

Course Syllabus
Intermediate Microeconomics
ECON 300 – Winter 2025
Last Edited 1 January 2025

Objective

This is a course in intermediate microeconomics. Its aim is to teach you how to use the tools of microeconomic theory to understand how markets allocate scarce resources and how consumers and producers make decisions. Some knowledge of calculus is therefore required; we will review the mathematical techniques you need to keep up with the course.

Instructor

Professor Jason Kerwin
342 Savery Hall
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:20-3:20PM & by appointment.
Email: jkerwin@uw.edu

Teaching Assistant

Bocheng Zhang
319A Savery Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Fridays 2:30-3:30
Email: zhan0908@uw.edu

Textbook

For this course, you will be required to purchase McGraw-Hill Education Connect® access for Microeconomics (2e) by Bernheim and Whinston. Connect will provide full access to the eBook, so you are not required to have a print text. Please be aware if you purchase a used textbook, you must still purchase Connect access. The assignments for the course will use the Connect feature.

- The University Bookstore has set up a new program called Day One Access (D1A) to offer digital course materials to students directly through their Canvas page. See notice below.
- Please find more details about MH Connect on canvas.

Day One Access – University Bookstore Notice:

You are enrolled in a course that is participating in the Day One Access program. Through this program, some or all of your materials for this course will be delivered digitally through Canvas, at a reduced price. All communication about this program will be sent to your UW email address, and it is your responsibility to read through this information. Participation is optional, and if you find that Day One Access is not right for you, make sure to opt out by the deadline for this quarter. To opt out, click the “want to opt out?” button on the VitalSource tool.

Important Dates for Winter 2024

Opt-Out Deadline – Sunday, January 26
Payment Deadline – Sunday, January 26

The balance due for your Day One Access materials will appear on your Accounts page in MyUW, underneath your tuition balance. To pay for your materials, click the “make payment” button underneath the balance, and you will be re-directed to your shopping cart on ubookstore.com. You will receive an order

confirmation after submitting payment – please keep this confirmation for your records. Your balance due in MyUW will be updated within 24-48 hours.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PAYMENT: The balance for your Day One Access materials is NOT part of tuition, and is paid separately. If you have not paid by the posted deadline, you will lose access to your materials.

Questions? Visit <https://www.ubookstore.com/day-one-access-faq> for more information about the program, or contact University Book Store via email at dayoneaccess@ubookstore.com.

Lectures

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:20 PM in Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) 045

Lectures will cover similar material to the textbook but will also go into more detail in certain areas and cover topics that the textbook misses. You are therefore strongly encouraged to take notes in class. To help you do so, I will make the slides available ahead of time. Lecture participation will factor into your participation grade, as noted below. Lectures will be held in-person during scheduled class times and will not be recorded.

Discussion sections:

Tuesdays, 12:30-1:20 PM in Communications (CMU) 226 or 1:30-2:20 PM in Smith (SMI) 309

Discussion sections will focus on reviewing concepts that the class finds difficult and going over practice problems. You are expected to attend the discussion section in which you are enrolled each Thursday. Participation during discussion sections is factored into your participation grade, as noted below.

Assignments and Grades

Your grade in this course will be a weighted average of three components:

1. Exams – 70% (30% midterm, 40% final)

There will be two exams held during the term: a midterm and a comprehensive final.

2. Online graded quizzes – 10%

We will post weekly quizzes on the material using the McGraw-Hill Connect feature. These will be due each Friday. If you initially get a question wrong on a quiz you will be told the answer was incorrect and given a second chance to submit an answer. After your second try you will lose the points for the question.

3. Problem Sets – 0% (Ungraded)

I will regularly post problem sets over the course of the quarter. I plan to assign 7 problem sets during the term, but this is subject to change as I adapt the course schedule to the comfort level of the class. These will be ungraded. However, I urge you to take these seriously: practicing solving economics problems is the single best way to learn the material and to prepare for the exams.

4. Participation – 20%

You will be graded on your participation in lecture and section. I will have a good sense of whether you are attending lecture and participating actively—by answering questions and by asking for clarification. I will also be aware of the level of respect you show to your peers and your instructors.

If you are uncomfortable speaking up during lecture, you can also earn the same participation credit by asking me questions during office hours or via email. However, I encourage you to take advantage of our lectures as an opportunity to practice public speaking, which is an important life skill.

Participation is worth 20% of your grade. You are not guaranteed to receive all 20 percentage points; I expect participation grades to range from 0 to 20.

Academic Misconduct

Students found to be guilty of academic misconduct will receive an F for the quiz or exam and may receive an F for the course. Serious cases of academic misconduct may necessitate the involvement of higher levels of the university administration. Academic misconduct includes cheating on quizzes or exams. Students may not communicate with anyone else about the exams while they are taking them; this rule applies to communicating with other students in the class as well as with people outside the class, and covers spoken communication but also sending messages in any other way.

Grading Policy

Consistent with prior terms of 300, I plan to aim for a class average grade of 3.0. This means that I will grade the class on a curve, and what matters is your performance relative to that of other students. Your overall grade in the course will be based on the weighted average described above, but I will also look at trends in your performance. If you do badly on the first midterm but excel on the second midterm and the final, I will adjust your grade to reflect that.

Should you disagree with the grade you receive on a quiz or exam, you must submit a written explanation of why you deserve a higher grade within one week of receiving the graded assignment. I will not discuss re-grade requests that are submitted late, or verbal requests, because I want to document the grading process and make it fair for all students. I will not consider any frivolous re-grade requests: all requests for re-grades must be based on legitimate grading errors, and not a desire or need for a higher grade.

Department and University Policies

The Economics department has a policy on academic conduct and academic honesty. Please be familiar with it : <https://econ.washington.edu/policy-academic-conduct>

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>).

Should you require disability accommodations, please contact Disability Resources for Students at <https://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/> or 206-543-8924.

Calendar

Below is a *tentative* schedule for the quarter. I will move through the material at a pace at which the entire class is comfortable, so this schedule is subject to change: it is more important to ensure that everyone is learning than to stick to a strict calendar for the course. When the calendar changes I will send an updated version.

Date	Topic	Reading	Problem Set Posted
Jan. 6	Course Introduction, Supply & Demand	Ch. 1-2	PS#1
Jan. 8	Supply & Demand		
Jan. 13	Preferences & Budget Constraints	Ch. 4, 5.1, 5.2	
Jan. 15	Preferences & Budget Constraints		
Jan. 20	<i>MLK Day – No Class</i>		
Jan. 22	Individual and Market Demand, Welfare	Ch. 5.3, 5.4, 6	PS#2
Jan. 27	Individual and Market Demand, Welfare		
Jan. 29	Time Preferences	Ch. 10	PS#3
Feb. 3	Risk Preferences	Ch. 11	
Feb. 5	Midterm Exam, 1:00-2:20 PM in ECE 045		
Feb. 10	Producer Behavior	Ch. 7	
Feb. 12	Costs	Ch. 8	
Feb. 17	<i>Presidents' Day – No Class</i>		
Feb. 19	Costs		PS#4
Feb. 24	Supply in a Competitive Market	Ch. 9, Ch. 14	
Feb. 26	Supply in a Competitive Market		PS#5
Mar. 3	Monopolies & Monopsonies	Ch. 17	
Mar. 5	Monopolies & Monopsonies		PS#6
Mar. 10	Price Discrimination	Ch. 18	
Mar. 12	Oligopolies	Ch. 19.2 & 19.6	PS#7
Mar. 17	Final Exam, 2:30-4:20 PM in ECE 045		