I. RATIONALE:

Until recently, the demands of an industrial economy governed our individual, personal wealth/earning potential. The principal route to getting rich within this structure usually lay in developing some sort of manufacture-based business, requiring a sizeable investment of money on the front end, to pay for equipment, labor and working capital. The average person had little or no access to the amounts of money or other backing which would be needed to produce wealth.

But now, the new world of high-tech has made some changes in that model. Wealth is now theoretically within the reach of almost anyone with an idea. The main requirements for success may not be production process, but rather a nimble mind, computer literacy, and the willingness to take risks. This change opens up to all of us the presence and potential of wealth, now more widely dispersed and visible in our daily lives.

We may be surprised to find that, seen up close, our feelings about money are mixed. This course attempts to organize and illuminate the contradictory issues that surround wealth - its economic, mythical, historical and psychological aspects - enabling us to better understand the ambivalence and inconsistency of our feelings. Much of this inquiry will be conducted through self-directed research and analysis of literature and films on these themes.

As Psychology professionals, we recognize that reactions to trauma come in many forms. The content of this course, and discussions about trauma from different perspectives, may bring about unexpected and unsettling reactions. Responses to trauma are often strategies that survivors have developed to keep themselves safe, and therefore really reflect strength and resiliency. Recognizing how trauma impacts anyone is an important part of skill building for creating trauma-informed services and systems. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor at any time during the course if you would like to discuss, privately, your reactions to the content we are reviewing and/or the discussions we are having.
II. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A:
Understand the concept of wealth

Learning Outcomes: The student will be able to:

A-1 Define wealth.
A-2 Show where wealth originates.
A-3 Identify how wealth is distributed.

GOAL B:
Understand society’s view of wealth

Learning Outcomes: The student will be able to:

B-1 Identify the Society’s ambivalence towards wealth.
B-2 Cite sources of society’s view of wealth.

GOAL C:
Understand society’s view of conspicuous consumption vs. de-emphasized values of consumption.

Learning Outcomes: The student will be able to:

C-1 Identify past and present views on conspicuous consumption.
C-2 Identify notable individuals connected with conspicuous consumption.
C-3 Identify past and present views on de-emphazing conspicuous consumption.