



## Call for Papers

### **Econ Bites: How not to be a Practitioner of the Dismal Science**

Economics is often viewed as a dismal science, inapplicable to the real world. In their book *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side to Everything*, economists Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner set out to demonstrate the hidden economic dimension of how the world works and show that economic theories can be applied to a range of provocative subjects that are often ignored by "traditional" economists.

In this section, we invite everyone to be their own "rogue economist" and investigate possible answers to these questions. Fresh and sharp analytical pieces are encouraged. Fellow SPE students—economists and political scientist alike—get out your pens and paper and start applying those sometime mundane theories to these amusing questions! (1,000 word limit)

1. An Argentine author recently proposed that "beautiful people" have an unfair financial advantage over "ugly people" and suggested a beauty tax to compensate. How would such a tax be implemented and what effects would it have? How would the tax differ if the tax-payers determined where they fell on the "beauty-scale" and thus determined their "tax bracket?"
2. Considering the following statistics from the MADD website, is drunk-driving "rational?" How would a policy-maker reduce drunk-driving?
  - Number of impaired (drunk) driving trips in 2002: 159 million
  - Number of arrests on account of drunk-driving: 1.4 million
  - Average costs (monetary and quality of life) of drunk-driving: approximately \$1200