

Economics 301 (L01) (Intermediate Economics Theory – Microeconomics I)

Instructor: Moshe Lander
Email: moshe.lander@ucalgary.ca

Lecture Location: AD 140
Lecture Days/Time: TR 14:00 – 15:15

Office: SS 336
Office Hours: TR 09:30 – 10:30

Winter 2024

Course Description:

This course is the first of a pair of courses designed to acquaint students with microeconomic theory. Microeconomics is concerned with a systematic understanding of the choices of individuals, firms and organisations. It seeks to address the social consequences of the behaviour of economic agents. Economic theory provides the structure, or framework, for economic inquiry.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Develop expertise in the methodology of economic analysis. Economic theory has four elements that students are expected to master:
 - Students become familiar with the foundation of economic reasoning. This involves the fundamental assumption that individuals make choices based on their perceived self-interest. The consequence of this assumption is that individual choices and actions depend on incentives, which, in turn, depend on the interaction of preferences and constraints on time, income, technology and ability. This framework explains how choices can be understood in terms of their incremental or marginal costs and benefits and how changing an individual's perception of either of these changes their behaviour.
 - Students master equilibrium analysis, which involves aggregating over the choices of individuals and ensuring that the choices of individuals are consistent (ie, that what individuals plan to do, they are in fact able to do). Equilibrium analysis underlies how economists explain resource allocation in an economy.
 - A key part of equilibrium analysis is comparative statics: asking how the equilibrium will change when conditions change.
 - Students understand the strengths, limitations and value judgments that underlie the notion of efficiency. Efficiency is the yardstick by which economists measure the social desirability of resource allocation.

These four elements of economic modelling are developed through their deployment in the topics considered.

- The economist's view of the world and the economic way of thinking: scarcity and its management; Pareto optimality and the gains from trade; the role of prices and markets; institutional foundations of market economies; restrictions on voluntary trade; the success of market economies and institutional choice to relax scarcity constraints.
- Consumer theory: axioms of preferences; the budget set; optimal choice and the derivation of a demand function; Marshallian and Hicksian demand functions; income and substitution effects; the expenditure function; measuring welfare using CV, EV and consumer surplus; applications.

- The neoclassical theory of the firm. The characterisation of technological possibilities; opportunity costs; sunk costs; depreciation; the user cost of capital and economic profit; profit maximisation; cost minimisation; the long and short run.
- The theory of perfect competition: assumptions; price taking; supply curves; short-run equilibrium; quasi-rents versus profits; entry and exit; long-run industry supply curves; Ricardian rents.
- The use and usefulness of economics in the determination of public policy: equity vs efficiency; market failure and the normative role for government; an introduction to ECON 357.

Tentative Lecture Schedule, Assigned Readings and Key Dates:

Date	Topic	Lecture
January 9	Introduction	—
January 11	The Market	Chapter 1
January 16	Budget Constraint	Chapter 2
January 18	Preferences	Chapter 3
January 23	Utility	Chapter 4
January 25	Choice	Chapter 5
January 30	Demand	Chapter 6
February 1	Revealed Preference	Chapter 7
February 6	Slutsky Equation	Chapter 8
February 8	Consumer's Surplus	Chapter 14
February 13	Technology	Chapter 19
February 15	Profit Maximisation	Chapter 20
February 20	CLASS CANCELLED	
February 22	CLASS CANCELLED	
February 27	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE	Chapters 1 – 8
February 27	TBA	
February 29	MIDTERM 1 (in class)	Chapters 1 – 8
March 5	Cost Minimisation	Chapter 21
March 7	Cost Curves	Chapter 22
March 12	Firm Supply	Chapter 23
March 14	Market Demand	Chapter 15
March 19	Equilibrium	Chapter 16
March 21	Industry Supply	Chapter 24
March 26	ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE	Chapters 14, 19 – 23
March 26	MIDTERM 2 (In Class)	Chapters 14, 19 – 23
March 28	TBA	
April 2	Equity vs Efficiency	—
April 4	Market Failures	—
April 7	Review	Chapters 1 – 8, 14 – 16, 19 – 24
TBA	FINAL EXAM	Chapters 1 – 8, 14 – 16, 19 – 24

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

ECON 201, ECON 203 and 3 units from MATH 249, MATH 265 or MATH 275

Required Textbook:

Varian, H. *Intermediate Microeconomics*. Any edition. New York: Norton.

Recommended Textbook:

Roberts, R. 2001. *The Invisible Heart*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Required Access to Technology:

None.

Desire2Learn:

This course makes use of the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform. Students who are registered in the course can log on at <http://d2l.ucalgary.ca> through their student centre. Please note that D2L features a class email list that may be used to distribute course-related information. These emails go to your University of Calgary email addresses only.

Tutorials:

You are expected to attend the weekly tutorial section to which you have been assigned. During tutorials, the TA discusses pre-assigned questions and additional material relevant to the course that is not covered in lectures. Tutorials are Th 17:00 – 17:50 in SA 104.

PASS:

ECON 301 is part of the Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS) programme funded by the Student Success Centre and the Department of Economics. PASS sessions for ECON 301 are offered weekly during which students work collaboratively, guided by a PASS Leader, on difficult concepts. PASS offers alternative approaches and strategies to develop an understanding of the course material. The PASS Leader for ECON 301 has recently taken the course, attends lectures and has been trained to facilitate collaborative learning and group study. PASS sessions are about students working together to understand course material and develop better academic habits. Students who attend PASS regularly have higher course GPAs and lower DFW rates than those who do not.

Grade Determination:

ASSIGNMENTS (2 x 5% each)	10%
MIDTERMS (2 x 20% each)	40%
FINAL	50%
	<hr/>
	100%

Examination Details:

- Tests and exams WILL NOT involve multiple choice questions.
- Programmable calculators, cellphones, textbooks, course notes and other electronic devices are not allowed during the writing of midterm or final exams. You are reminded that simply being able to access your cellphone during an exam is academic misconduct.

Grading Policies:

The official grading system will be used. See <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>.

Students must receive a passing grade on the final exam to pass the course. Students committing academic misconduct during the final exam will not receive a passing grade for the course.

If a student's letter grade on the final exam exceeds their midterm(s) letter grade, the weight of the midterm(s) is (are) transferred to the final exam. The student must have written the midterm(s) or provided supporting documentation for the absence(s).

As per the Writing Across the Curriculum Statement in the Calendar, writing and grading thereof will be a factor in the evaluation of student work. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUP OR DEFERRED QUIZZES/TESTS/EXAMS under any circumstances, nor may the quizzes/tests/exams be written early. Students unable to write the quizzes/tests/exams because of documented illness, family emergency, religious observance, or university-sanctioned event will have the weight shifted to the final examination; otherwise a grade of zero will be assigned.

The final examination will be comprehensive, scheduled by the Registrar, held in a classroom, and last 2 hours. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-3-4.html>. Under no circumstance will this be accommodated by the Department.

Any student work which remains undistributed after the last day of classes will be available to students through the instructor's office during the instructor's office hours.

Reappraisal of Grades:

For Reappraisal of Graded Term Work, see Calendar I.2

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

For Reappraisal of Final Grade, see Calendar I.3

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Academic Misconduct and Intellectual Honesty:

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior that compromises proper assessment of students' academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

Statement of Intellectual Honesty, see Calendar K.3

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html>

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

<https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

Academic Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services. SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf> and <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf>.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act:

Personal information is collected in accordance with FOIP. Assignments can only be returned to the student and will be accessible only to authorized faculty and staff. For more information, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/faq-privacy-faculty-members.pdf> and <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/faq-privacy-students.pdf>

Internet and Electronic Communication Device Information:

The use of cell phones for any purpose in class is prohibited. Computers and tablets may be used for note taking only unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Copyright Legislation:

See the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>. Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is prohibited, except for audio recordings authorized as an accommodation by SAS or an audio recording for individual private study and only with the written permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized electronic or mechanical recording of lectures, their transcription, copying, or distribution, constitutes academic misconduct. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>.

Instructor Intellectual Property:

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Important Dates:

Please check: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html>.

Student Organizations:

Faculty of Arts Students' Association (F.A.S.A.):

Economics Department Representative

Office: SS 803, E-mail: econrep@fasaucalgary.ca and Web: www.fasaucalgary.ca.

Society of Undergraduates in Economics: <https://www.ucalgarysue.com/>.

Society of Undergraduates in Economics is a student run organization whose main purpose is to assist undergraduate economics students to succeed both academically and socially at the University of Calgary. Services include access to the exam bank, career events such as Industry Night and information sessions, mentorship programs, and social events for members. They invite you to join by contacting SUE at sue@ucalgarysue.com

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call them at 403-220-3580, or email them at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>, which has detailed information on common academic concerns, including program planning and advice.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them in the MacKimmie Tower.

Student Support and Resources:

- See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information on campus mental health resources, the Student Ombuds Office, Student Success Centre, Safewalk, and Emergency Evacuation and Assembly.
- Online writing resources are available at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>.

Notes:

- You are responsible for all assigned material (eg, supplementary material posted on D2L), regardless of whether the material is covered in class.
- Please note that the following types of emails will receive no response: emails not addressed to anyone in particular; emails where the recipient's name is not spelled correctly; anonymous emails; emails in which the sender has not identified which course and section he/she is taking; and, emails involving questions that are specifically addressed on this course outline.
- I have been told that my lecture style is fast-paced and intense but engaging and humorous. Although students often find that this style makes the concepts easier to understand, they are often disappointed when they fail to perform to the level to which they are accustomed on my exams. My exams tend to reward those that are sufficiently knowledgeable of the underlying concepts and have developed an intuitive approach to the material. **Memorisation is almost never rewarded.**
- To give you the best chance for success in my course, I strongly encourage you to come prepared and on time, avoid absences, participate regularly with a positive attitude, read and review the relevant chapters in detail before (and after) after class, do the exercises I recommend before the subsequent class, dress appropriately and identify problems and seek help as soon as they occur.

ML

2023-11-08