

University of Southern California
Marshall School of Business
BUAD 351 - Economic Analysis for Business Decisions
Course Syllabus - Spring 2010

*This Course Syllabus describes the content, requirements, and rules for this course.
By enrolling in the course you are committing to abide by the policies set by this Syllabus.*

1. Instructor

Professor Odilon Câmara

Office: HOH 610 (Hoffman Hall)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00pm to 3:30pm

E-mail: ocamara@marshall.usc.edu

2. Textbook and Required Readings

- a. *Microeconomics* by Pindyck and Rubinfeld: Prentice Hall, 7th edition (2008) (Students may also use the 6th edition)
- b. Additional required material (lecture notes, sample quizzes, etc.) will be available on Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) as Word or Pdf documents. They will **not** be handed out in class. You are responsible for timely download of the material.
- c. It is always beneficial to do the required reading before class. Also, lecture notes are not a complete record of what I say in class, so attending lectures, taking notes and asking questions will be required to successfully complete the course.

3. About this Course

- a. The main goal of this course is to show how microeconomic models can be used to guide business decisions. We will study the behavior of consumers and firms, and their implications to demand, supply and market equilibrium. We will analyze competitive markets, market failures and the role of Government. This course will also introduce basic principles of game theory and competitive strategy.
- b. More generally, this course will provide a rigorous foundation for the study of decision making problems. The student who successfully completes this course should be able to apply microeconomic analysis to issues of real world interest both within and beyond the area of business.
- c. Although our focus will be on the intuition behind the microeconomic models and their real world consequences, the use of mathematics (in particular, algebra and calculus) will be fundamental to analyze and understand such models. For example, you may be asked to draw and interpret graphs representing demand and supply, to solve a system of

equations describing a competitive market, or to compute the derivative of a profit function.

- d. The prerequisites for this class are ECON 203, ECON 205 and either MATH 118 or MATH 125. I expect students to have a good understanding of the material covered in the prerequisites. I expect students to review the material from prerequisite classes as necessary.

4. Grading

- a. Grades will be assigned according to the following weights:

Quizzes (3 out of 4)	30%
Midterm	30%
Final Exam	40%

- b. There will be 4 quizzes. Your lowest quiz grade will be ignored, so that each remaining quiz corresponds to 10% of your final grade.
- c. I do not assign letter grades to individual exams. I will not implement a “curve” or hard target for the **distribution** of class grades. Your grade will reflect my best judgment of your class performance, as indicated by your performance on the exams. However, I will attempt to follow the School’s recommended target for the **mean** GPA: 3.0 (B).
- d. Tentative Exam Dates:

Quizzes (in class)		
(1) Tuesday Feb/09, (2) Tuesday Mar/02, (3) Tuesday Apr/06, (4) Tuesday Apr/27		
Midterm (in class) Tuesday, Mar/09		
Final Exam	Section	Time
Thursday, May/06	14989R	4:30pm to 6:30pm
	14987R	7:00pm to 9:00pm

- e. In **rare** occasions, the dates of the exams might need to be changed. If that happens, then I will notify the students through Blackboard as soon as possible.
- f. University policy requires the final exam to be given at the time indicated on the University’s final exam schedule. No student is allowed to take the final exam early or to skip the final exam. Instructors do not have discretion to grant exceptions to this policy.
- g. **There will be no make-up tests.** By enrolling in the course you are committing to take the tests on the scheduled dates. If a quiz is missed, it receives an automatic zero. If the **midterm** is missed for an approved reason, the weight of quizzes and final exam are increased to compensate for the missed midterm. Approval for a missed midterm will be **rare**, and only with appropriate written documentation from an authoritative source

indicating why the student was unable to appear for the midterm. Normally, only a doctor's certification of a severe medical problem will suffice.

- h. Each quiz will address the subject matter that precedes it. The midterm covers the first part of the course. The final exam is cumulative.
- i. Regrades must be requested within one week of the day the exam was returned to the class. The student must submit a written and precise explanation of why he/she thinks the grade should be modified. The entire exam will be regraded and the final mark may go up or down.
- j. Returned paperwork, unclaimed by a student, will be discarded after 4 weeks and hence, will not be available should a grade appeal be pursued by a student following receipt of his/her course grade.

5. University Student Conduct Code (*selected passages*)

10.0 General Disciplinary Principles: Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the university community's standards of behavior as articulated in the Student Conduct Code and in related policy statements.

11.0 Behavior Violating University Standards and Appropriate Sanctions: General principles of academic integrity include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Faculty members may include additional classroom and assignment policies, as articulated on their syllabus.

The following are examples of violations of these and other university standards.

11.13 A. Any use of external assistance in the completion of an academic assignment and/or during an examination shall be considered academically dishonest unless expressly permitted by the instructor. The following are considered unacceptable examination behaviors: communicating with fellow students during an exam, copying material from another student's exam; allowing another student to copy from an exam; possession or use of unauthorized notes, calculator, or other materials during exams and/or any behavior that defeats the intent of an exam or other classwork; and unauthorized removal of exam materials.

B. Submission of altered work after grading shall be considered academically dishonest, including but not limited to changing answers after an exam or assignment has been returned or submitting another's exam as one's own to gain credit.

11.80 Sanctions: Sanctions for violations of the university Student Conduct Code are assessed appropriately for the cited violation. One or more of the following sanctions may be imposed for violations of university regulations

11.88 Grade Sanctions: Any disciplinary grade reduction including, but not limited to, grades of "F" for a course, a reduced grade for a course, grades of "F" or zero credit for assignments, or reduced credit for assignments.

6. Academic Accommodations Based on a Disability

“Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me or the TA as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.”

7. Other Policies

- a. No laptops or other internet access devices may be used in class for any reason. Please turn off your cellular phones, beepers and pagers before entering the class.
- b. It is your responsibility to regularly access Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) to receive any additional material and important announcements related to this class.
- c. Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions during class and during office hours. Most times it is not feasible to give a comprehensive answer to questions sent to me by e-mail. If you send me a question by e-mail and I believe that it is not feasible to give a satisfactory answer to that question by e-mail, I will ask you to come to my office hours.