

# ECON 310 Sec 002: Intermediate Microeconomics

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Office hours: Mondays 8-9:30 p.m., or by appointment

Office: <https://csuci.zoom.us/j/88183201072?pwd=RDZFY0R3VzVhYTZDaWNmZ0VCL29Sdz09>

Class hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8 p.m.

Class room: <https://csuci.zoom.us/j/86065562211?pwd=bzh1MkVacjRkT1hxaHVQSkhKSWRxUT09>

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## Course description

The material presented in this course is the primary basis for your understanding of microeconomics. We will discuss theoretical treatments of how individuals make decisions, how economists interpret these decisions, and how economists define rational behavior. We will also discuss theoretical treatments of how firms under various competitive environments maximize profits given their production technologies.

## Prerequisite

ECON 110, ECON 111 and MATH 140 or MATH 150. The course makes extensive use of algebra, graphs, and basic calculus. To succeed in this class you should be comfortable simplifying algebraic expressions, solving linear equations, solving systems of two equations with two variables, and taking basic derivatives.

## Program learning goals

These are the skills we try to help you build in all MVS courses:

1. Critical thinking.
2. Oral communication.
3. Written communication.
4. Collaboration.
5. Conduct (ethics).
6. Competency in discipline

## Course learning objectives

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to (associated program learning goals in parentheses):

1. Explain the economic behavior of firms and households (1, 2, 3, 6)
2. Describe and apply the scientific method to economic behavior (1, 2, 3, 6)
3. Apply the principles of supply and demand to determine prices and identify the factors that affect supply and demand (1, 6)
4. Describe and distinguish between various forms of individual preferences and firm technologies (1, 6)
5. Evaluate the manner(s) in which public policy may affect behavior (1, 6)

## Textbook and online homework platform

The textbook for the course is Hal R. Varian’s “Intermediate Microeconomics,” Ninth Edition. We will also be using the publisher’s Smartwork5 platform for homework and practice problems. While the book is optional, the Smartwork5 platform is required because it will be our tool for homework submission. There is a module in the course’s Canvas page named “Course book resources.” Within this module, you will find:

- A short video with registration instructions. I recommend you watch this
- A link for the Smartwork5 assignments
- A link for the electronic version of the book. You would use this if you choose to buy the electronic version of the book
- A link to graphing tutorials. I recommend checking them out and revisiting for reference as we cover material in the course

While I favor the online/electronic version of the book, in part because it integrates with Smartwork5 for cross-referencing material, I do want to remind you that the book is optional. It is also possible to purchase paper-based versions of the book, the ISBN-13 of the book is 978-0393123968.

You should know that I am not financially affiliated with W.W. Norton & Company (the publisher), and receive no monetary benefit from requiring the course material.

## Lectures and participation

Our lectures will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m. via Zoom:

<https://csuci.zoom.us/j/86065562211?pwd=bzh1MkVacjRkT1hxaHVQSkhKSWRxUT09>

In addition to Zoom, I tentatively intend to use Mentimeter (<https://www.mentimeter.com/>) in order to conduct in-class polls, and that will be the basis for participation in the course. This is a platform that is new to me, and if it turns out not to work well, participation will be based on random attendance checks throughout the semester.

## Grading

Your grade will be based on a series of problem sets—due every Tuesday before class, except for the weeks in which we have an exam. Those weeks, problem sets are due on Sunday—two midterms, a final exam, and participation. You may use your book, notes, lectures, consultations with yours truly (by email, in office hours) and with your classmates while doing the problem sets. The problem sets are worth 40% of your grade. Each midterm will account for 15% of your grade, the final exam will account for an additional 20% of your grade. Lastly, participation accounts for 10% of your grade.

All problem sets must be submitted on time. Homework turned in late will not be graded. Naturally, if you are facing a time constraint, feel free to reach out to me directly **before** missing a deadline.

Midterms and the final exam will be available for a whole day on the dates specified below. While they will be open all day, the midterms will be 75 minutes long and the final exam will be two hours long. Once you start them, you will have to complete them within the given time frame. You may not collaborate with others when doing the exams. I will post instructions closer to the date of each exam.

While the participation grade is small, I believe that attending and actively participating with both questions and contributions to discussions is beneficial for both your own understanding of the material and that of your peers. I therefore strongly encourage attending lectures, and showing up prepared and ready to discuss the material. For participation, the lectures will include a series of questions which, naturally, you have to be in attendance in order to answer. The number of questions asked during each lecture will vary from lecture to lecture (some days we may not even have any questions). The participation grade,

however, will be based on the overall number of questions answered and how many were answered correctly during the entire semester.

Letter grades for this class will be determined based on the total points in all assignments/final exam as follows:

**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** 0% to 59.99%

Exams and the whole class **may** be curved, at my discretion. This will be done in order to adjust for difficulty of the class.

## Important dates

First lecture .....	August 24 <sup>th</sup>
First midterm exam .....	September 21 <sup>st</sup>
Second midterm exam .....	October 26 <sup>th</sup>
Final exam .....	December 7 <sup>th</sup>

## Credit hour

As of July 1, 2011 federal law (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, sections 600.2 and 600.4) requires all accredited institutions to comply with the federal definition of the credit hour. For all CSU degree programs and courses bearing academic credit, the "credit hour" is defined as "the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practice, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

## Equipment

You are required to have access to the Internet and a computer (equipped with a headset [i.e., microphone and speaker]).

## Academic honesty

1. Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. It usually involves an attempt by a student to show possession of a level of knowledge or skill that he/she does not possess.

2. Course instructors have the initial responsibility for detecting and dealing with academic dishonesty. Instructors who believe that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred are obligated to discuss the matter with the student(s) involved. Instructors should possess reasonable evidence of academic dishonesty. However, if circumstances prevent consultation with student(s), instructors may take whatever action (subject to student appeal) they deem appropriate.
3. Instructors who are convinced by the evidence that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty shall assign an appropriate academic penalty. If the instructors believe that the academic dishonesty reflects on the student's academic performance or the academic integrity in a course, the student's grade should be adversely affected. Suggested guidelines for appropriate actions are: an oral reprimand in cases where there is reasonable doubt that the student knew his/her action constituted academic dishonesty; a failing grade on the particular paper, project or examination where the act of dishonesty was unpremeditated, or where there were significant mitigating circumstances; a failing grade in the course where the dishonesty was premeditated or planned. The instructors will file incident reports with the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and for Student Affairs or their designees. These reports shall include a description of the alleged incident of academic dishonesty, any relevant documentation, and any recommendations for action that he/she deems appropriate.
4. The Vice President for Student Affairs shall maintain an Academic Dishonesty File of all cases of academic dishonesty with the appropriate documentation.
5. Student may appeal any actions taken on charges of academic dishonesty to the "Academic Appeals Board."
6. The Academic Appeals Board shall consist of faculty and at least one student.
7. Individuals may not participate as members of the Academic Appeals Board if they are participants in an appeal.
8. The decision of the Academic Appeals Board will be forwarded to the President of CSU Channel Islands, whose decision is final.

## ADA Statement

California State University 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.

## Online Course Netiquette Guidelines<sup>1</sup>

You should check the course web site and your CI mail once every day for announcements and updates while the class is in session. Respond to instructor and classmates inquiries in 48 hours or sooner. We do not have required postings, but if you use the discussion board, please follow these rules:

1. Review all discussion postings before posting your own to prevent redundancy.
2. Be aware that typing in all capital letters indicates shouting.
3. Be careful with humor and sarcasm. Both can easily be misunderstood!
4. Check your writing for errors by reviewing what you've written before submitting it.
5. Acronyms (LOL, etc.) and emoticons are commonly used online, but be careful not to overuse them.
6. Many communications with your instructor or fellow students are best handled through email. Only post on the classroom discussion board if the conversation is relevant to others in the class.
7. Respect the privacy of your classmates and what they share in class.
8. Ask classmates for clarification if you find a discussion posting offensive or difficult to understand.

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from <http://blogs.lsc.edu/expectations/netiquette-guidelines/>

9. Avoid sweeping generalizations. Back up your stated opinions with facts and reliable sources.
10. Understand that we may disagree and that exposure to other people's opinions is part of the learning experience.
11. Be respectful of each other. We're all in this together. Before posting a comment, ask whether you would be willing to make the same comment to a person's face.
12. Keep in mind that everything you write, indeed every click of your mouse is recorded on the network server. On the Internet there are no take backs.
13. Keep in mind that you are taking a college class. Something that would be inappropriate in a traditional classroom is also inappropriate in an online classroom.

## **Tentative schedule**

**Week 01, 08/24 - 08/30: Introduction, Syllabus, Chapter 1**

**Week 02, 08/31 - 09/06: Chapter 2**

**Week 03, 09/07 - 09/13: Chapters 3 and 4**

**Week 04, 09/14 - 09/20: Chapters 5 and 6**

**Week 05, 09/21 - 09/27: First midterm**

Midterm is on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Week 06, 09/28 - 10/04: Chapter 15**

Please note that we skip a number of chapters.

**Week 07, 10/05 - 10/11: Chapters 14 and 16**

Please note that we will cover Chapter 15 before Chapter 14.

**Week 08, 10/12 - 10/18: Chapter 19**

Please note that we skip a few chapters.

**Week 09, 10/19 - 10/25: Chapter 22**

Please note that we skip a few chapters.

**Week 14, 11/23 - 11/29: Second midterm**

Midterm is on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Week 11, 11/02 - 11/08: Chapters 23 and 24**

**Week 12, 11/09 - 11/15: Chapters 25 and 26, Veterans Day**

**Week 13, 11/16 - 11/22: Chapters 25, 26, and 28**

**Week 14, 11/23 - 11/29: Chapter 28, Thanksgiving**

**Week 15, 11/30 - 12/06: Comprehensive review**

**Week 16, 12/07 - 12/13: Final exam**

Final exam is on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus is subject to changes. Any changes will be made on Canvas with at least one week of notice, except under extraordinary circumstances.