

Economics 410

Intermediate Theory: Price and Distribution

Summer 2020 Session II, Section 001

Instructor:

Estonia Black

efblack@live.unc.edu

(919) 307-9764

Meeting Time:

MTWThF 9:45-11:15am

Classroom:

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/94446985797>

Prerequisites:

ECON 101, and MATH 152, 231, STOR 112 or 113

Website:

<http://sakai.unc.edu>

Class Description

In this course we will explore the foundations of microeconomic theory, particularly the choices and behavior of consumers and firms, and their interactions within markets. The course will roughly be divided into three topics:

1. Consumer Theory: How individual consumers make decisions in the face of scarcity, and how variations in the economic environment of the market effect these decisions.
2. Firm Theory: How individual producers make decisions in the face of scarcity, and how variations in the economic environment of the market effect these decisions.
3. The Organization of Markets: How markets with varying levels of market power/competition are organized.

The focus of this course is to develop a theoretical framework which can be used to approach a wide variety of microeconomic questions. This framework is a *way of thinking* about markets and individual choices, and as such this course is best approached with an attitude of problem solving and critical thinking. Students will get the most out of this course if they focus on not just *how* we find answers to specific economic questions, but *why* our methods work.

Class Expectations

- **Regular class attendance:** Not only will attendance make up 2% of your final grade, but regular attendance and active participation will be essential to your success in other areas of the course. We have a lot to cover in only 24 class meetings, so missing only one session will likely require a sincere effort on your part to keep from falling behind.
- **Time spent out-of-class:** One of the challenges of Summer session courses is that students will have less time between classes to digest the material. As is true with most economics courses, intense review immediately prior to the exam will not be enough to ensure success. Students should plan to consistently spend a considerable amount of time studying between classes; studying a few hours per day throughout the summer session will be much more effective than pulling an all-nighter before each exam.

Office Hours

I will hold office hours each day after class in the same Zoom meeting (98446985797) from 11:30am-12:30pm, and by appointment. If anyone has another obligation every weekday during this time, I will work with the class to schedule an alternative time block for at least two days a week. Any changes to my office hours will be reflected on the course Sakai site, and will be announced in class.

One of my favorite parts of teaching is working with students one-on-one or in small groups in office hours. If you have questions about specific problems or concepts, or if you feel like you are putting in the required amount of work studying the material and are still struggling, please don't hesitate to talk to me.

Grades

Component	% of Course Grade
Attendance	2%
Homework Assignments	18%
Midterms	45%
Final	35%

- There will be seven homework assignments, weighted equally. Each homework will consist of a multiple-choice section and a long-form section. Multiple-choice answers will be submitted through Sakai, and long-form answers will be submitted through Gradescope. Submissions are due by 5:00pm on the assigned due date. No submissions will be accepted after 6:00pm on the assigned due date. There will be a 20% late penalty applied to all submissions received between 5:00pm and 6:00pm. An answer key for each assignment will be posted on Sakai at 6:05pm on the due date.
- There will be two midterm exams. Each student's highest midterm grade will be worth 25% of their final course grade, and their lower midterm grade will be worth 20%. Midterm exams will be structured similarly to homework assignments, with a multiple-choice section on Sakai and a long-form section submitted through Gradescope. Calculators are permitted (and recommended) during exams, but only very basic, non-programmable, non-graphing calculators.
- The final exam will take place from 8:00am-11:00am on Monday, July 27th. The final exam will consist only of multiple-choice questions, submitted on Sakai. Calculators are permitted (and recommended), but only very basic, non-programmable, non-graphing calculators.

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Course Grade} = (0.02 \times \text{attendance average}) + (0.18 \times \text{homework average}) + (0.25 \times \text{higher midterm score}) + (0.225 \times \text{lower midterm score}) + (0.35 \times \text{final exam score})$$

Course Policies

Textbook

The recommended textbook for this course is *Microeconomics* by David Besanko and Ronald Braeutigam. You do not have to purchase the most recent edition of this textbook. Most Intermediate Microeconomics textbooks will have similar content, and older editions will have similar content, and likely be less expensive. If you do not want to rent or purchase a textbook, there are many available on 2-hour reserve in the UNC library.

Excused Absences and Missed Exams:

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

- Authorized University activities
- Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)
- Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

If due to one of the above reasons, you must miss a class, let me know. If possible, obtain a University Approved Absence by submitting a request to the Office of the Dean of Students. If an absence is excused, I will drop it from your attendance score.

If due to one of the above reasons, you must miss an exam, I will work with you to schedule a makeup exam.

Regrade Requests:

You may submit a “regrade request” on Gradescope for one or more long-form questions on a midterm exam or homework assignment within one week of the date the assignment’s grade is posted. Any regrade request submitted after that point will not result in a change to your grade for that assignment.

Accessibility Resources:

UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us>.

Students registered with the Accessibility Resources & Service (ARS) who are eligible for testing accommodations should let me know as soon as possible so that we can work out an appropriate way to provide those accommodations while the ARS testing center is physically closed.

Honor Code:

Students are bound by the Honor Code in taking exams and in written work. The Honor Code of the University is in effect at all times, and the submission of work signifies understanding and acceptance of those requirements. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please consult with me if you have any questions about the Honor Code.

Additional Resources

CAPS:

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or call 919-966-3658.

The Learning Center:

The UNC Learning Center is a great resource both for students who are struggling in their courses and for those who want to be proactive and develop sound study practices to prevent falling behind. They offer individual consultations, peer tutoring, academic coaching, test prep programming, study skills workshops, and peer study groups. If you think you might benefit from their services, please visit their website for more information or to set up an online appointment: <http://learningcenter.unc.edu>.

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC AND CORRESPONDING CHAPTERS	HOMEWORK
Monday, June 22, 2020	Introduction; Math review (Mathematical Appendix)	
Tuesday, June 23, 2020	Consumer Theory: Budget constraints (Chapter 4.1)	
Wednesday, June 24, 2020	Consumer Theory: Preferences and Utility (Chapter 3.1 - 3.3)	
Thursday, June 25, 2020	Consumer Theory: Preferences and Utility (Chapter 3.1 - 3.3)	Homework #1 assigned
Friday, June 26, 2020	Consumer Theory: Constrained utility maximization (Chapter 4.2 and Chapter 4 Appendix 1)	
Monday, June 29, 2020	Consumer Theory: Constrained utility maximization (Chapter 4.2 and Chapter 4 Appendix 1)	Homework #1 due; Homework #2 assigned
Tuesday, June 30, 2020	Consumer Theory: Demand (Chapter 5.1)	
Wednesday, July 1, 2020	Consumer Theory: Elasticity (Chapter 2.2 and 2.3)	Homework #2 due; Homework #3 assigned
Thursday, July 2, 2020	Consumer Theory: Income and Substitution Effects (Chapter 5.2)	
Friday, July 3, 2020	No class for July 4th holiday.	Homework #3 due
Monday, July 6, 2020	Consumer Theory: Income and Substitution Effects (Chapter 5.2)	
Tuesday, July 7, 2020	Midterm #1	
Wednesday, July 8, 2020	Consumer Theory: Extensions (Chapter 4.3, Chapter 4 Appendix 2, and Chapter 5.5)	
Thursday, July 9, 2020	Firm Theory: Production (Chapter 6.1-6.5)	Homework #4 assigned
Friday, July 10, 2020	Firm Theory: Cost (Chapter 7)	
Monday, July 13, 2020	Firm Theory: Cost (Chapter 7)	Homework #4 due; Homework #5 assigned
Tuesday, July 14, 2020	Firm Theory: Cost minimization (Chapter 7, Chapter 8.1 and Chapter 8.2)	
Wednesday, July 15, 2020	Firm Theory: Cost minimization (Chapter 7, Chapter 8.1 and Chapter 8.2)	Homework #5 due; Homework #6 assigned
Thursday, July 16, 2020	The Organization of Markets: Profit maximization and Perfect Competition (Chapter 9.1, 9.2 and Chapter 9 Appendix)	
Friday, July 17, 2020	The Organization of Markets: Perfect Competition (Chapter 9.3)	Homework #6 due
Monday, July 20, 2020	The Organization of Markets: Monopoly (Chapter 11.1 and 11.2)	
Tuesday, July 21, 2020	Midterm #2	
Wednesday, July 22, 2020	The Organization of Markets: Monopoly (Chapter 11.1 and 11.2)	Homework #7 assigned

Thursday, July
24, 2020

The Organization of Markets: Oligopoly (Chapter 14.1, 13.1 and 13.2)

[Homework #7 due](#)