

Econ 410-003: Intermediate Microeconomic Theory  
2013 Summer Session I  
Monday through Friday, 11:30 am – 1:00 p.m.,  
Instructor: Jeff Ackermann ([jeffack@email.unc.edu](mailto:jeffack@email.unc.edu))  
Office Hours: TBD

## Course Overview

Why is it that airplane tickets get more expensive on the day of the flight, but Broadway tickets get less expensive on the day of the show?

Does living near a bar cause people to drink more?

If you get a raise, will you work more or fewer hours?

All of these questions are related to how people make choices. As anyone who has spent time around humans knows, people tend to make strange, seemingly unpredictable decisions. In this course, we will learn how some basic mathematical concepts and a few assumptions can help us answer abstract questions about decision making.

## Prerequisites

Econ 101; Math 231 or Stor 113

## Required Text

"Intermediate Microeconomics - The Science of Choice" by Jeremy Petranka. You may obtain a paperback version of this textbook at either the student bookstore or at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). You can also purchase the eBook version of this text on [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com).

## Grading

Item	Percentage	Dates
Attendance and Participation	10%	Daily
3 Midterm exams	50%	May 29; June 7; June 13
Final exam	25%	June 17 at 11:30 a.m.
6 Homework assignments	15%	May 17; May 23; May 25; June 1; June 8; June 14

After each midterm exam, I will give approximate grade cutoffs.

## Exams

There will be three midterm exams. The final exam will cover all of the material covered during the course. If you miss a midterm, the points for that midterm will be allocated to your final exam score (so your final will be worth approximately  $25\% + \frac{50\%}{3} \approx 41.7\%$  of your grade). If you miss more than one midterm, I will need a dean's excuse or else your second midterm will be entered into the gradebook as a zero.

## Homework Assignments

There will be six homework assignments. Your lowest homework score will be dropped. You are permitted to work in groups, but everyone must turn in their own answers. See the section regarding the honor code for information on what resources you are permitted to use.

I encourage you to take pride in everything you turn in. Half of the grade for each assignment will depend on the professionalism of your submission. What does this mean? It should be easy for me to read and follow your work. All assignments must be stapled, with your name on the front. Do not use scrap paper or torn paper.

I will frequently assign ungraded problems. I do this for a couple reasons. First, because I ask for a degree of professionalism in your homework submissions, I try to not give you excessively long problem sets; I would rather you submit a few problems done well than a lot of problems done hastily. Second, it is important that you get lots of practice doing lots of types of problems. Do not infer that “ungraded” means “unimportant”.

Homework problems are designed to prepare you for exams. Because exams make up 75% of your grade, it is important that you take these assignments seriously.

The lowest homework grade will be dropped; however, the first assignment cannot be dropped.

## Math and the First Homework Assignment

In this course, we will study some really interesting concepts. Most of these concepts will use math as their foundation. Because of this, it is very important that you be comfortable with the math that the course uses. The first homework assignment will focus exclusively on the math that is used in the course. Because these concepts are so crucial, the first assignment will be graded differently than the rest:

- You may not drop the first assignment.
- You are not permitted to use mathematical software to solve problems in this assignment; you can use software to check your work, but you must do the calculations yourself and show your work.
- You can redo any of the problems you missed and resubmit the assignment. The redone problems are due on May 20. If you redo the problems you missed, your grade for the first homework assignment will be updated to reflect the average of your original grade and your new grade. For example, suppose there are 10 problems, and a student originally got an 8 problems right, redid the two they missed, and got one of those problems correct. Their grade for homework one is  $\frac{80\%+90\%}{2} = 85\%$ .

## Attendance and Participation

10% of your grade will depend upon your attendance and decorum during class. Specifically, you will be graded on:

- Attendance: This is a summer course, and we move quickly. It is very important that you not fall behind, and one easy way to fall behind is to miss a class meeting.

- Attention: No electronic devices (computers, tablets, cell phones, etc.) are permitted during class. All cell phones should be turned off – not set on vibrate. If there is a special circumstance requiring you to have your cell phone on during class, come speak to me before class begins.
- Engagement: Because this is a small course, I encourage everyone to participate. Feel free to ask questions and offer your comments during class. Because I need to keep the class moving at the appropriate pace, I may have to cut some discussions short; do not infer this as discouragement from participation but as the unfortunate result of having a large amount of material to cover in a small amount of time.

I expect the median attendance and participation grade to be 100%. However, if your midterm average is higher than your attendance and participation grade, I will use your midterm average instead.

## Honor Code

Your behavior is governed by the UNC Honor Code. If you do not yet understand your responsibilities under this code, I urge you to go to <http://honor.unc.edu> to learn more. I am also bound by the honor code and am required to report all cheating to the honor court. I will do my best to discourage cheating by actively proctoring exams, but there is a limit to what I can do. Ultimately, you should recognize that nothing we do in this course is worth jeopardizing your integrity over.

### Honor Code – Homework Assignments

You can use the following resources to help you complete your homework assignments:

- Anyone currently taking any section of ECON 410, as long as they have not seen the answer keys for the problem set.
- Jeff Ackermann
- Any economics book, whether in electronic or traditional form.
- Course notes from another intermediate microeconomics course found online.
- Math software, including calculators and [www.wolframalpha.com](http://www.wolframalpha.com).
- Instructional websites, such as [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org).

### Honor Code – Exams

The only resources you are allowed to use during an exam are:

- A pencil
- A straight-edge
- For each midterm, you are allowed to bring in one side of an 8.5 x 11" sheet of paper with anything on it legible to your naked eye. For the final, you are allowed to bring in all previous cheat sheets plus one additional. Thus, for the final you are allowed to have four sides of 8.5 x 11" sheets of paper.

Note that no calculators are permitted on the exam. I will write the exams so that all math problems can be solved without the aid of a calculator. Because calculators are not permitted on the exam, I encourage you to practice doing homework problems without them.

Using any resource not expressly permitted above is an honor code violation. If you have any questions about what is permitted under the honor code in this course, please ask me!