

EC303: Intermediate Microeconomic Theory (Fall 2020)

Section 26082R
MW 10:00-11:50AM
Zoom: 985 4204 4789

Instructor

Daniel Bennett (bennettd@usc.edu)

Zoom personal meeting room: 682 555 1509

Office hours: Tuesday 11AM-12PM. I will be available on Zoom in the personal meeting room during that time. Or email me to meet at another time.

Course Description

This course surveys standard topics in microeconomic theory. We will introduce the model of supply and demand. Then we will study the theory of the consumer and the theory of the firm and examine how these models fit together under perfect competition. We will develop a way to think about social welfare and consider the impacts of alternative economic policies. The second half of the course will examine market failures, including concentrated markets, externalities, and public goods. Studying these topics will require us to introduce basic concepts from game theory. Finally, we will cover topics is asymmetric information, including adverse selection and moral hazard. This course builds on EC203. Knowledge of basic calculus (Math 118) will be useful.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to observe and explain canonical microeconomic concepts and evaluate the consequences of economic policies in theory.

Required Texts

Perloff: [Microeconomics: Theory and Applications with Calculus](#) (Fourth Edition).

Varian: [Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach](#) (Ninth Edition).

Earlier editions of these books are okay, but you are responsible for dealing with any variation from these versions (e.g. problem set questions).

Assessment

The course grade will be based on six homework assignments (25%), a midterm exam (25%), and a final exam (50%). Homework assignments will be due around one week after they are assigned. Please upload your completed assignments to Blackboard as pdf files. Homework will be graded on a scale of 1-5.

Late homework policy: I will not accept late homework for any reason. However your homework grade will be based on your five highest homework scores. This policy gives you flexibility if unforeseen circumstances make it hard for you to turn in your homework on time.

Course materials

Please see the Blackboard website for course documents and assignments.

Slides

I will post preliminary versions of my slides before the lecture. These slides are subject to change. After the lecture I will post the actual slides.

Regrade Requests

If you feel your work was graded incorrectly, please submit your work and a brief written explanation of your argument. I will regrade the entire answer, which means that your score may go down.

Academic Integrity Policy

I am committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the Campus Guide. It is the policy of the Economics Department to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the major or minor, or from the undergraduate program.

Academic Accommodations

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 as early as possible in the semester. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8.30am-5.00pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213)-740-0776.

Course Plan

Week	Dates	Note	Topic	Perloff Readings	Varian Readings
1	8/17, 8/19		Introduction, Supply and Demand	Ch. 1, 2	Ch. 1, 3, 4
2	8/24, 8/26*		Consumer Choice	Ch. 3	Ch. 2, 5
3	8/31, 9/2		Demand	Ch. 4	Ch. 6-9, 14
4	9/9*	No class 9/7 (Labor Day)	Producer Theory	Ch. 6	Ch. 19
5	9/14, 9/16		Costs	Ch. 7	Ch. 20-22
6	9/21, 9/23*		Competitive Markets	Ch. 8	Ch. 23, 24
7	9/28, 9/30 (midterm)		Equilibrium	Ch. 5, 9	Ch. 33
8	10/5 10/7		Monopoly	Ch. 11	Ch. 25
9	10/12, 10/14*		Monopolistic Behavior	Ch. 12	Ch. 26
10	10/19, 10/21		Game Theory	Ch. 13	Ch. 29, 30
11	10/26, 10/28*		Oligopoly	Ch. 14	Ch. 28
12	11/2, 11/4		Risk and Uncertainty	Ch. 16	Ch. 11-13
13	11/9, 11/11*		Externalities	Ch. 17	Ch. 35
14			Asymmetric Information	Ch. 18, 19	Ch. 38
16	Reading Week				
17	Final Exam 11/23 8:00-10:00AM				

* = Homework due dates on 8/26, 9/9, 9/23, 10/14, 10/28, and 11/11.