

Statement of Socio-Economic Principles

Socio-economics begins with the assumption that economic behavior and phenomena are not wholly governed or described by any one analytical school, but are embedded in society, polity, culture, and nature. Drawing upon economics, sociology, political science, psychology, anthropology, biology and other social and natural sciences, philosophy, history, law, management, and other disciplines, socio-economics regards competitive behavior as a subset of human behavior within a societal and natural context that both enables and constrains competition and cooperation. Rather than assume that the individual pursuit of self-interest automatically or generally tends toward an optimal allocation of resources, socio-economics assumes that societal sources of order are necessary for people and markets to function efficiently. Rather than assume that people act only rationally, or that they pursue only self-interest, socio-economics seeks to advance a more encompassing interdisciplinary understanding of economic behavior open to the assumption that individual choices are shaped not only by notions of rationality but also by emotions, social bonds, beliefs, expectations, and a sense of morality.

Socio-economics is both a positive and a normative science. It is dedicated. It respects both inductive and deductive reasoning. But it also openly recognizes the policy relevance of teaching and research and seeks to be self-aware of its normative implications rather than maintaining the mantle of an exclusively positive science. Although it sees questions of value inextricably connected with individual and group economic choices, socio-economics does not entail a commitment to any one paradigm or ideological position, but is open to a range of thinking that treats economic behavior as involving the whole person and all facets of society within a continually evolving natural context.

Unique among interdisciplinary approaches, however, socio-economics recognizes the pervasive and powerful influence of the neoclassical paradigm on contemporary thought. Recognizing that people first adopt paradigms of thought and then perform their inductive, deductive, and empirical analyses, socio-economists seek to examine the assumptions of the neoclassical paradigm, develop a rigorous understanding of its limitations, improve upon its application, and develop alternative, perhaps complementary, approaches that are predictive, exemplary, and morally sound. With modest amendment, this description of Socio-Economics was the substance of the petition signed by more than one hundred twenty law professors from over fifty AALS member schools, to establish the AALS Section on Socio-Economics. It serves as the constitution of the Section. For a fuller description of socio-economics, see http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=882751

The Society of Socio-Economists (SOS) is a society of academics, other professionals, and other interested people who approach economic issues in harmony with the following "Statement of Socio-Economics Principles."

SOS holds (1) an annual meeting in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Section on Socio-Economics of Association of American Law Schools (AALS) and (2) other meetings and conferences based on those principles.

SOS membership is free. However, to help cover event costs, SOS charges a registration fee of between \$75 to \$175 to attend and participate in its events. (This fee may be reduced or waived based on need.) A "brown-bag luncheon" featuring a speaker or panel discussion usually follows the morning plenary. The afternoon features concurrent sessions based on the morning plenary topics, and a concluding plenary.

Introductory Socio-Economic References

1. Paul Stern, "The Socio-Economic Perspective and Its Institutional Prospects," *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1993, pp. 1-11.
2. Richard Coughlin, "Whose Morality? Which Community? What Interests? Socio-Economic and Communitarian Perspectives," *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, Vol. 25, 1996, pp. 135-55.
3. Robert Ashford, "Socio-Economics: What Is Its Place in Law Teaching?" *Wisconsin Law Review*, Vol. 1997, p. 611-623.
4. Jeffrey L. Harrison, "Law and Socio-Economics," Vol. 49, *Journal of Legal Education*, 224 (1999).
5. Richard E. Hattwick, "Future Paradigm for Socio-Economics: A Call for Papers," Vol. 28, *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 1999, pp. 511-532.
6. Robert A. Solo, *The Philosophy of Science, and Economics* (1991) and *Economic Organizations and Social Systems* (2000).
7. Steve Keen, *Debunking Economics - The Naked Emperor of the Social Sciences* (2001).
8. Socio-Economics and Corporate Law Symposium: The New Corporate Social Responsibility, 76 *Tulane Law Rev.* 1187 (2002).
9. Symposium: Teaching Law and Socio-Economics 41 *San Diego Law Review* 1 (2004).
10. Lynne Dallas, *Law and Public Policy: A Socio-Economic Approach* (2004).
11. Robert Ashford, "Socio-Economics" *Encyclopedia of Law & Society*, 2007, pp. 1405-1407.
12. "Law and Socio-Economics: A Symposium," 49 *Akron Law Review* 287 (2016)