

Econ 511: Game Theory, Spring 2018

Instructor: Peter Norman Gardner 300C, normanp@email.unc.edu

Office Hours Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 or by appointment.

Logistics: We meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:00-3:15 in GA 307.

Course Description: In this course we will study how strategic real world situations can be described as mathematical games. To do so we will define and examine the concept of a strategy, examine what it means to be rational or irrational, and define solution concepts that correspond to different assumptions about how well players can coordinate play as well as differences in assumptions about the sequential and informational structure. Most of these ideas will be illustrated in terms of applications such as auctions, bargaining, signalling, oligopoly, and dynamic pricing.

Exams and Grades: All graded components fall under the jurisdiction of the Honor Code. If you have any questions concerning the Honor Code Policy for this course, please ask.

There will be two in class midterms, February 27 and March 29 (25% of the grade each). Instead of a final exam you will have to write a short term paper. This paper accounts for 30% of the grade. In addition, you will have to present your paper in class, and this presentation carries a 10% weight. Papers should be written by groups of 2 to 3 students. The remaining 10% of the grade will be based on the problem sets. You are encouraged to cooperate when solving the problems, but you should hand in individually.

The Term Paper: Detailed instructions about the term paper requirement will be given by mid-September. The preliminary timetable is as follows:

- By February 22 you should hand in a brief synopsis, containing a title, a one paragraph abstract, and a brief (roughly one page) description of what you intend to accomplish.
- By March 22 you should hand in a draft of your paper.
- By April 12 you should hand in the final version of the paper.

Anything in the syllabus may be changed if needed, including due dates and exam dates. Any such changes will be announced as early as possible.

Textbook: *An Introduction to Game Theory*, by M.J Osborne (Oxford University Press, 2003, ISBN-13: 978-0195128956) is required. You can get a used copy for less than \$15 online and there is also a newer UK edition. It doesn't matter which version you get. R. Gibbons, *Game Theory for Applied Economists* (Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1992, ISBN-13: 978-0691003955) is also recommended. You will also have to read some research articles that will be announced later.

Outline:

The following schedule is approximate and we will surely deviate from it at some point

1. Games in Normal Form (2 weeks)
2. Games in Extensive Form (2 weeks)
3. Mixed Strategies (1 week)
4. Games of Incomplete Information, auctions (1 1/2week)
5. Signalling (2 weeks)
6. Bargaining (1 week)
7. Repeated Games (1 week)
8. Information Economics (2 weeks)
9. Student Paper Presentations (2 weeks)