and businesses.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- describe the Federal Reserve System.
- examine the role of the Federal Reserve System as the manager of the country's money supply.
- describe how the Federal Reserve System uses monetary policy to regulate the economy.

### **Focus Question**

How does the Federal Reserve System use monetary policy to regulate the economy?

### **Suggested Activity**

- Field trip to the Federal Reserve Bank of Manhattan

### **Suggested Materials**

- Handout on Savings

### **Sample Assessment**

Federal Reserve System Chart

### **Pacing**

1 week

## **V. Financial Investments, Markets, and Equities**

### **Core Topics**

- Stocks
- Bonds
- Mutual funds
- New York Stock Exchange
- The relationship between risk and return and how this applies to various financial investments

### **Essential Question**

How do limited resources affect choices by individuals, households, business and governments?  
(CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 13.11-12.1 analyze the impact of economic choices on the allocation of scarce resources.
- 13.11-12.2 define, defend and predict how the use of specific resources may impact the future.
- 13.11-12.3 analyze how market forces and government regulation impact the use of resources.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of how financial investments, markets, and equities work.
- describe investments in financial assets, equities, and markets in the United States.
- explain the major characteristics of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.

### **Focus Question**

How do financial investments, markets, and equities work?

### **Sample Assessment**

Financial Investments Risk vs. Return Graph

### **Pacing**

2-3 weeks

## **VI. Personal Financial Investing and Planning**

### **Core Topics**

- Analyzing stocks
- Bonds and mutual funds
- Morningstar
- Accessing and analyzing current information on the Internet
- Roth IRA
- Deferred income plans
- Compound interest

### **Essential Question**

How do limited resources affect choices by individuals, households, business and governments?  
(CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 13.11-12.1 analyze the impact of economic choices on the allocation of scarce resources.
- 13.11-12.2 define, defend and predict how the use of specific resources may impact the future.
- 13.11-12.3 analyze how market forces and government regulation impact the use of resources.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- apply major tools for long-term personal financial investing and planning.
- analyze the relationship between risk and return.
- examine the influence of liquidity requirements in determining appropriate financial investments and savings tools.
- describe deferred income plans and various financial instruments available in the United States to individuals seeking to build retirement savings.

### **Focus Question**

What are major tools for long-range personal financial investing and planning?

### **Suggested Activities**

- Money for Life Internet Lesson
- Personal Budget
- Planning a trip
- Career planning
- Interview skills

### **Suggested Materials**

- Money for Life Internet resources
- Guest speaker – financial planner

### **Sample Assessments**

- Financial Investments Case Study Brochure
- Presentation on research assignment

### **Pacing**

3-4 weeks

## **VII. International Trade and Developing Countries**

### **Core Topics**

- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
- North American Free Trade Agreement
- The European Union
- Protectionism
- Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930
- Developing countries

### **Essential Question**

How does economic interdependence affect the economic lives of people? (CT)

### **Connecticut Performance Standards (CCS)**

Students will:

- 15.9-10.1 illustrate the international differences in resources, productivity and prices that are a basis for international trade.
- 15.9-10.2 explain that a nation has a comparative advantage when it can produce a product at a lower opportunity cost than its trading partner.
- 15.11-12.1 evaluate the effects of national policies (e.g., on trade, immigration and foreign investments, as well as fiscal and monetary policies) on the international exchange of goods, services and investments.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able:

- describe how international trade influences developing countries and creates global interdependency.
- examine the interdependent nature of trade and foreign exchange among nations.
- analyze the problems of economically developing countries.

### **Focus Question**

How does international trade influence developing countries and create global interdependency?

### **Suggested Activities**

- Sheff vs. O'Neill presentation
- Discussion on protectionist policies

### **Suggested Materials**

- Sheff vs. O'Neill information

### **Sample Assessments**

- Free Trade Chart
- Predict the probability of world peace from an economist's point of view.

### **Pacing**

1-2 weeks