Economic sociology is concerned with the social bases of economic behavior. It is one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing areas of sociology. Some of the most interesting work in the social sciences is being done by sociologists and economists at the intersection of the two fields. But the field is still in formation and is therefore not as well developed as some other areas of sociology. One goal of this course is to work toward developing a systematic conception of the field.

We shall begin the course with a discussion of the differences between sociological and economic approaches, followed by samples from the classic works of Adam Smith, Polanyi, Marx, and Weber. We shall then discuss the rise of the large corporation, focusing on both economic and sociological accounts. Following this unit, we shall move progressively from the internal workings of the firm toward macro-level discussions of the relation between business and society. Topics covered include issues of corporate control, the social meaning of money, production and financial markets, mergers and divestitures, the role of national cultures in shaping economic behavior, globalization, and fundamental questions about the distribution of income and wealth.

Our focus will be on the scholarly literature within each of these topics. Much of this reading will be difficult, but all of should be rewarding. Students will be expected to complete the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class and/or section. The requirements for the course include a short paper, midterm and final examinations, and various short assignments. Class participation, especially in discussion section, may affect the final grade. The purpose of the sections is to provide an opportunity for increased discussion, as well as more detailed attention to the readings. The required readings for the course will come from four sources: two books, both of which are available for purchase at the Shaman Drum Bookstore at 313
South State Street; and a coursepack, assembled by Dollar Bill Copying and available at Ulrich’s on South University.

**Books Available for Purchase** (purchase strongly recommended):

Granovetter, Mark and Richard Swedberg (eds.), *The Sociology of Economic Life* (second edition)
Frank, Robert H. and Philip J. Cook, *The Winner-Take-All Society*

**COURSE OUTLINE** (readings not from the two books are in the coursepack)

**September 2: Introduction to the Course**

**September 4: Sociological vs. Economic Approaches**


**September 9, 11, 16: Classical Writings on the Economy**


**September 18: The Rise of the Large Corporation**


**September 23, 25, 30: Transaction Cost Economics and Sociological Alternatives**


**October 2, 7: Interfirm Market Transactions**


**October 9, 16: Inside the Firm**


**October 21: Midterm examination**

**October 23, 28: Labor Markets**


**October 30, November 4: Who Controls the Corporation?**


**November 6, 11: Money and Financial Markets**


**November 13: Economic Culture in Comparative Context**


**November 18, 20: Economic Transitions and Globalization**


**November 25, December 2: Business and Politics**


**December 4, 9: The Distribution of Income and Wealth**


Final examination (date and time TBA)