

Econ 200 Syllabus

Instructor: Qifan Huang (email: qifan@uw.edu)

October 5, 2020

1 Overall Description of the Course

This course is an introductory course to the field of microeconomics. In this course, students will learn about the basic ideas, concepts and analytical methods used in modern microeconomics. Students will also be notified about some of the most recent development at the frontier of microeconomic research and practice. The overall aim of this course is for students to gain basic training in microeconomics at the introductory level, have an idea of the 'up to date' panorama of this field, develop interest in microeconomics and be prepared for more advanced courses in this field.

2 General Learning Goals

The general learning goals for students in this course are as follows:

- Be able to use microeconomic terminologies
- Be able to analyze a market (or multiple markets together) using supply and demand
- Be able to explain the behavior of individual consumer and firm using simple graphical models
- Be able to explain the organization and dynamics of an industry under different market structures
- Be able to explain how the market (and the price mechanism) allocates scarce resource and achieves desirable outcome
- Know situations in which the market may fail to deliver desirable outcomes
- Be able to analyze how government policies and institutional arrangements affect the allocation of resources in an economy

- Know the limitations of partial equilibrium analysis and comparative statics
- Know some of the most recent developments in the frontier of microeconomic theory and practice.

3 Our respective responsibilities

Your Instructor: my responsibilities include clear explanations of concepts and tools, inspiring and motivating you to want to master the tools and concepts, and provide feedback of your learning upon request.

You: This course tries to equip you with 3 sets of abilities/skills:

- the ability to use concepts, vocabulary and essentially the language of microeconomics;
- the ability to use graphical tools to model human economic behavior;
- the ability to apply those tools to understand/predict the likely consequences of various events in our economy (e.g., tax reform, drug regulation, technological change, demographic change, climate change, etc.).

To obtain these abilities/skills, you need to read the reading material before class, solve and make sure you understand homework problems and practice the economic way of thinking whenever possible in your spare time.

4 Textbook and Related Reading Material

1. **Principles of Economics (or Principles of Microeconomics)(7th edition) by Gregory Mankiw.** The main reference of this course. Also, some of the problems in our problem sets come from the textbook.
2. **Lecture slides** Lecture slides are based on the corresponding chapters in the reference textbook, but will not be exactly the same. There will be summarizing/rearranging or adding of new materials from outside the textbook.

5 Chapters and An Approximate Schedule

** We will start very slowly and gradually accelerate. Depending on how we progress, we might add/remove materials, and there might be some slight modifications to this schedule.

- Week 1
chapter 1 Ten Principles of Economics Suggested reading: textbook page 3-16.
chapter 2 Thinking Like an Economist Suggested reading: textbook page 20-31.

- Week 2
chapter 3 Interdependence and the Gains from Trade Suggested reading: text-
book sections: 3-1, 3-2 (page 48-55)
- Week 3
chapter 4 The Market Forces of Supply and Demand Suggested reading: text-
book sections: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4 (page 66-79)
chapter 5 Elasticity and Its Application Suggested reading: textbook section:
5-1, 5-2, 5-3 (page 90-105)
- Week 4
Midterm 1 60 minutes chapter 6 Supply, Demand, and Government Policies
Suggested reading: textbook section: 6-1, 6-2 (page 112-123)
- Week 5
chapter 7 Consumers, Producers, and the Efficiency of Markets Suggested read-
ing: textbook sections: 7-1, 7-2, 7-3 (page 136-146)
chapter 8 Application: The Costs of Taxation Suggested reading: textbook
sections: 8-1, 8-2 (page 156-162)
- Week 6
chapter 10 Externalities Suggested reading: 10-1a, 10-1b, 10-1c (page 197-199),
10-2a, 10-2b, 10-2c (page 202-205), 10-3 (page 208- 211)
chapter 11 Public Goods and Common Resources Suggested reading: 11-1, 11-
2, 11-3, 11-4 (page 216-228)
Market Analysis Workshop
- Week 7
Market Analysis Workshop, continue
Midterm 2 60 minutes
chapter 13 The Costs of Production Suggested reading: 13-1, 13-2, 13-3, 13-4
(page 260-272)
- Week 8
chapter 14 Firms in Competitive Markets Suggested reading: 14-1, 14-2, 14-3
(page 280-289)
chapter 15 Monopoly Suggested reading: 15-1, 15-2, 15-3, 15-4, 15-5, 15-6
(page300-322)
- Week 9
chapter 16 Monopolistic Competition Suggested reading: 16-2, 16-2 (page330-
336)
chapter 17 Oligopoly Suggested reading: 17-1, 17-2, 17-3, 17-4 (page 348-364)

- Week 10 chapter 21 The Theory of Consumer Choice Suggested reading: 21-1, 21-2, 21-3 (page 436-448)
chapter 22 Frontiers of Microeconomics Suggested reading: 22-1, 22-2, 22-3 (page 462-475)
- **Final Exam** 1 hour and 40 minutes.

6 Voluntary Market Analysis Workshop

This is a group presentation in week 6 and 7. Each presenter will receive an extra credit of 0.2-0.4 point. The number of people can be one, two or three and the corresponding presentation time are 10, 20, 30 minutes. The capacity is limited due to time constraint. So please email me about your willingness **and topic** as early as possible if you plan to present.

You can choose these topics: (1) analysis of platform economy or two sided market (e.g. Uber, Airbnb etc) (2) competition policy and antitrust (3) trade war.

You can present anything as long as it's related with course material and interesting. For example, you could use tools learned from this course to analyze Uber's subsidy policy. You may also introduce some high level concepts in antitrust economics. Please email me at least one week prior to the presentation so I could judge whether it's suitable for presentation or not.

7 Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required but highly recommended, as there will be improvised whiteboard illustration sometimes. It's your responsibility to catch up with the materials for missing classes.

8 Extra Credit

We will have one market analysis workshop presentation in week 6 and 7. The aim of these workshops are to bridge the gap between the abstract textbook theories and the real world practices and policies.

The **Market Analysis** Workshop discusses the application of model of supply and demand to analyze one market or a few related markets, to make (qualitative) predictions about what's going to happen in these market, to analyze and evaluate the effects of policies (for example, taxation) on market outcomes.

A detailed guideline for each workshop will be announced one week before the workshop. In the workshop, volunteers will each give an up to 10-minutes presentation in front of the whole class. Each presenter will receive an extra credit of 0.2-0.4 point (equivalent to having 0.2-0.4 points more on a problemset/a quiz/the midterm/the final) depending on the quality of the presentation. Send me an email if you want to present in the workshops. The workshops will be cancelled if no one wants to present.

9 Office Hour

Fri 5:00-7:00pm

10 Assignments and Grading

There are 6 problem sets in total, and they will all be **graded based on submission** (not based on correctness of your solution). We will probably go through some of the problems together in class before your submission, and you won't need to submit these problems. It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand the problems by asking me, asking your peers or checking the our slides, notes and textbook.

The final grade consists of 5 parts:

- Homework 10%
- Midterm 1 25%
- Midterm 2 25%
- Final 40%

The range for each exam will be pre-announced. Midterm and final are not cumulative. Midterm is a short 60 minutes exam and final is a long 100 minutes exam.

For the midterm, it will have 4 problems, 1 problem will be selected from our problem set, 1 problem will be a modified problem from our problem set and 2 problems will be new.

For the final, 1 problem come from the problem sets, 2 problems will be modifications of problems from the problem set, and 4-5 problems will be new. The new problems will be based on my lectures, illustration on the whiteboard, the "check for your self" summary by the end of each lecture slides and lecture notes.

11 Grade Expectation

Following the department grading policy, grades will be curved to target a median grade point of 3.0 (on a 0-4 scale).

12 Academic Honesty

1. Homeworks are individual work. Students are encouraged to work in groups to discuss problem sets, but must turn in their own work.
2. Exams are individual work and cheating will not be tolerated. Looking at a neighbor's exam is considered cheating. If a student is seen committing this act, they will not be allowed to continue taking their exam. The neighbor sitting next to the student will also be duly punished if they are seen as facilitating this act of cheating.
3. Altering an exam before submitting it for a review of the grading, obtaining an advance copy of an examination, or arranging for a surrogate test-taker are all flagrant violations of University policy.
4. Cheating of any kind may result in expulsion from the University. The Department will follow University policy in case of academic misconduct. I strongly recommend that you review University policy at <http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/help/academichonesty.php> Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions, which range from a disciplinary warning to permanent expulsion from the University, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct.