

Syllabus

Instructor

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Class

M,W 1:15 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Clapp 407
Office Hours: M,W 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

This course studied the theoretical analysis of consumer and firm behavior, the role of prices in an economic system with various market structures, interrelationships of product and factor markets in a general equilibrium model, and the implications of the price system for resource allocation and economic welfare. Prerequisites include Econ 103 and 104, and Math 101 (or equivalent). The course relies heavily on calculus and the math prerequisite will not be waived.

Textbooks

- Varian. *Intermediate Microeconomics (8th Edition)*. ISBN: 978-0-393-93424-3
- Heilbroner. *The Worldly Philosophers (7th Edition)*. ISBN: 978-0-684-86214-9
- Nasar. *Grand Pursuit: The Story of Economic Genius*. ISBN: 978-0-684-87298-8

Grades

40% **Problem Sets**

30% **Midterm**

30% **Final Exam**

Letter grades will be assigned based on the typical 90,80,70,60 scale. The course is not curved, but I reserve the right to adjust the scale in order to assign higher letter grades. I will not adjust the scale to make it harder to get a good letter grade. For example, if you earn 80% in the course, you will get at least a "B-".

Problem Sets

A problem set is assigned each week and due the following week in class. The lowest problem set score will be dropped from your grade. You are encouraged to work with other students to solve the problems, but you must turn in your own copy of the work and make note of who you worked with. If you choose to work in a group, I recommend re-writing the problem set on your own to make sure that you understand the problems. This small amount of extra work each week will pay dividends on exams.

Problem sets must be written in legible handwriting, with problems appearing in correct order, and stapled. Failure to follow these instructions (or a failure to acknowledge the students you worked with) will result in a 20% deduction from your score.

I will post answer keys online shortly after each problem set is due. As such, late assignments are not accepted. A missed or late assignment will be counted as your dropped score.

Exams

There are two exams: a midterm and a final. Both exams are open-note and open-book. The availability of written material during an exam is not a substitute for studying! Your notes and the book will not be enough to figure out how to do a problem on the spot, but they are useful if you momentarily forget a formula. Electronic devices such as calculators and mobile phones are not allowed.

The midterm is in-class on March 7. If we deviate from the course schedule, the material covered on the midterm will adjust – not the date of the exam. The final is self-scheduled and will cover material from the second half of the course. Although the final is not explicitly cumulative, the course material builds upon itself, so material from the first half of the course will still be important for the final.

Practice Problems

I will occasionally post practice problems on the website. They are optional, but I encourage you to work through them. I do not post solutions, but am happy to discuss the problems in office hours or during class.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices such as laptops and iPads are not permitted in class. The course is very mathematical and graphical in nature and keyboard input is not a practical way of taking notes. Mobile phones must be turned off or set to vibrate. Microeconomic theory is very exciting, but please wait to text your friends about the weak axiom of revealed preference until after class.

Academic Honesty

You will follow the College's honor code:

*I will honor myself, my fellow students, and Mount Holyoke College
by acting responsibly, honestly, and respectfully in both my words and my deeds.*

If you are not sure how this applies in some particular context, please ask me for clarification. Violation of this policy will result in an F for the course and will be reported to the College.

Schedule

This schedule is flexible and will probably change. If we get ahead or fall behind on the material, the content of the midterm will change – not the date. Plan accordingly.

Week 0	25-JAN-2012	Syllabus and Math Review	
Week 1	30-JAN-2012	Ch. 2: Budget Constraint	
	01-FEB-2012	Ch. 3: Preferences	
Week 2	06-FEB-2012	Ch. 4: Utility	PS 1 Due
	08-FEB-2012	Ch. 4: Utility	
Week 3	13-FEB-2012	Ch. 5: Choice	PS 2 Due
	15-FEB-2012	Ch. 5: Choice	
Week 4	20-FEB-2012	Ch. 6: Demand	
	22-FEB-2012	Ch. 15: Market Demand	PS 3 Due
Week 5	27-FEB-2012	Ch. 16: Equilibrium	
	29-FEB-2012	Catch-up/review	PS 4 Due
Week 6	05-MAR-2012	Catch-up/review	PS 5 Due, Finish <i>The Worldly Philosophers</i>
	07-MAR-2012	Midterm 1	
Week 7	12-MAR-2012	TBA	
	14-MAR-2012	Ch. 18: Technology	
Week 8	19-MAR-2012	Spring Break	
	21-MAR-2012	Spring Break	
Week 9	26-MAR-2012	Ch. 19: Profit Maximization	
	28-MAR-2012	Ch. 20: Cost Minimization	
Week 10	02-APR-2012	Ch. 21: Cost Curves	
	04-APR-2012	Ch. 22: Supply	PS 6 Due
Week 11	09-APR-2012	Ch. 24: Monopoly	
	11-APR-2012	Ch. 25: Monopoly Behavior	PS 7 Due
Week 12	16-APR-2012	Ch. 27: Oligopoly	
	18-APR-2012	Ch. 33: Welfare	PS 8 Due
Week 13	23-APR-2012	Ch. 34: Externalities	
	25-APR-2012	Ch. 35: Asymmetric Information	PS 9 Due
Week 14	30-APR-2012	Catch-up/review	PS 10 Due, Finish <i>Grand Pursuit</i>