

ECO 304K
INTRODUCTION TO MICROECONOMICS – HONORS
Unique # 33305
TTh 3:30-5, UTC 2.112A; F 10-11, BRB 1.120
Fall 2010

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Office hours: Thursdays 9:30-11:30 and 2-3, and by appointment

TAs: To be announced ...

SI: This class will feature Supplemental Instruction discussion sections (SI). These optional sessions will help reinforce and clarify course content PLUS help you to learn the material more effectively. SI also gives you a smaller forum for discussing course content and getting to know your classmates. Regular participation in SI discussion has been shown to improve students' performance by an average of one-half to one full letter grade. Meeting times and places are to be announced ...

Welcome (back) to the University of Texas at Austin!

Course overview: In this course we will learn economics principles relating to the behavior of individual consumers, firms, and markets. I expect that in the process, you will come to appreciate the great power and some of the shortcomings of economic theory in explaining the world.

Textbooks: Our required texts are *Modern Principles: Microeconomics*, by Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrok (Worth 2010, ISBN 978-1-4292-0248-0), *Economics is Everywhere*, 3rd edition, by Daniel S. Hamermesh (Worth 2010, ISBN 978-1-4292-3686-7), and *New Ideas from Dead Economists*, 2nd revised edition (Plume 2007, ISBN 978-0-452-28844-7). An i-clicker is also required. If you want additional resources, there are many, many other textbooks that cover much of the same material in somewhat different styles.

i-clickers: The i-clicker is a response system that allows you to respond to questions I pose during class. You will need to register your i-clicker remote online. You must have come to class at least once and voted on at least one question in order to complete this registration properly. Once you have voted on a question in my class, go to <http://www.iclicker.com/registration>. Complete the fields with your first name, last name, student ID, and remote ID. Your student ID should be your UT EID. The remote ID is the series of numbers and sometimes letters found on the bottom of the back of your i-clicker remote. i-clicker will be used every day in class, and you are responsible for bringing your remote daily.

Exams: There will be eight short in-class multiple-choice quizzes, two 75-minute in-class midterm exams, and a final exam. The dates and coverage of these exams are listed in the class schedule. The first midterm will consist of short essay questions; the second midterm will have a mix of short essays and multiple-choice questions; and the final exam will have all multiple-choice questions. You **must** bring your i-clicker to class to take the quizzes. You **must** bring a #2 soft lead pencil to each of the exams. You may bring a simple calculator, but **not** one that is able to store and display text. **No make-up exams** will be given.

Problem sets: There will be eight homework problem sets assigned, to be completed online through Blackboard. Each problem set is due by the beginning of class on the dates indicated on the class schedule.

Story: A brief economic analysis of an event that you have observed in the real world, in a book or movie, or in your own life will be due on the last class day. (Hard copies only, please; no email attachments.) In the first paragraph of your story, you should describe the event. In the second paragraph, you should analyze how the event illustrates a specific economic concept that we covered in class. Examples will be posted on Blackboard.

NOTE: Stories about *The Dark Knight*, *Forrest Gump*, Black Friday sales, or the trade-offs between studying and partying will not be accepted, nor will stories about situations described in your texts.

Response papers: There will be six short, 1-2 page papers assigned, to be turned at the beginning of the Friday section on the dates indicated on the class schedule. Each paper will correspond to a chapter of *New Ideas from Dead Economists*. The first part of the paper should describe one of that chapter's ideas from the history of economic thought, and discuss how and where that idea appears in the Cowen and Tabarrok text or in lecture. The second part of the paper should analyze an event that you have observed in the real world, in a book or movie, in a vignette in the Hamermesh text, or in your own life, and describe either i) how the event illustrates the historical idea, or ii) how the event demonstrates that modern life has exposed something missing from the historical analysis.

Two Friday sections will be devoted to each assigned chapter of *New Ideas for Dead Economists*. The first will be for general discussion, and the second for discussing the completed response papers.

Course evaluation procedures: Your course grade will be determined as follows:

- Quizzes 8%
 - (We will drop your two lowest quiz grades, so that you may miss two quizzes without lowering your average.)
- Homeworks 8%
 - (We will drop your lowest homework grade.)
- Midterms 17% each
 - (If you miss a midterm, the 20% weight will be added to the final exam.)
- Final Exam 30%
- Story 5%
- Papers 15%

NOTE: Plus/minus grades will be assigned. The cutoff for an A is 92; A-, 88; B+, 84; B, 80; B-, 76; C+, 72; C, 68; C-, 64; and D, 54.

The Wiseman Award for Excellence: If your score on the final exam is an A, AND you take both midterms, AND you turn in a passing story, you will receive an automatic A for the course.

Special needs: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259. If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

Policy on scholastic dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Judicial Services web site at deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/.

Summary: Introduction to Microeconomics can be a tough course. Hard work and perseverance, however, will most likely pay off, so don't be discouraged. Utilize your fellow students, your TAs, and, of course, me. It's my job to help you succeed.

Class Schedule

Economics 304K Honors, Fall 2010

Date	Topic	Chapters in C&T	Chapters in Hamermesh	Chapters in Buchholz
Thursday, August 26	Nature of economics	1	1	
Friday, August 27				I, II
Tuesday, August 31	Demand and supply; Quiz 0 (practice)	2	2	
Thursday, September 2	Demand and supply, equilibrium; Quiz/HW 1	2, 3	2, 3	
Friday, September 3	Paper on Chapter II			II
Tuesday, September 7	Equilibrium	3	3	
Thursday, September 9	Elasticity; Quiz/HW 2	4	5	
Friday, September 10				VII
Tuesday, September 14	Elasticity, price ceilings	4, 6	5, 4	
Thursday, September 16	Price ceilings and floors, taxes; Quiz/HW 3	6, 7	4, 19	
Friday, September 17	Paper on Chapter VII			VII
Tuesday, September 21	Price floors, taxes	7	4, 19	
Thursday, September 23	Midterm 1			
Friday, September 24				–
Tuesday, September 28	Costs, perfect competition	10	7-10	
Thursday, September 30	Costs, perfect competition	10	7-10	
Friday, October 1				III
Tuesday, October 5	Costs, perfect competition	10	7-10	
Thursday, October 7	Monopoly; Quiz/HW 4	11	12	
Friday, October 8	Paper on Chapter III			III
Tuesday, October 12	Monopoly, price discrimination	11, 12	12, 13	
Thursday, October 14	Oligopoly and game theory; Quiz/HW 5	13	14	
Friday, October 15				VIII
Tuesday, October 19	Oligopoly and game theory	13	14	
Thursday, October 21	Labor markets; Quiz/HW 6	14	16, 17	
Friday, October 22	Paper on Chapter VIII			VIII
Tuesday, October 26	Labor markets	14	16, 17	
Thursday, October 28	Midterm 2	Covers Entire Course So Far		
Friday, October 29				–
Tuesday, November 2	Trade	8	20	
Thursday, November 4	Trade	8	20	
Friday, November 5				IV
Tuesday, November 9	Externalities and environment	13	18	
Thursday, November 11	Externalities and environment; Quiz/HW 7	13	18	
Friday, November 12	Paper on Chapter IV			IV
Tuesday, November 16	Public goods	17	18	
Thursday, November 18	Ethics and Inequality; Quiz/HW 8	18	–	
Friday, November 19				XI
Tuesday, November 23	Political economy	19	19	
Thursday, November 25	Thanksgiving			
Friday, November 26	Thanksgiving			
Tuesday, November 30	Incomplete information	–	–	
Thursday, December 2	Review; stories due	15	–	
Friday, December 3	Paper on Chapter XI			XI
See Registrar's website	Final Exam	Covers Entire Course		