

Syllabus

PPHA 39720:

Public Policy and Creative Sectors

Lecture: TR 8:00-9:20am Keller Center 0010

Professor Carolyn M. Sloane

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Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00-1:00 pm via Big Blue Button

Course Materials:

- (1) Course slides posted weekly on Canvas
- (2) *Rockonomics* by Alan B. Krueger, *Thinking in Sync: A Primer on the Mind of a Music Supervisor* by Amanda Krieg Thomas, *Her Country* by Marissa R. Moss
- (3) Additional readings posted weekly in Canvas
- (4) Weekly course email message

Course Objective:

This course delves into major topics in public policy through the lens of the music industry and other creative sectors. We will use an applied microeconomist's toolbox to explore issues such as intellectual property protection, collective bargaining, music royalties in a digital age, consolidation, proposed regulations to live events pricing and more. As part of this class, we will engage in conversations with professionals working in creative sectors.

Specifically, the course is divided into 9 major topics spread over the course of 9 weeks:

Topic (1): **Wanna Be Startin' Something: Preamble & Prerequisites:** As we will discuss markets in many contexts this quarter, we begin the quarter with a basic review of market principles: supply, demand, equilibrium, surplus, and elasticities. We also establish some empirical facts about creative sectors by looking at long-term trends in revenue and employment.

*This week's thematic song is written and performed by Michael Jackson.

Topic (2) **Something Beautiful: Is the market providing enough art?** This week we focus on the topic of externalities: artists and other creatives generate positive spillovers that are not fully internalized by the artist; thus, there is an under provision of art in a market economy. We are going to look at government actions around the world to encourage investment in the arts. We will ask: What makes a place a great writing/ music/ movie city?

*This week's thematic song is written by Nathaniel Rinehart and William Rinehart, performed by Nathaniel Rateliff.

Topic (3) **Ten Year Town: The Starving Artist, Working Creative, and the Super Star:** In the first part of the week, we delve into data and ask: who are professional creatives? What are the main occupations? How much do the bottom/median/top creatives earn annually? What factors influence the decision to become a professional creative? How has the composition of professional creatives changed over time? From a theory perspective, we will explore the theme of super star markets to try to understand the nature of earnings disparities within creative sectors.

*This week's thematic song is written by Brandy Clark and Hailey Whitters, performed by Hailey Whitters.

Topic (4) **Everything is Free: Technological Change and Intellectual Property-** In the past decades, we have seen frequent and seismic technological disruption in the magazine and book publishing sectors as they have moved from print to digital delivery. What are the phases of technological change in the magazine and book publishing sectors? Has productivity increased? How have these changes impacted or been impacted by market structure? How have these changes affected both new entrants and incumbents? What legal and market protections are in place to protect intellectual property? Are those protections adequate?

*This week's thematic song is written by Gillian Howard Welch and David Todd Rawlings, performed by Gillian Welch.

Topic (5) **Nosebleeds: Market Structure-** A trend we have seen in the greater economy is consolidation. The creative sectors are no exception. This week, we explore the competitive structures of the recording/touring/ merchandising/sponsorship parts of the music industry. What are the barriers to entry for new artists? Are current market structures efficient? What enforcement tools do governments have to address markets with a lack of competition?

*This week's thematic song is written by Amanda Lee Duffy, Dylan Bauld and Kristine Flaherty, performed by Misterwives.

Topic (6) **Union Maid: Collective Bargaining** – The summer of 2023 may be thought in some circles of labor economists as “Hot Union Summer.” This week, we look at collective bargaining in the television and motion picture industries. We will start with the theory of collective bargaining and think about why unions form, what they want, and what they can bargain on. We will test these ideas in the context of the cases of the WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes.

*This week's thematic song is written by Woody Guthrie, performed by Old Crow Medicine Show.

Topic (7) **Git Paid: Paying for an Idea:** A song is partly an idea and partly a performance of an idea. Yet, when we buy a record or stream a song, we do not separate our consumption of the idea from the performance. How are the idea and performance sides of a song compensated? It is impossible to discuss this topic without discussing public policy. In fact, the current system for royalty splits for songwriters and performers in the U.S. has its roots in Congressional intervention in the music industry in the days of the player piano! We trace the history of music royalties over time, discuss the Music Modernization Act, and compare how royalties are paid in radio, musical physicals and streaming compared to how royalties are paid in the sync market.

*This week's thematic song is written by Richard Edwards, performed by Richard Edwards.

Topic (8) **Black Like Me: Discrimination:** How have the television and movie industries evolved to address discriminatory practices? What legal protections are in place to prevent and address workplace discrimination? Are there opportunities for legal or market-based reforms? Specifically, we explore the Times Up movement in Hollywood.

*This week's thematic song is written by Nathan Paul Chapman, Mickey Guyton, Emma Davidson-Dillon, Fraser James Eliot Churchill, performed by Mickey Guyton.

Topic (9) **Dinner Party: The Artist Goes to Washington-** The music, movie, and publishing sectors are relatively small in economic importance but loom large when it comes to influencing culture, public opinion, and even politics. This week we talk about signaling (how our speech, behavior and investments can provide information) and special interest group theory (what it takes to effectively organize a special interest group, what it takes to effectively influence policy as a special interest group). We will discuss protest art in music, television and motion pictures, and publishing industries. We will analyze the case of the Save Our Stages legislation.

*This week's thematic song is written by Kamasi Washington, Michael E. Neill, Patrick Douthit, Robert Glasper, and Terrace Martin, performed by Freeze Tag (featuring Phœnix).

How our course works:

1. Lecture will be in person every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00-9:20 am Central in Keller 0010. You are expected to attend every lecture.
2. Unlike most of the courses you will take at UChicago, a big part of this course is introducing you to people who work in the industries we are studying! As such, I have invited guest speakers to visit our class this quarter. Some of those visits will happen in person and some of those visits will happen over Zoom. You are expected to formulate questions for our speakers and to be active participants in the conversation. **Attendance is mandatory when guest speakers visit our class.**
3. On Wednesdays from 12:00-1:00pm Central, we will convene together for my office hours. My office hours are unstructured conversations as a group to talk about questions from the lecture, questions about the weekly quiz, etc. You can also schedule a meeting with me by appointment. Attendance is not required but will greatly help your progress and engagement in the course. **You will access these sessions through Big Blue Button links found in Canvas.**
4. Reading for this class is **essential**. The course readings come in many forms: the required textbooks, podcasts, YouTube videos, and academic articles.
5. The lecture material for this course is posted as slides (found in the Modules on Canvas). **These slides are by no means a substitute for attending class.**

Course Grading

Here is a breakdown of the grading for the course

70% Quizzes (You will take a quiz every week of the quarter—that's 9 total quizzes. I will drop your 2 lowest quiz grades.)

30% Final Exam

There will be 9 online quizzes during the quarter—one quiz every week. Quizzes are accessed through Canvas. They are timed, open book and must be completed by the due date. Quizzes count equally. Of the 9 quizzes, I will only count the grade on the highest 7. That means you have 2 quiz grades that can be dropped. **If you attend all the guest speaker presentations, I will drop an additional quiz grade (average your top 6 scores instead of your top 7 scores).**

The reason I am allowing any quiz to be dropped is because I know sometimes work, technology and life can be unpredictable. In practice, this means that you do not need to send me excuses about why you missed a quiz or performed poorly on a quiz. I never allow re-takes. Missed quizzes count as a 0. Because my policy is so generous, we never need to negotiate about quizzes.

This also means that if you register late for the course, you will not have a chance to re-take Quiz 1—it will count as a 0 and will be one of your dropped quiz grades.

The Final Exam is a take home that is due by 11pm Central on March 7. **If you do not take the final exam, you will fail the course.**

Timing of the Assignments/Quizzes/Exams

Quiz 1:	Available January 1. Due at 5pm Central on January 7
Quiz 2:	Available January 8. Due at 5pm Central on January 14
Quiz 3:	Available January 15. Due at 5pm Central on January 21
Quiz 4:	Available January 22. Due at 5pm Central on January 28
Quiz 5:	Available January 29. Due at 5pm Central on February 4
Quiz 6:	Available February 5. Due at 5pm Central on February 11
Quiz 7:	Available February 12. Due at 5pm Central on February 18
Quiz 8:	Available February 19. Due at 5pm Central on February 25
Quiz 9:	Available February 26. Due at 5pm Central on March 3

Final Exam: Available March 5. **Due at 11pm Central on March 7.**

Individual study and success in this course

In this course, I suggest students dedicate about 3 hours a week to individual study. This includes reviewing lecture notes, **doing the readings**, discussing lecture content with classmates in an informal setting, and jotting down questions about course material to ask in lecture. This time will help you prepare for the weekly quizzes and help you get the most out of the course. Every week, I send a weekly course email message with tips for how to direct your time outside the classroom that week including suggestions for the materials to review for the weekly quiz.

Course communication policy:

Every Sunday after 5pm, I send a weekly course email message with tips for how to direct your time outside the classroom that week including suggestions for the materials to review for the weekly quiz and assignment. The instructor will respond to individual emails once a week: on Mondays.

Ethical Academic Conduct:

<https://college.uchicago.edu/student-services/academic-integrity-student-conduct>

By taking this course, you explicitly pledge your honor that you will not cheat (or help others to cheat) in any way on the quizzes, assignments, and exams. Cheating includes the use of artificial intelligence such as Chat GPT and similar products to answer or draft responses for quiz, assignment, or exam questions. If you are in doubt about whether a behavior violates the course ethics guidelines, contact Professor Sloane for clarification.

Copyrights and Course Content (Use of Course Hero and similar websites):

This course is a work of original authorship. All course materials (including, but not limited to, class lectures and discussions, handouts, examinations, study guides and web materials) and the intellectual content of the course itself are protected by United States Federal Copyright Law. Students are permitted to make notes solely for their own private educational use. Students and all other persons are expressly forbidden from recording lectures or discussions and from distributing or selling lectures notes and all other course materials without the prior written permission of the instructor. Because the instructor owns the copyright to the classroom presentations and all course materials, any notes taken during those presentations and subsequently sold or distributed to others would constitute an unauthorized derivative work and expose the person or persons involved to individual copyright infringement actions by the instructor. No one may make recordings of lectures in this course in any media (audio, video, or still photography) without the instructor's permission.

Course Agreements:

Members of this course are expected to treat each other, and the instructor with respect. In lecture, respectful behavior includes arriving to class punctually, limiting distracting behavior on devices, not interrupting other students, the teaching assistants, or the instructor when they are speaking, using respectful language, and silencing devices. Outside of class, respectful behavior includes contacting teaching assistants and the instructor during reasonable working hours, using respectful language in correspondence, and adhering to the time limitations of office hours.

From the University:

General Resources Available to Students

- [Harris Academic Support Programs and Handbook](#)
- [Student Wellness](#)
- [University Learning Resources](#)

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies

- [Harris School Policies](#)
- [University General Policies](#)
- [University Academic Policies](#)
- Policies on audio and video [recordings](#) and [deletion](#).