BUSINESS & SOCIETY: CRYPTOCURRENCY (SMPP #tbd)

COURSE FACULTY

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Graduate Assistant: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SMPP #tbd BUSINESS & SOCIETY: Cryptocurrency

3 credits (35 hours)
Meets: December 8 & 15, 2018 online and January 8-11, 2020 on campus, plus online work prior to arrival
Room: DUQ #tbd

Whether it is introducing legislation, creating or repealing regulations, or providing an environment for businesses to thrive, Washington is at the crux of business. This course, “Business & Society: CRYPTOCURRENCY,” will examine the different forces and organizations, roles and relationships, and policies that are shaping the future of cryptocurrency in the US. What is currency? What is cryptocurrency? Is it a fad or here to stay? Can any company create its own currency? What do policymakers think about cryptocurrency? Through online lectures and videos prior to our on-campus class, guest speakers and visits to various government agencies, we will learn the varying perspectives on cryptocurrency and the policies that will shape its future.

This course will begin with a brief review of traditional fiat currencies and the roles they play in the macro-economic environment. It will then outline the present cryptocurrency landscape in the US and abroad and explore the socioeconomic benefits, challenges, and potential policies related to it. It seeks to provide students with a working knowledge of the multiple issues surrounding cryptocurrency and the public policies impacting it in the US and equip them with the theoretical and analytical tools needed to make sound business decisions related to cryptocurrency. Please note this is a policy focused course and not a technology or finance course.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the genesis and evolution of cryptocurrency
- Identify the applications, implications, and challenges of cryptocurrency on industries, society, and public policy
- Identify the diverse stakeholders, their roles and issues, as related to cryptocurrency in the US
- Explain the US legislative and regulatory process and how policy is made and influenced
- Demonstrate improved skills related to teamwork, negotiation, critical thinking and analysis, advocacy,
ABOUT THE PROFESSOR
Bonnie J. Pierce has been a George Washington University School of Business adjunct faculty member since 2007. Her nearly 25 years of experience working in institutional asset management, financial services, and global banking encompasses the Great Financial Crisis, the many emerging markets crisis throughout the 1990’s, and the rise of Fintech. In 2016 she became Managing Director of ndp | analytics, a strategic economic research and communication boutique specializing in advocacy. She supports her clients’ policy issues and develops innovative quantitative strategies to successfully win their advocacy battles. Her clients represent a diversified array of industries from financial services, technology, energy, pharmaceuticals, and airlines to affordable housing. Bonnie has MBAs from Columbia Business School and London Business School, with concentrations in Finance and Corporate Strategy respectively, and a MA in International Relations and BA in European History from Boston University. She is a member of the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies Dean’s Advisory Board at Boston University, a former trustee of the National Presbyterian School in Washington, DC, and a certified Sommelier. She resides in Washington, DC with her husband and two daughters.

COURSE MATERIALS/RESOURCES
Sample materials - This course requires the use of the following materials.

www.coincenter.org – this organization is on the forefront of cryptocurrency research and public policy. They require your email to download their papers.

https://coincenter.org/entry/framework-for-securities-regulation-of-cryptocurrencies
https://coincenter.org/entry/overcoming-obstacles-to-banking-virtual-currency-businesses
https://www.loc.gov/law/help/cryptocurrency/cryptocurrency-world-survey.pdf – read pages 1-6, the rest is for reference only
**Cases:** (Harvard Business School Press link will be provided)
Bitcoin: The Future of Digital Payments (HBSP)
Bitcoin: Investment or Illusion (Darden Business Publishing)

Follow on Twitter:
@coincenter
@vincentolari
@hesterpeirce (cryptomom)
@giancarloCFTC (cryptoad)
@CaitlinLong
@crypto (Bloomberg)
@angela_walch

[www.cointelegraph.com](http://www.cointelegraph.com) – A news service related to the future of money.

**Fintech in Focus.** Milken Institute sign up using link below:
[https://www.cvent.com/Pub/eMarketing/Pages/SignUp.aspx?p=5b49cee6-fb01-4e53-bf27-b8aef82941e6&m=](https://www.cvent.com/Pub/eMarketing/Pages/SignUp.aspx?p=5b49cee6-fb01-4e53-bf27-b8aef82941e6&m=)

**Piktochart** or similar infographic design software and stock graphics might be required (fees may apply)
[https://piktochart.com/](https://piktochart.com/) and [www.istock.com](http://www.istock.com)

Students will be expected to pay for taxis/Ubers to get to offsite meetings. Our GA will organize lunch orders for working lunches on campus.

**Proposed COURSE STRUCTURE**

Readings and assignments can be found on Blackboard. Please refer to Blackboard for the most up-to-date schedule. Business attire required unless otherwise noted. Class and meeting attendance required; final meetings to be determined once schedules are confirmed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (2019)</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7, 2019</td>
<td>To start, please complete the following tasks as soon as possible.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1. <strong>Post</strong> your bio on the discussion tab by December 7, 2019, include why you are taking this class.</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Post</strong> your cell on the discussion tab (we will create a texting group for when we are on campus) by December 7, 2019</td>
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<td>3. Please email me if you have any graphic design experience ASAP</td>
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<td>4. <strong>Read</strong> the assigned reading (on Bb under Outline) before coming to class in January</td>
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<td>5. <strong>Watch</strong> –additional videos will be posted on Bb. These include lectures by the professor as well as speeches and interviews by industry</td>
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<td>and policy experts. They must be watched prior to coming to class in January (approx. 4-5 hours)</td>
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<td>December 8, 2019</td>
<td><strong>Participate</strong> - Please log into our <strong>Bb Collaborate Ultra Live Session on Sunday, December 8, 2019 at 2:00-4:00 pm EST</strong> to be introduced to the course and for the lecture “The Evolution of Currency”. I will outline expectations, go over blog deliverable, take questions, etc.</td>
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December 15, 2019

**Participate** - Please log into our Bb Collaborate Ultra Live Session on **Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 2:00-4:00 pm** for the following lecture “Introducing the Stakeholders and Issues that Impact Cryptocurrency Policy”.

**Sign up** for a group (on Bb) - groups are 3 students by December 20, 2019

1. Connect with each other and assign a group liaison to communicate with me
2. Begin researching your project topic (must be approved by professor by 12/29/19)
3. As a group, **sign up for a group Live Session** with the professor to discuss your project topic and approach (schedule to follow)
4. The majority of research must be done prior to class.

January 8-11, 2020

Please refer to the separate class itinerary for the January 8-11, 2020 schedule.

Assume a full day of classes or meetings each day. Evenings should be reserved for group work. You must be on time for all meetings and classes.

By Monday, January 13, 2020

**FINAL PROJECTS & FINAL REFLECTION DUE**

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**COURSE GRADING & REQUIREMENTS**

The Faculty of the School of Business decided to implement a rigorous grade distribution format with limited numbers of students receiving high grades. The MBA Faculty Task Force recommends that the grade distribution of the class has an average of 3.2 and 3.4 and no more than 20% of the class receives a grade of A.

Grades for this course will be curved. That is, the points that you obtain for the course will be added up and sorted from high to low. Students who accumulated the most points will get an A. The cut-off points for A-, B+, B, B-, etc., will be determined in accordance with the MBA Faculty Task Force recommendations. In particular, no more than 20% of the class will receive an A, and the average grade of the class will range between 3.2 and 3.4.

There is no extra credit in this course. Late work will not be accepted.

**Group Project (group) 35% grade**

**Class Participation (individual) 20% grade**

**4 Questions/Reflections (individual) 35% grade**

**Peer Grade (from your teammates, non-negotiable) 10% of grade**

**Group Project** - The project will be done in groups of 3, with a few exceptions (due to class size). Each group will represent a different stakeholder in the cryptocurrency discussion. The group will produce a professional advocacy blog, with infographics, or primer which represents the stakeholder’s point of view. These will be posted online and tweeted on the GWU GE&E blog. Blog topics must be researched, analyzed, and communicated in a concise and attractive way, based on advocacy best practices. Although there are 6-7 separate groups, depending on ultimate class size, we must work together as an entire team to deliver a collaborative overall advocacy/PR campaign/s.
Students’ ability to apply course content to real-world situations will be tested and they must fully understand the company, industry, forces within the industry, issue at hand, etc. All data must be sourced and cited.

All students are responsible for being responsive to fellow team members’ communication, participating in group activities, contributing to the research and writing or designing of the group deliverables, and for turning in group assignments to Blackboard. The Peer Grade reflects a student’s participation in group assignments.

Specific instructions will be posted on Bb and presented during out first online Live Session together. Groups must virtually meet with the professor prior to the onsite to confirm topic and approach. See Bb for more details.

Reflections – Before each day on campus, students must read all relevant materials and bios and submit five questions for each guest speaker by 5 am the day of class. (hint - you can even do these BEFORE you arrive on campus). This will be done for Wednesday through Friday. The fourth and last reflection is due after the class if over. It is a reflection about what you have learned on the topic.

Class & Group Participation - The goal is to create a community of learners in this course that share, support, and inform one another. This goal will only be achieved if all students in the course commit themselves to fully participating in class discussions in the classroom and on the discussion board.

Class participation will be based on the professor’s perceptions of your contribution to the course. It is a non-negotiable grade. It is the student’s responsibility to do their best to manage impressions of fellow class members. The student is free to query the professor at any time about his/her class participation quality and request suggestions/feedback for improvement.

Policies

Academic Integrity: The professor will strictly abide by the academic integrity policies as stated at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html#definition. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. All members of a group are responsible for the academic integrity of the entire group assignment. All group members are required to submit final group deliverables to Blackboard. Doing so indicates that you vouch for the academic integrity of the group project. ANY ASSIGNMENT INCLUDING PLAIGERIZED MATERIAL (see Academic Integrity Code for definition) WILL RECEIVE AN F AND THE PROFESSOR WILL CONTACT THE UNIVERSITY’S OFFICE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

Late Assignments: NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED (NOTE: 5 MINUTES LATE CONSTITUTES A LATE ASSIGNMENT – PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO TURN YOUR ASSIGNMENTS IN BEFORE THE DEADLINE TIME). Due dates and times are available on Blackboard.

Final Grades: All grades are final. THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT OFFERED IN THIS COURSE. Grades are not negotiable.

Group Conflict: If you cannot solve group conflict issues within your own group. Please bring it to the professor’s attention ASAP. I cannot solve problems once the class is in full swing.
**Grading Disputes:** Mistakes in grading can happen. The professor will do her best to grade very carefully. However, if you believe that an error has been made in the grading of your work, you should submit a WRITTEN REQUEST for a grade change to both the teaching assistant and professor. This report should include a discussion of what you got wrong and why you believe you should have gotten credit for your work. She will try to give you a response as soon as possible.

**Disability Support Services:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Support Services to establish eligibility and to coordinate appropriate accommodations. Academic Center (Rome Hall) Suite 102, 801 22nd Street, NW Phone: 202-994-8250, Email: dss@gwu.edu, Website: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss

**University Mental Health Services:** The University Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referrals to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills issues. Services for students include: • crisis and emergency mental health consultations • confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals: Marvin Center Ground Floor, 800 21st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20052 Phone: 202-994-5300.