

Florida International University
Department of Economics
Principles of Microeconomics (ECO 2023)

Instructor: Andra Hiriscau

Spring, 2021

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Office Hours: Th 12:30- 2:00 pm

Office: [Virtual \(Zoom\)](#)

Web: www.andrahiriscau.com

Class Hours: Tu-Th 11:00 am- 12:15 pm

Classroom: Student Academic Success Center, Room 352

Course Description and Purpose

In this course, we will study the making of decisions by individuals, businesses, and government. For some of you, this may be the only course you take in the subject, and it provides a solid foundation for economic analysis and thinking that can last throughout your education and subsequent professional careers. For others, this may provide a foundation for many years of study in economics, business, or related fields. In either case, the concepts you learn in this class will be applied in some form or fashion to your lives for years to come. Therefore, my goal in this class is to make sure that by the end of these sixteen weeks you will have a solid foundation of microeconomics. To achieve this goal, I will employ teaching strategies that are designed to increase your long-term retention of this material. Why study Microeconomics? The answer to this question is that you are probably required to take this class for your major. This is a fair response. However, you are about to embark on a scholarly journey where you will learn about how people make decisions. Why should you be interested? Because you are a person and you make decisions! This course will help you think more clearly about making decisions and to better understand how the economy works. We will use economic analysis to think about how people, businesses, and society try to maximize their well-being given that they all have limited resources.

Required Materials

- Hubbard, R. Gleen and O'Brien, Anthony Patrick; *My Lab with Pearson e-text- Instant Access- for Microeconomics* (8th Edition , 2021; ISBN-13: 9780135952955)
- MyLab Economics Access (Course Website: [Pearson](#))
- Note: On-line access to the full text of *Microeconomics* is included with purchase of MyLab Economics access, so students are not obligate to buy a physical copy of the textbook. All weekly homework and quizzes will be distributed and grade through MyLab Economics, so you cannot pass this course without MyLab Economics class.
- Download the application [Kahoot Mobile App](#) in order to be able to answer questions.

Registering for MyLab Economics Access

Follow the steps mentioned on [Student Registration Instructions for Canvas](#) or [Video](#). Online access to the e-text and MyLab Economics must be accessed through Canvas. If you need additional guidance, consult the [support site](#), especially the system requirements which list recommended browsers. If you have problems registering, purchasing, or logging in, please contact [Customer Support](#). Pearson Support is available to assist you on the phone, through email, or with on-line chat.

- Email services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Chat services are available Monday through Thursday (8:00 am- 12:00 am) and Friday (8:00 am- 10:00 pm)

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

By the end of this course you will be able to:

1. Explain the role of scarcity, specialization, and cost-benefit analysis in the economy and economic decision making.
2. Explain the concept of comparative advantage and how it can lead to gains in trade for all involved.
3. Analyze how buyers and sellers interact in a free and competitive market to determine prices and quantities of a good.
4. Identify the determinants of supply and demand; demonstrate the impact of shifts in supply and demand curves on equilibrium price and output.
5. Analyze the conditions that determine when markets are efficient and when markets fail.
6. Analyze the extent to which consumers and producers react to changes in prices and changes in income.
7. Evaluate the factors affecting firm behavior, such as production and costs.
8. Analyze the pricing and production decisions of firms under different market structures.

Course Structure

Class Structure

The class is meeting face-to-face twice a week for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Grading Policy

I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Any curve will only ever make it easier to obtain a higher letter grade. Incomplete will be given only under exceptional circumstances. Any kind of emergency has to be documented to receive an "Incomplete". Doing poorly in the course will not be considered a valid reason. The grade will be calculated using the following proportions:

- 15% of your grade will be determined by in class midterm exam 1
- 15% of your grade will be determined by in class midterm exam 2
- 15% of your grade will be determined by in class midterm exam 3
- 15% of your grade will be determined by final exam
- 40% of your grade will be determined by homework
- 5% (extra points) will be determined by class participation/attendance

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Final Grade} = & (\text{Midterm 1} * 0.15) + (\text{Midterm 2} * 0.15) + (\text{Midterm 3} * 0.15) + (\text{Final Exam} * 0.15) \\ & + (\text{Homework Average} * 0.40) + (\text{Class Participation} * 0.05) \end{aligned}$$

If your final is a higher score than any of your three previous exams, then your final grade will be calculated as follow:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Final Grade} = & (\text{Average of Two Highest Exam Scores} * 0.30) + (\text{Final Exam} * 0.30) \\ & + (\text{Homework Average} * 0.40) + (\text{Class Participation} * 0.05) \end{aligned}$$

Table 1: Sample Grading Scheme

Letter	Range	Letter	Range	Letter	Range
A	90.00 or above	B	79.00- 83.99 %	C	67.00- 72.99 %
A-	87.00-89.99 %	B-	76.00- 78.99 %	D	60.00- 66.99 %
B+	84.00-86.99 %	C+	73.00- 75.99 %	F	59.99 or less

- Class participation is not equivalent to class attendance; it implies that you participate actively in the class discussions. Actively talking and thinking economics may be the most important element to further your economic intuition.
- All weekly homework will be distributed and grade through MyLab Economics. The two lowest online homework assignments will be dropped.
- Exams are going to be composed of multiple choice questions. Final exam is **cumulative** and given according to the University rules during Finals Week.
- There will be no extra credit of any kind offered to any student under any circumstances. If and when extra credit is given the entire class will have the opportunity to get it. Usually extra credit opportunities are available during the class. If you do not attend class then you may miss the extra credit opportunity. Final grades will not be rounded.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your grade, please contact the instructor immediately. You should be proactive about your grades, and do not wait until the last minute.

Homework

- Homework consists of 15-50 questions from each chapter. Homework will be assigned at the end of every chapter and must be completed by the due date and time which are posted on MyLab. Students have **TWO** attempts to complete the homework assignment, in which the score will count as the recorded grade. The assignment will automatically close on the due date and time.
- Make sure to save and submit the assignment once you have completed it.
- Since the homework assignments are on-line, they are open-book and open-notes. However, full understanding of the material will be needed in order to answer all of the questions.

Office Hours

My office hours are on Thursdays from 12:30-2:00 PM or by appointment. You need to schedule a meeting through [Calendly](#). You will access the sessions through Zoom links posted on Canvas under the Zoom tab. If the appointment time you want is taken on Calendly, you can join the office hours with your classmates.

Exams

- There are four exams in total. You are required to take all the exams at the scheduled time. All exams are hard-copied exams taken in class. Midterm exams test on certain chapters (see weekly schedule section), while the final exam is **cumulative**.
- **Make-up exams:** Unless you have a university-sanctioned schedule conflict there will be no make-up exams. If you think you have a schedule conflict, please notify me at least two weeks before the exam. If you miss an exam the final will count twice and replace the missed exam grade. If you miss a second exam due to a documented emergency, then we will deal with those situations an individual basis. Make sure to bring your Panther ID on the exam days.

Weekly schedule

The schedule is tentative and subject to change. Homework and quizzes in the second half of the semester tend to build on the concepts in the first half of the semester, so it is important to at least review those concepts throughout the semester.

Week	Date	Section
1	Tuesday, January 12, 2021	Economics: Foundations and Models (Chapter 1)
1	Thursday, January 14, 2021	Trade-Offs, Comparative Advantage, and the Market System (Chapter 2)
2	Tuesday, January 19, 2021	Where Prices Come From: The Interaction of Demand and Supply (Chapter 3)
2	Thursday, January 21, 2021	Where Prices Come From: The Interaction of Demand and Supply (Chapter 3)
3	Tuesday, January 26, 2021	Economics Efficiency, Government Price Setting, and Taxes (Chapter 4)
3	Thursday, January 28, 2021	Economics Efficiency, Government Price Setting, and Taxes (Chapter 4)
4	Tuesday, February 2, 2021	Elasticity: The Responsiveness of Demand and Supply (Chapter 6)
4	Thursday, February 4, 2021	Elasticity: The Responsiveness of Demand and Supply (Chapter 6)
5	Tuesday, February 9, 2021	Midterm 1: Chapters 1-4, & 6
5	Thursday, February 11, 2021	Consumer Choice and Behavioral Economics (Chapter 10)
6	Tuesday, February 16, 2021	Consumer Choice and Behavioral Economics (Chapter 10)
6	Thursday, February 18, 2021	Technology, Production, and Costs (Chapter 11)
7	Tuesday, February 23, 2021	Technology, Production, and Costs (Chapter 11)
7	Thursday, February 25, 2021	Firms in Perfectly Competitive Markets (Chapter 12)
8	Tuesday, March 2, 2021	Firms in Perfectly Competitive Markets (Chapter 12)
8	Thursday, March 4, 2021	Monopolistic Competition (Chapter 13)
9	Tuesday, March 9, 2021	Monopolistic Competition (Chapter 13)
9	Thursday, March 11, 2021	Midterm 2: Chapters 10-13
10	Tuesday, March 16, 2021	Oligopoly: Firms in Less Competitive Markets (Chapter 14)
10	Thursday, March 18, 2021	Oligopoly: Firms in Less Competitive Markets (Chapter 14)
11	Tuesday, March 23, 2021	Monopoly and Antitrust Policy (Chapter 15)
11	Thursday, March 25, 2021	Monopoly and Antitrust Policy (Chapter 15)
12	Tuesday, March 30, 2021	Externalities, Environmental Policy, and Public Goods (Chapter 5)
12	Thursday, April 1, 2021	Externalities, Environmental Policy, and Public Goods (Chapter 5)
13	Tuesday, April 6, 2021	Optional Chapter*
13	Thursday, April 8, 2021	Optional Chapter*
14	Tuesday, April 13, 2021	Midterm 3: Chapters 14-16, & 5 & optional chapter
14	Thursday, April 15, 2021	Optional Chapter*
15	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM
15	Thursday, April 22, 2021	
*Any of the following chapters: The Economics of Healthcare (Chapter 7), The Markets for Labor (Chapter 16) or Public Choice, Taxes and the Distribution of Income (Chapter 17)		

Key Dates

Classes start	Monday, January 11 th , 2021
Martin Luther King Day (No Class)	Monday, January 18 th , 2021
Last day to add/drop	Tuesday, January 19 th , 2021
Last day to drop with DR grade	Monday, March 22 th , 2021
Last regular class day	Saturday, April 17 th , 2021
Finals week (Required Class Meetings)	Monday-Saturday, April 19 th – 24 th , 2021
Last regular class day	Saturday, April 24 th , 2021
End of term	Saturday, April 24 th , 2021
Grades available to students	Thursday, April 29 th , 2021

Sources of Additional Microeconomics Information

- Economics tutor center. The Economics Department has provided a classroom designed to assist students enrolled in various economics courses. The Tutoring Center is located in VH 136, and is open Monday- Friday from 9:00 AM- 5:00 PM. Economics Ph.D. students are available during these times to help with any questions you may have.
- There are great video tutorials on [YouTube](#) and [Khan Academy](#)
- [The Economist](#)
 - Free with Miami Dade Library Card [Miami Dade Library Card](#)
 - Free (UK edition) [FIU- College of Business](#)
- [The New York Times](#)
 - Activate your free access to [NYTimes](#)
- [The Wall Street Journal](#)
 - Activate your free access to [WSJ](#)

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is **required** for all scheduled class lectures. Invariably, students who miss classes fall to the bottom of the grading ladder. Reading the textbook is a complement to the lectures, not a perfect substitute for missing classroom lectures. The lectures may deviate from the textbook, and you can only be aware of the appropriate material if you attend the class. Some material in the textbook may be skipped in the lectures, while other material may be studied in more detail than is presented in the textbook. I will give examples, make clarifications, answer questions, and offer interpretations that may not be found in the textbook. Announcements concerning which material in the textbook will be emphasized or ignored, will be made in class. Students are responsible for all announcements made in class. Students are also responsible for all subsequent changes in the syllabus that are announced. Missing a lecture is no excuse.

Policies on Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted and under no circumstances will make-up homework be allowed. A student who fails to complete the homework before the due date will receive a grade of "0" for the respective assignment. Deadlines are strictly enforced and are detailed on MyLab Economics, and on Canvas. Please be mindful of these dates, as they will not change. If you do miss an assignment (or two), remember that I drop the two lowest homework assignments so your grade will not be hurt. However, if you miss more than two homework assignments your homework grade will suffer.

Technology policy

I have a no laptop, or cell phone policy. I find that although there are merits to taking notes on these devices they can cause a distraction. Sometimes even distracting those around you, which in economics is what we call a "negative externality" (You will learn about this later on in the course). Additionally, because my goal is to promote long-term retention of this material this is best done through taking notes with a paper and pencil. Do not take my word for it look at the research below.

- [Attention, Students: Put Your Laptops Away](#) NPR Article.
- [The impact of computer usage on academic performance: Evidence from a randomized trial at the United States Military Academy](#), S. Carter, K. Greenberg and M. Walker

Email policy

Please use common courtesy when sending e-mails. Include your name, class section, and other relevant information. Please allow 48 business hours for a response. E-mails will be checked periodically Monday-Friday from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. E-mails will not be checked on the weekends.

Classroom etiquette

- Arrive on time.
- No food or snacks.
- Please silence cellphones during class.
- If you need to use your cell phone for any non-academic purposes during class (i.e. social media, texting, checking voicemails, phone calls, and etc.) please step outside of the classroom.

Exam etiquette

- You cannot not leave the class once the exam has started unless you are finished. Once you leave the classroom you will have to turn in your exam. Please use the bathroom before coming to class.
- No phones or other wireless devices are allowed on the exam.
- Please remove smart watches.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Students are required to comply with the F.I.U. university policy on academic integrity found in the [Academic Misconduct](#). Cheating in exams, homework, or any other assignment will not be tolerated. Those found cheating in any way will be reported to the relevant authorities of the university

Accommodations for Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register at [Disability Services Office](#). Discrimination based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation is a violation of state and federal law and/or Florida International University policy and will not be tolerated.

Please note: The syllabus is tentative and subject to change at the professor's discretion