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Course Information

Instructor Information

Dr. Christopher Blake
Email: christopher.blake@emory.edu
Office Hours: My office hours are flexible; please visit: https://oxford.emory.edu/bookings/blake/ to book an appointment.
Zoom Meeting ID for Office Hours: 371-262-3265

Synchronous Meeting Time: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 1:00 pm EST–2:15 pm EST

Course Description

In Principles of Microeconomics you received an introduction to decision-making for individuals, firms, and government. This introduced you the concepts of key economic agents and the allocation of scarce resources in markets. This course expands on the topics you learn in a Principles course. In many ways, the topics are the same, but the level of complexity is drastically increased through the incorporation of algebra and calculus. The addition of these tools allows us to intuitively model real-world situations and markets in an effort to understand them—much like an economist would do in a professional setting. As a result, this course serves as an intermediary between Principles and Graduate-level modeling of things like supply and demand and optimal decision-making.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should:

- Advance their understanding of theories from Principles of Microeconomics.
- Learn how math can be used to inform our understanding of the economy.
- Critique the assumptions that are made in common microeconomic theories.
- Apply calculus to advanced theoretical models.
- Learn the basics of developing a model from scratch.

Course Meetings

This course meets synchronously (online, at specific times) and asynchronously (online, content available on Canvas). There is no in-person component to this class. You should attend all synchronous sections for our semester (TRF from 1:00 pm EST – 2:15 pm EST) as these are where you will be able to ask questions and get some guided practice.

Synchronous Session Information

Zoom Meeting ID: 918 8382 1255
Password: micro

Synchronous Session Guidelines

Synchronous sessions will be recorded. As a result, please review the Conduct and Netiquette sections to be sure you are comfortable with the guidelines. For each session:

1. Login five or ten minutes early to the synchronous session so that we can start right away.
2. Mute your microphone when not speaking to avoid audio feedback.

3. Keep your camera on for the duration of the session. This helps build community and makes our breakout session group work more fun!

4. Questions and comments are welcome and encouraged. Please use the hand-raise feature in Zoom and I will call on you so that we can avoid interruptions.

Each week, you will be asked to read prior to our synchronous sessions to make sure we stay on track. I will also post short videos clarifying content prior to each session for asynchronous viewing, which will leave our synchronous sessions to focus on the more difficult content. Sessions themselves will be split between lecture/discussion and applied practice via Participation Worksheets.

Attending When Quarantined

If you get sick or must quarantine, this will likely affect your ability to remain focused on course content. I will do my best to be flexible where possible, but will need you to communicate with me as soon as possible if something arises that will affect your performance. All sessions will be recorded so that you can revisit any class periods you might need to miss over the course of the semester.

Course Materials

There are plenty of materials that could be useful for this course. This section outlines some specific suggestions and highlights the required elements. It is expected that you will already have access to Canvas (canvas.emory.edu). There is no required content for this course. Because Course Reserves are not an option this semester, I have elected not to require a textbook or online homework platform. That said, the following optional textbook would potentially be of value to you as another source of our course content.

Textbook (Optional)

If you choose to get a textbook this semester, it will be: Microeconomics (9th Edition) by Robert Pindyck and Daniel Rubinfeld (ISBN-13: 978-0134184241). Purchasing the book is your choice and you will not be penalized for choosing not to.

Coursework

This course will be graded based on percentages assigned to coursework. All coursework can be divided into three categories: Participation Worksheets, Modeling Exercises, and Exams.

Participation Worksheets

Most class sessions will feature a Participation Worksheet. I have developed these worksheets as a way to challenge your understanding of course content you have studied prior to that session. There will be approximately 30 participation worksheets over the course of the semester and your lowest 5 scores are dropped. During synchronous sessions, I will divide you into breakout groups to work through the problems together as you discuss. While you are asked to work together, you should fill out your own worksheet for submission.

It is OK if you do cannot attend the synchronous session for a Participation Worksheet. Worksheets will be available on Canvas and you can submit them at any point prior to the stated deadline even if you are unable to work with a group. The real purpose of the group time is to make sure that you get in the habit of explaining your answers while providing you the opportunity to ask fellow students questions as they arise.

The manner that each worksheet will be graded will be clearly stated at the top of each worksheet and each participation activity will be worth 10 points. Grading will generally work one of two ways:
1. “Participation Only”
   (a) This grading style will be used most often for open-ended questions that ask you to analyze a given concept. You will receive a 10 if you complete this worksheet and 0 otherwise.

2. “Answer-Driven”
   (a) This grading style will be more common and correspond to worksheets where there is a correct answer. If your answer is perfect, you will receive 10 points. If your answer is not perfect, your grade will weight each sub question equally and scale your score to 10 points.

Modeling Exercises
Part of the purpose of this class is to teach you how to model circumstances like economists do. You will have one of these assignments approximately every other week in this course. Modeling exercises will also ‘scaffold” over the course of the semester as described below:

Modeling Exercises—Stage 1
I will present you an economic problem. After describing that problem, there will be three possible models presented that could potentially describe that circumstance. You will pick one of these and write a paragraph (no more than 250 words) describing why you made your choice. Some models presented will be wrong, while others will be close to the best. Your grade will be determined by both your choice of model and how well you argue your choice in the paragraph.

Modeling Exercises—Stage 2
In Stage 2, I will present you with an economic problem. Instead of providing you with possible models, you will now be asked to provide your own. Your submission will be a simple model with a short paragraph explaining it. Because this will be challenging, grading will be weighted more heavily towards completion so that I can provide you feedback and give you practice without pressure.

Modeling Exercises—Stage 3
In Stage 3, you will develop a simple model that reflects a current event. You will get to choose a current event of interest to you and then, like Stage 2, develop a simple model that explains that event. For this category of grading, you can consider it a ‘capstone,” in the sense that this model should reflect what you have learned over the course of these exercises. You will still be limited to 250 words to describe your model and the model cannot contain more than three independent variables.

Exams
You will have three exams this semester, each of which will be worth 100 points. Exams are held approximately once every five weeks. The first two exams will only cover new material while the last exam (Final Exam) will be cumulative in nature. For each exam, you will have a 48 hour window to start. Once you begin, you will have one hour for the first two exams, and 2 hours for the Final Exam. Exams will be open-book, open-note, open-resource, but you may not use the help of other students.

Exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer. Please note that this class will require that you continue to learn material outside of class since exams will evaluate not only your ability to recall information, but apply course content in unique ways. As a result, the exams are difficult. Simply memorizing content covered will not be enough to perform well in this class as we work towards the development of applicable skills and learn how economic analysis could be applied in a variety of settings.
Grading

With three types of coursework, grades are determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Necessary Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Necessary Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A−</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B−</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Final grades for the course will be determined exclusively based on the percentages you earn across all coursework for the semester. No rounding will occur after the semester, no matter how close you come to a threshold for a higher grade. In order to earn each letter grade, you must earn at least the percentage listed in the following table:

Expectations

In order to maximize the amount of learning for everyone, there are some rules I expect everyone to follow throughout the semester. Because these expectations are designed to ensure that everyone is evaluated the same way, they are non-negotiable.

Late Assignment Policy

I cannot award credit on late assignments. If something does come up that would prevent you from submitting an assignment on time, communicate this with me as soon as possible. By contacting me reasonably before a deadline, we may be able to figure out solutions.
**Attendance**

Attendance for synchronous sessions is not mandatory.

1. You should treat attendance of synchronous meetings as mandatory. While I will not explicitly take attendance each synchronous session, please make every effort to attend.

2. If something does prevent you from attending a synchronous session, you are responsible for covering missed content. The synchronous sessions will be recorded and posted on Canvas allowing you to watch any session you are unable to attend.

**Conduct**

Emory University’s ideals of inclusivity require that we foster an environment where people of diverse backgrounds, identities, abilities, and ideologies are affirmed, respected, and seen as a source of strength; where we strive to learn together, and ultimately thrive communally. If we at all fail to support these ideals, then we encourage discussion towards improvement, and we hope that this statement affirms your right to seek those discussions via dialogue with faculty, staff, your peers, and the use of the “Speak Up!” system when needed.

I treat this course as a “two-way” street. My goal is to provide the best education possible for you while covering the topics that need to be discussed prior to semester’s end. If at any point you have suggestions or comments, I welcome them. If I am going too fast in class, or too slow, say so. If something is unclear, ask for clarification or help. I will not be able to adjust things without knowing about them.

**Netiquette**

Netiquette is the etiquette of cyberspace—a set of rules for proper behavior and courteous online interaction. Review this link about Proper Netiquette Rules (Source: Rasmussen College). These are general rules that apply to this course.

**Academic Honesty**

The Honor Code is strictly enforced in this class. Academic dishonesty may include giving or receiving help on exams, plagiarizing material, copying another student’s work, and more. Please familiarize yourself with the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code will result in a penalty at the discretion of the instructor, but will typically result in the automatic award of an ‘F’ for the course.

**Communication**

Any changes to the course will be made via Canvas announcements. Check these often, especially if you must miss class. You are expected to attend class, and will be directed to fellow classmates should you miss some time. All assignments (with the exception of exams) and course material can be found on Canvas. Check Canvas often to make sure that you are keeping up.

If something happens to prevent you from fully participating in class, communicate this with me immediately. In such moments, we can figure out a plan of action to ensure that the course remains manageable to you.

**Accommodations**

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, please contact the OAS and complete the registration process. Faculty may not legally provide you with accommodations until an accommodation letter has been processed and discussed with them; accommodations do not start until this point and are not retroactive. Students registered with OAS who receive a letter outlining specific academic
accommodations are thus strongly encouraged to immediately coordinate a meeting with their professors to discuss a protocol to implement accommodations that will (or may) be needed over the course of the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the term as possible. Additional information is available at the OAS website at http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html.

Title IX Reporting

First and foremost, I am always willing to listen if you need an ear. Before your do, Title IX requirements ask every Emory employee who is informed about an allegation of sexual misconduct involving any student is required to notify a Title IX Coordinator either directly or through their relevant reporting structure. However, employees who serve in a professional role in which communications are afforded confidential status under the law (e.g., medical providers, therapists, and professional and pastoral counselors) are not bound by this requirement but may, consistent with their ethical and legal obligations, be required to report limited information about incidents without revealing the identities of the individuals involved, to a Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. All members of the Emory community are encouraged to promptly report incidents of sexual harassment and discrimination.

For more information, visit: http://sexualmisconductresources.emory.edu/policies/index.html.