Spring 2015
Introduction to Microeconomics
01:220:102 Section 07
Wednesday January 21 – Monday May 4

Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:35pm – 6:55pm, Hickman Room 138, Cook Douglas Campus
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 4:45pm – 5:30pm and 6:55pm -7:30pm in Hickman,
Room - Hickman (TBD)
Instructor: Jack Skydel
Class Portal: https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal
Email: jack.skydel@rutgers.edu
Final Exam: Friday May 8 4:00PM – 7:00PM

Course Description

“A human being has a natural desire to have more of a good thing than he needs.”
Mark Twain

“The most valuable of all capital is that invested in human beings.”
Alfred Marshall

The overall purpose of this introductory course in Microeconomics is to provide students
with a global understanding of the principles of economics as they apply to the functions of
individual decision makers, both consumers and producers. This course will place an
emphasis on the nature and functions of product markets, factor markets, and the role and
effects of government policy in the economy. All of the topics studied, directly inform current
issues facing businesses and the United States and international economies.

In addition this course will cover selected topics related to decision - making and behavior by
individuals and businesses that are not obviously in the domain of economics but are indeed
influenced by the principles of economics.

Learning Goals

1. Basic economic concepts including opportunity costs, scarcity, positive and normative
economics
2. How to analyze production possibilities of firms and countries, the sources of their
comparative advantages, and gains from trade
3. How to use the supply and demand model to understand how markets work.
4. How elasticity is calculated and its relevance to understanding markets.
5. How to analyze consumer behavior with respect to decisions about consumption, savings
and employment.
6. How to analyze decisions firms make about pricing, output, employment and investment.
7. How to analyze the behavior of firms in alternative market structures including perfect
competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition and oligopoly.
8. How to apply basic game theory to strategic interaction between companies and individual.

9. How to use the concepts of equity, efficiency, and market failure to analyze and evaluate government policies such as price floors and ceilings, tax policy, assistance programs, environmental policy, etc.

10. How to apply economic concepts and ideas broadly.

Course Prerequisites
640:111 (Pre-Calculus I) or 640:115 (Pre-Calculus College Math) or PLACEMENT TO CALCULUS

Required Resources

The required reading for this course is from the following text:


It is necessary that you will have read each chapter before it is presented in class. My class presentation is focused on working through the more difficult concepts and bringing to light real-world applications of these concepts. If you fail to read the material, you will not be prepared to understand the analysis or gain insight as to how economics is used outside the classroom.

In order to fully understand the material presented in this course, you will also need to complete assigned problem sets. These problem sets, are critical in that they provide practice in applying the concepts and analytical methods of economics. Advanced mathematics is not required to complete these problem sets, but it is assumed that you have a firm grasp on Pre-calculus and Algebra.

The assigned problem sets must be completed through MyEconLab – an online learning resource. It is your responsibility to learn how to use MyEconLab and to keep abreast of the material on this portal. Note: registration for MyEconLab will remain open up until the add/drop date. After that date I will close registration. In short, if you select this course you must have timely access to MyEconLab. The information you will need for access is provided below:
Visit the website: [http://pearsonmylabandmastering.com/](http://pearsonmylabandmastering.com/)

Register as a Student using the following **Course Id:** (see instructions posted, and announcement on Sakai.)

Create an account or sign in using an existing account (if you have one). **Full instructions on how to get access to MyEconLab will be posted on Sakai.** Please read and follow them closely (I am not good at tech support).

MyEconLab can be purchased with or without an electronic version of the textbook. Thus you have choices: you can purchase access to MyEconLab only and then purchase a new or used copy of the textbook. (If you purchase a used copy of the textbook you can use the 10th edition if you want). Or you can purchase MyEconLab with the e-book.

In addition you can purchase access to the resources through the RU Bookstores as noted below. If you purchase through the RU Bookstores you will receive an access code that you can use when you register. Under any of the alternatives you must register using the Course ID provided in the instructions posted on Sakai.

Options to purchase the textbook with MyEconLab access at RU Bookstores are:

1. **MyLab (all digital option with e-text)** ISBN 9780133021769
2. **MyLab + Loose-leaf Version with e-text** ISBN 9780133423891*

**Class Attendance**

Class attendance is crucial. You are **responsible for material covered in class, including material that is not specifically in our textbook** but presented in class. If you expect to miss class because of illness or a family emergency, you should use the University absence reporting website [https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.
Grading
Assignments 15%
Exam 1 20%
Exam 2 20%
Exam 3 20%
Final exam (Cumulative)

Grade Distribution

The following is a distribution of grades and provides the minimum scores needed to earn these grades. Note that the grading scale has already built in a “curve”. I do not curve beyond what is shown in the grade distribution.

A: 88
B+: 82
B: 76
C+: 70
C: 64
D: 59
F: 0-59

Exams:
You must attend all exams at their scheduled times and very specifically if you have a conflict with the scheduled time for the final exam you should find another class section. Make-up exams will only be accommodated with a documented excuse that I find acceptable – and all make-ups must be completed within 7 days of the original exam date. Exams will be based on material covered in the required textbook, presented during lectures, or assigned on MyEconLab. Class attendance and assignment completion are highly correlated with success in this course.

Please note that NO calculators, cell phones, translators or other similar electronic devices may be used during the exams. Any calculations on an exam will be simple enough that calculators will not be needed.
**Assignments:**

You must complete each assignment by the specified due date. Late assignments will be accepted; however there will be a **10% deduction.** Assignments are for your benefit. MyEconlab is a robust, self-teaching tool that will help you learn how to analyze and apply economic concepts. The assignments represent the minimum level of practice you should do. MyEconLab has many problems under each topic that allow you to extend your practice. In addition, assignments are a significant element in your grade. I encourage working in groups, being mindful that exams, of course, evaluate your own individual mastery of the material. The important aspect is that you put forth a diligent and consistent effort and actually do the assigned work.

**Rules of the Road**

My rules for class conduct are straight-forward and based on mutual respect. I **take them very seriously.** In short, I will attend every class, be there on time and be prepared. I will do my best to engage with the class. I will not take time out to phone or text, listen to music, read the newspaper, do other work, catch up on my sleep or hold unrelated conversations during our time together. I will stay and engage for the **entire** scheduled class time. My full expectation is that you will also do the same and adhere to the Rules of the Road as summarized.

**Academic Integrity**

Any student caught cheating on an exam will be dismissed immediately and receive a failing grade for the course. **NO exceptions.** In addition, the incident according to University policy will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. Cheating during an exam includes, but is not limited to, consulting any textbooks or notes including the use of a prohibited electronic device talking to another student, a physical exchange with another student, or making a concerted effort to view another student’s exam or to share your own. For a complete description, you should refer to Office of Student Conduct web site. It is in your best interest to refrain from any activities, movements or communications that might suggest you are cheating.

**Notifications**

All announcements regarding the course will be made in class and through our Sakai site. You are responsible for monitoring the site to keep updated. Note particularly that if there is a change to our assigned room, (which I do not expect will occur) such change will be posted, by me on Sakai. You should not pay heed to any hand posted signs to the contrary. Hand posting room changes is a well-known ruse by certain people in our community who clearly have too much time on their hands and not a lot on their minds.
Tentative Schedule

**Jan 21**  
Topic: Administrative matters and "What is Economics? (Limits, Alternatives and Choices)  
Parkin Chapter 1

**Jan 26**  
Topic: What is economics (continued) and The Economic Problem (Limits, Alternatives, ...and Comparative Advantage)  
Parkin Chapter 1 Appendix, and Chapter 2

**Jan 28**  
Topic: The Economic Problem ...(continued)  
Parkin Chapter 2

**Feb 2**  
Topic: Supply & Demand  
Parkin Chapter 3

**Feb 4**  
Topic: Supply & Demand continued  
Parkin Chapter 3

**Feb 9**  
Topic: Elasticity  
Parkin Chapter 4

**Feb 11**  
Topic: Elasticity  
Parkin Chapter 4

**Feb 16**  
Exam 1 Chapters 1-4

**Feb 18**  
Topic: Efficiency and Equity and Government Actions in Markets  
Parkin Chapter 5 and 6
Feb 23  
Topic: Utility and Demand  
Parkin Chapter 8

Feb 25  
Topic: Utility and Demand  
Parkin Chapter 8  
(Parkin Chapter 9 optional)

March 2  
Topic: Organizing Production  
Parkin Chapter 10

March 4  
Topic: Output and Costs  
Parkin Chapter 11

March 9  
Topic: Output and Costs  
Parkin Chapter 11

March 11  
Exam 2 Chapters 5, 6, 8, 10-11

March 14 – 22 Spring Recess

March 23  
Topic: Perfect Competition  
Parkin Chapter 12

March 25  
Topic: Perfect Competition (continued)  
Parkin Chapter 12

March 30  
Topic: Monopoly  
Parkin Chapter 13
April 1
Topic: Monopoly (continued)
Parkin Chapter 13

April 6
Topic: Monopolistic Competition
Parkin Chapter 14

April 8
Topic: Oligopoly
Parkin Chapter 15

April 13
Topic: Markets for Factors of Production
Parkin Chapter 18

April 15
Topic: Markets for Factors of Production
Parkin Chapter 18

April 20
Exam 3 Chapters 12-15 and 18

April 22
Topic: Public Choices and Public Goods
Parkin Chapter 16

April 27
Topic: Externalities and the Environment
Parkin 17
April 29
Topic: Economic Inequality
Parkin Chapter 19

May 4
Topic: Uncertainty, Information and Decisions
Parkin Chapter 20

May 6
Reading Day
Will be available during normal class time for final exam review – Location TBD