Course overview:

“Founded on the principles of private initiative, entrepreneurship and self-employment, underpinned by the values of democracy, equality and solidarity, the co-operative movement can help pave the way to a more just and inclusive economic order.” Kofi Annan

“It has been said that cooperativism is an economic movement that uses methods of education [...] This definition can also be modified to affirm that cooperativism is an educational movement that uses methods of economics” Arizmendi (cited in Everything for Everyone, Schneider, 2018)

This course introduces you to cooperatives as an alternative business structure to investor-owned firms. You will learn about the role of cooperatives in market-oriented economies and familiarize yourself with fundamentals of operations including governance, financing, and distribution of benefits among owners or members. While cooperatives often evoke social and political connotations, we will focus on cooperatives as economic organizations. We will cover the history, regulatory environment and current challenges of the cooperative movement, with a focus on the development and role of (agricultural) cooperatives and mutuals in the U.S. However, principles of cooperatives are universal across different industries and both developed and developing economies worldwide, and you can choose to study non-agricultural cooperatives and cooperatives in other countries in more detail.

Guest speakers will share their practical expertise working in cooperative settings as well as challenges they face throughout the quarter.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this quarter you will have a basic understanding of the
1. fundamentals of cooperative business enterprises.
2. historic milestones of the cooperative movement.
3. economic theory applied to cooperatives.
4. current challenges faced by cooperative businesses.

How this course works:

An introduction to and discussion of cooperatives has largely disappeared from economics textbooks and business school curricula. By introducing you to the cooperative movement, my primary goal is to broaden your understanding of business operations and strengthen your competence as applied economists. You will encounter a different side of economics not solely focused on neoclassical paradigms of individual cost and benefit maximization as underpinnings of market supply and demand. Cooperatives often form out necessity (rather than purely based on the desire to maximize profits), ensure that communities have access to goods and services that were missing or unattainable to their members, and have given women, people of color, or immigrants a path to economic self-sufficiency. Education,
training & information is a key principle of the cooperative movement and also one of its biggest challenges.

Please note that no formal textbook on cooperatives is currently available. I assigned both, select chapters of two introductory texts and more advanced journal articles as required readings. You are not expected to understand articles in their entirety but engaging even formulars and graphs presented will allow you to develop an analytical and descriptive knowledge of cooperatives. Please familiarize yourself with assigned readings prior to attending lectures each week. We will review important points and add context in lectures. Engagement with the material is essential to your success and learning outcome in this course. How much you chose to engage will determine how much you learn. Scientists have repeatedly proven that in order to learn, you have to challenge yourself, try something new, and embrace that making mistakes is an important part of learning. This course is designed to allow you to challenge your perceptions and beliefs, to learn from low stakes mistakes, and to develop effective study habits that will result in a growth mindset.

Lectures, sections, and student (office) hours:

Regular lecture attendance and being present is an essential part of doing well in this course. Lecture slides will be posted prior to each lecture (including a note taking version) and I encourage you to take notes throughout lectures. We will break up lectures, allow you to repeatedly engage with your peers and learn from practitioners in a variety of industries. Please ask questions and actively engage in group discussions and exercises. I will also hold additional student (office) hours during which you can ask additional questions and receive feedback on assignments and your overall progress.

Prerequisites: 
ECN 001A (C- or better) or ECN 001AV(C- or better); UWP 104A or UWP 104AY or UWP 101 (recommended)

Required: 

An Introduction to Cooperation and Mutualism. Michael Boland, University of Minnesota (2017). (Posted on Canvas)

Additional journal articles and select chapters from a new Handbook on Cooperatives and Mutuals currently in final editing posted on Canvas.

iClicker App

Further reading:

Coops 101: An Introduction to Cooperatives. USDA, Report 55 (2012, posted on Canvas)

Research on the Economic Impact of Cooperatives. University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives (2009, posted on Canvas)

State of Worker’s Cooperatives in the U.S., Democracy at Work Institute and the U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives (2017, posted on Canvas)

Food Co-ops in America: Communities, Consumption, and Economic Democracy, Anne Mais Knupfer (2013, posted on Canvas)

Graded Assignments, Projects, and Exams:

We all procrastinate. Incentives serve as commitment devices to stay engaged with the material throughout the quarter. Graded assignments are meant to support the development of effective study habits and provide you with constructive feedback. They are an imperfect assessment tool of your individual learning outcomes, however, and should not be your primary motivation of engagement with the material. I strongly encourage you to repeatedly and independently assess your learning throughout the quarter as well.

Quizzes:

We will have one weekly pre-lecture quiz posted on the Quizzes tab on Canvas. You will have to complete this quiz before each Tuesday lecture (it will be available 24 hours prior). This quiz tests whether you read the required texts for each week. There will be a total of 7 quizzes and I will drop your two lowest quiz scores in computing your final grade.

Lecture participation (iClicker App):

You will be able to actively participate and test your understanding by responding to questions using the iClicker App in lectures. Please make sure you are registered (using your UC Davis information). I will ask questions throughout lectures (and sections) and randomly choose one question to assign up to two points for each lecture. You will receive one point if you submitted an answer to the question randomly chosen (participation point) and an additional point if you submitted the correct answer. Receiving at least 30 points will count as a 100% participation score towards your final grade. Please note that it is possible to receive slightly more than 30 points by end of the quarter. This cut-off scoring allows you to learn from answering questions incorrectly, miss a lecture or two, or encounter occasional technical difficulties when submitting your answers. No additional adjustments are made to your iclicker score.

Weekly reflections:

I want you to keep a journal or regularly reflect on the material covered each week and ask you to submit your journal entry as an assignment each week. These assignments give you an opportunity to assess your learning and provide feedback on the assigned readings, lectures, and additional information posted from each week. You can also discuss ideas related to each week’s material in preparation for

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1 We will not have a pre-lecture quiz during the first week, midterm week, and last week.

2 You can choose to opt out of the participation score altogether. If you decide to do so, please contact me via email before the midterm. In this case, all other assignments receive a higher weight when computing your overall grade.
your final project, including additional examples or sources that relate to the material covered each week.
Journal entries can be submitted in whatever format you feel most comfortable in when expressing your
thoughts (e.g., upload a picture of your hand-written reflection, draw a diagram, record yourself or
share relevant additional content). Journal entries will be graded on effort and I (and my TA’s) will
provide comments and feedback for each of your submission. I will also incorporate select reflections
during lectures in the following weeks. **Please turn in at least six journal entries over the course of the
quarter. Each entry is due by midnight on Friday (see Canvas assignments posted).** If you turn in
more than six reflections, your six highest scores will count towards your final grade.

**Final project:**
In order to apply the learned material throughout the quarter, **you will complete a business case study on a
cooperative business of your choice.** Additional information regarding this project is provided in a separate
handout.

**Exams:**
There will be one midterm and a final exam. **The midterm will be given during lecture time on Tuesday,
January 31. The final will be given during the scheduled final exam time on Wednesday, March 22.**

Please add graded assignments and exams to your calendar. If other responsibilities or circumstances
interfere with the successful completion of graded assignments, please reach out ASAP such that I can
verify your circumstance (documentation will be required) and excuse you from missed quizzes or
exam. I do not give make-up assignments. Your final grade will be based solely on the remaining
assignments.

If you are unsure if your situation warrants this additional accommodation, please ask me. In the past,
in addition to athlete schedules, I have made these accommodations for family emergencies (e.g., death
or sickness), extraordinary circumstances (e.g., economic and social distress), job obligations (one-time
responsibilities that cannot be rescheduled) and professional opportunities (e.g., job interviews or
conference attendance).

**Grades:**
Your final numerical score will be calculated based on your participation and reflections, quizzes, group
project, midterm and final exam. Numerical scores will not be converted to letter grades until the end of the
quarter and specific letter grades will not be assigned to individual assignments. The final score breakdown
and grade distribution is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>(50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Entries</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>(400)</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 – 100%</td>
<td>400 – 372</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 – 92%</td>
<td>371 – 360</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 – 89%</td>
<td>359 – 348</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 – 86%</td>
<td>347 – 332</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 82%</td>
<td>331 – 320</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 – 79%</td>
<td>319 – 308</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 – 76%</td>
<td>307 – 292</td>
<td>C</td>
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</table>
Lectures:  
T/R 8:00 – 9:50am, ART 217

Student (office) hours:  
R 11:00 –12:00noon, SS&H 2147

Please come with questions or identify areas you want to talk about. I am happy to talk and provide feedback, advise you on anything we cover in class, or have a more personal conversation and provide advice.

TA Student (office) hours:  
T 11:00 –12:00noon, SS&H 2143 (Hyunjung)
T 1:30 –2:30pm, SS&H 2143 (Minsun)

Canvas discussions tab:  
Please use this Canvas feature to reach out with additional questions, comments or concerns. Please only use email for personal questions or concerns that cannot be shared or discussed publicly.

Tentative schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Required Readings (articles in italics)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (T 1/10, R 1/12)</td>
<td>Introduction and Course Logistics; History and Role of Cooperatives</td>
<td>Frank et al 1993 (optional), Zeuli and Cropp, Chapter 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 (T 1/17, R 1/19)</td>
<td>Economic Theory of Cooperatives I</td>
<td>Boland, Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3 (T 1/24, R 1/26)</td>
<td>Economic Theory of Cooperatives II</td>
<td>Hueth (2014), Sexton and Sexton (1987)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 (T 1/31, R 2/3)</td>
<td>Decision Making in Cooperatives</td>
<td>Boland, Chapter 2, Zeuli and Cropp, Chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm: 1/31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 (T 2/7, R 2/9)</td>
<td>Financing; Laws and regulation</td>
<td>Zeuli and Cropp, Chapter 3 &amp; 7 Boland, Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 (T 2/14, R 2/16)</td>
<td>Challenges and Opportunities</td>
<td>Zeuli and Cropp, Chapter 9 Boland, Chapter 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gina Chmielewski and Nancy Chung, FCA</td>
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<td>Brett Lauppe and Jeff Ornellas, CoBank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8 (T 2/28, R 3/2)</td>
<td>Consumer Cooperatives; Worker Cooperatives</td>
<td>Plakias and Entsminger (2023) Novkovic and Nembhard (2023)</td>
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<td>Jessica Nelson. Golden State Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9 (T 3/7, R 3/9)</td>
<td>Marketing Cooperatives</td>
<td>Kiesel et al (2023)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10 (T 3/14, R 3/16)</td>
<td>Business case study workshop; Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business case study due: 3/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam: 3/22 1pm</td>
<td>The final is cumulative</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: The listed journal articles may be difficult to understand upon a first read. You are not expected to comprehend all details discussed. Additional discussion during lecture and repeated reading of these articles will allow you to better understand main points.

Academic Conduct:

You are an active member of the UC Davis campus and essential in our efforts to create a fair and honest community. Please review the Code of Academic Conduct. Familiarize yourself with your rights and responsibilities as you are required to acknowledge them for each of your courses. I encourage you to work together as I strongly believe it supports the learning process. However, your submitted quiz and exam
answers need to be your own, and any sources used in the preparation of your group project need to be properly cited (Please refer to this additional information on proper citation). Any violation will result in you receiving no credit for the assignment or exam in question, and my reporting of the incident to the Office of Student Support & Judicial Affairs (OSSJA).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: UC Davis is a diverse community comprised of individuals having many perspectives and identities. Our department is committed to playing a vital role in increasing diversity in our discipline. I strive to create a learning environment that both supports the diversity of thoughts and perspectives, and honors your diverse experiences and identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). The economics profession is home to disproportionately few historically underrepresented minority groups and women, however, and I acknowledge that there may be biases in the course materials due to the lens with which they were written and presented. Please reach out and share any concerns or suggestions you might have such that we can acknowledge and correct these.

For more information on our commitment to DEI in education, see: ARE DIRECT Program, UCD Principles of Community, UCD Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and UCD Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision.

UC Davis Land acknowledgement:

I would also like to acknowledge the land on which we are gathered. For thousands of years, this land has been the home of Patwin people. Today, there are three federally recognized Patwin tribes: Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community, Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation, and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. The Patwin people have remained committed to the stewardship of this land over many centuries. It has been cherished and protected, as elders have instructed the young through generations. We are honored and grateful to be here today on their traditional lands.

Special accommodations:
If you have a learning disability, any other difficulties or special circumstances that require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. I will accommodate all needs that have been verified through the Student Disability Center.

Copyright: My lectures and course materials, including lecture presentations, assignments, quizzes and exams, are protected by U.S. copyright law and by University policy. I am the exclusive owner of the copyright in those materials I create. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use. You may also share those materials with other students who are enrolled in or are auditing this course, except when taking quizzes and exams. You may not reproduce, distribute or display (post/upload) lecture notes, recordings, quizzes and exams, and all other course materials in any other way — whether or not a fee is charged — without my expressed prior written consent. You also may not allow others to do so. Any violation will result in my reporting of the incident to the Office of Student Support & Judicial Affairs (OSSJA).

I hope we will all stay healthy, safe, and motivated throughout this quarter. Learning is hard and we each face unique challenges. But learning can also be fun. I am committed to making this an interactive and enjoyable class and a successful quarter for all of us.