

# Major Themes in Economics

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## Introduction

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*Major Themes in Economics, Spring 2003*

**Introduction**

All senior economics majors are required to refine their writing skills in our Directed Research course. In the process, they each write a research paper. *Major Themes in Economics* allows us to share the fruits of their labor with a wider audience.

Should internet commerce be taxed? The question is of growing importance because of the rapid increase in the volume of e-commerce. **Jeffrey Scudder** investigates the question, and concludes that for the sake of both equity and efficiency, internet transactions should be taxed the same as other transactions.

Urban leaf-burning seems like it should be an anachronism by now. Yet the city of Cedar Falls only recently passed a ban on leaf-burning. **Joshua Van Kley** conducted a cost-benefit analysis of the ban and concluded that from an economic standpoint, the ban is justified.

Should athletes, not scholars, receive college scholarships? **Ryan Miller** confronts the controversy. His research led him to conclude that it would be best if college sports were truly amateur sports.

Intellectual property has characteristics which make it different from most other types of property. **Liz Dunshee** tackles the complex issue of how to establish and enforce property rights over software. She argues that a mix of strategies is required to stop piracy.

The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 was aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. **Adam Mellem** explains why the Protocol is fatally flawed, and suggests a way to fix it.

Ken McCormick  
Professor of Economics