

Econ 310 – Intermediate Microeconomics

Fall 2014

Monday 4:30-7:20p, Bell Tower 2582

Instructor: Ty Robbins

Office: Sage Hall, Room 2141

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30 PM, or by appointment

Course Homepage: [CSUCI Blackboard](#)

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Textbook: *Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach*, 9th edition by Hal Varian (W. W. Norton & Company), 2014.

Course Description: This course will train you in the key principles of microeconomic theory relating to demand, production, and competitive markets. First analyzing the choices of individual consumers and production decisions, we'll then examine markets in equilibrium, how they work, and when/how/why they fail. Particular emphasis will be on the applications of theory. Our goal is to develop your skills to tackle problems using theory and to build your economic intuition with careful, systematic analysis.

Program Learning Goals:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Oral Communication
3. Written Communication
4. Collaboration
5. Conduct (Ethics)
6. Competency in Discipline

Course Learning Objectives:

1. Predict and interpret how rationale consumers make optimal decisions with formal resource constraints. (1-3, 6)
2. Develop and utilize economic tools (models, equations, graphs, etc.) to solve real-world situations, generating logically consistent arguments regarding efficiency and welfare. (1-4, 6)

3. Distinguish and determine optimal outcomes and efficiency implications of various forms of market structure, including risk considerations and strategic interactions. (1-4, 6)
4. Project the economic consequences of business decisions or policy changes from the short run to the long run. (1-4, 6)
5. Identify circumstances where markets may fail, forecast inefficiencies, and suggest optimal private/public mechanisms to correct market failures. (1-3, 6)
6. Apply economic intuition to other analytical disciplines. (1-4, 6)

Important Dates:

Exams: MT1 (10/6), MT2 (11/10), Final (12/15)

Review Sessions: MT1 (9/30), MT2 (11/4), Final (12/9); **Location/time TBD**

Grades: Your course grade will be determined by six problem sets assigned throughout the semester (20%), two midterm exams (20% each), and one final exam (40%).

Problem Sets – Each student must hand in his/her own copy of a problem set to receive credit, however, you are encouraged to work in groups if it enhances your learning experience. The six problem sets will be assigned every two or three weeks. Your lowest problem set score will be dropped and will not count against your final course grade. All work must be turned in on time at the beginning of the designated lecture (see schedule below); late work will not be accepted. Problem sets will be posted on Blackboard, as will *extra* problems/solutions (not turned in) to further your understanding. Each will be graded based on the following rubric:

Points	Description
4	Almost Perfect
3	Attempted all questions, some wrong answers
2	Missing questions, many mistakes
1	At least you turned it in
0	Assignment not turned in

Exams – The three exams (2 midterms, 1 final) comprise the bulk of your course grade. Each midterm will be 90 minutes. Completing all problem sets (assigned & extra), reviewing posted solutions, attending office hours/review sessions, and forming study groups will be your ticket to thriving in this course. There will be no make-up exams. If you miss a midterm with an

exceptional documentable excuse (medical emergency or death in the family), the weight of that exam may be added to the final exam provided official documentation of the incident is supplied. Please note that this is a risky proposition since the final will become a very large portion of your course grade and the best way to prepare for the final exam is to do all the required work regularly, including taking the midterm exams. If you miss the final exam, you will need to file for an Incomplete in the course. Letter grades for this class are determined according to the following scale:

A- to A+	90% to 100%
B- to B+	80% to 89.99%
C- to C+	70% to 79.99%
D- to D+	60% to 69.99%
F	Below 60%

Exams and the final course grade may be curved, at my discretion. This may be done only after the final exam is complete in order to adjust for the difficulty of the class.

Grade Appeals – If you believe that a mistake was made in grading your exam, you may submit a written appeal within one week after I return the exam in class. Attach the relevant exam along with a hand-written explanation of the appeal.

Participation – While participation will not directly factor into your course grade, attending lectures and actively contributing in discussion is beneficial for your own understanding of the material, helps your peers, and maintains a lively atmosphere. Regular participation, both in lecture and on the Blackboard discussion boards, signals extra effort and intellectual growth through the semester. As such, special consideration may be given to a student's final grade if on the border between two grades and the student exhibited growth and continued participation throughout the semester.

E-mail: I may occasionally send out course announcements to your CI email address. Please be aware that the University has a spam filter that may screen out email sent from third-party email providers (e.g., Google, Yahoo), therefore it is best to send email from your accredited CI account to avoid any issues. I will respond to all emails within 48 hours. Any questions regarding course material (lecture, problem sets, etc) should be posted to the Blackboard forums to ensure a timely response and for all classmates to benefit from the discussion.

Blackboard: We will be relying heavily on Blackboard throughout the semester. All course materials, including syllabi and problem sets, will only be made available through Blackboard. In addition, use of the discussion forums is strongly encouraged to ask and answer questions (see above section on Participation). If you have a question about the material, it is likely others have the same question so discussing issues in this public forum will benefit all.

Schedule of Lectures:

Week	Date	Textbook Chapter(s)	Description	Work Due
1	8/25	1-3	Intro, Math Review, Budget Constraint, Preferences	
2	9/1	HOLIDAY		
3	9/8	4, 5	Utility, Choice	
4	9/15	6, 8	Demand, Decomposing Prices Changes	PS #1
5	9/22	8, 9	Decomposing Price Changes, Labor Supply	
6	9/29	9, 10	Labor Supply, Intertemporal Choice	PS #2
7	10/6	MT1 (1-6, 8-9); 12	MIDTERM 1; Uncertainty	
8	10/13	20, 21	Profit Max, Cost Minimization	
9	10/20	15	Market Demand	PS #3
10	10/27	14, 16	Welfare/Surplus, Equilibrium	
11	11/3	32	Exchange	PS #4
12	11/10	MT2 (10, 12, 14-16, 20, 21); 32	MIDTERM 2; Exchange	
13	11/17	25, 26	Monopoly, Price Discrimination	
14	11/24	28	Oligopoly	PS #5
15	12/1	35	Externalities	
16	12/8	37	Public Goods	PS #6
17	12/15	All Chapters	FINAL EXAM	

Academic Integrity: All instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to CSUCI Judicial Affairs: <http://www.csuci.edu/studentlife/judicial-affairs/>. Cheating on an exam will result in a score of zero. However, I encourage you to work together on problem set assignments.

Disability Accommodation: CSU Channel Islands is committed to equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The mission of Disability Accommodation Services is to assist students with disabilities to realize their academic and personal potential. Students with physical, learning, or other disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Accommodation Services office at (805) 437-8510 for personal assistance and accommodations.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be made in lecture and/or on Blackboard with at least one week of notice, except under extraordinary circumstances.