Course Syllabus

Economics in the Public & Nonprofit Sectors

UAPP693 -- Section 010 -- Spring 2017

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A special thanks to Professor Eric Jacobson in the School of Public Policy and Administration who has taught this course for many years and who has been very generous with sharing advice and course materials.

Course Time and Location

This course meets from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm on Mondays in Room 187 Graham Hall.

Course Description

The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to principles of microeconomic theory and how they can be applied to the analysis of public policy and program analysis as well as to administrative issues. In addition, periodic but limited attention will be given to certain macroeconomic topics that are central to the ways in which the overall economy operates. The course begins with the basics of supply and demand and market operations, and then uses this as the foundation for exploring the behavior of consumers and producers. Throughout the course we will consider the roles that public and nonprofit agencies play in the marketplace, and how economic theory can be used to evaluate and enhance public policies and administration at all levels of society.

Course Prerequisites

This course requires familiarity with simple math techniques of algebra and graphing. Students who have some background in economics will find some of this course familiar, but will benefit from reviewing key concepts and principles, and applying them to public policy issues. Students with extensive or recent preparation in intermediate microeconomics should consider enrolling instead in a more advanced course. Please feel free to contact the instructor about your specific interests and the courses available in other parts of the University.

Competencies to be Acquired

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic language and concepts of Microeconomics and the tools of economic analysis. Knowing this will help you to effectively communicate with others about economic issues, and will help you understand and assess the strength of the economic reasoning of others.
• Understand how Microeconomic theory can be used to explain and model human economic behavior and how it can be employed to solve a variety of social and economic problems.

• Demonstrate, using appropriate graphical analysis, the ability to deliver a reasoned, persuasive economic argument both orally and in writing.

• Demonstrate the ability to progress to further graduate study requiring an understanding of basic Microeconomics and its tools. This familiarity with the language of economics and ability to apply (or criticize) the tools of economic analysis will strengthen your capacity to be an engaged citizen and an effective professional in the field of Public Policy and Administration.

Meeting with Instructor

I do not have standard office hours, but can usually be found in my office in 298G Graham Hall between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm. Students are welcome to come by my office unannounced to chat, or to have a conversation with me before or after class. Alternatively, meetings with me may be arranged via email.

Required Textbook & Learning Tools


This bundle consists of a printed copy of the book in loose-leaf binder format, plus an access code for "MindTap® Economics" learning tools (6 month access period). Go here to find an instruction sheet on how to access MindTap. It includes a "course key" that you'll need in addition to the MindTap access code. I've ordered this bundle through the UD Bookstore, but you are free to order it from any source you'd like, including directly from the publisher Cengage (https://www.cengagebrain.com/shop/ProductDisplay?langId=-1&storeId=10151&catalogId=10057&productId=171587). Students are required to use this 8th edition of the textbook for the course, but should fee free to periodically consult other Microeconomics textbooks by other authors to augment their learning.

Course Policies

For the benefit of all of us in class, please abide by the following rules:

• All assigned readings are to be done by the end of the day on Wednesday of each week. Class presentations, discussions and assignments will be hard to understand and follow if the readings are not done in a timely manner.

• Questions and discussion are always welcome! All students are expected to participate on a frequent basis by asking and answering questions, and by engaging in discussions in ways that demonstrate familiarity with assigned course materials. Students should always be courteous and respectful to fellow students and the instructor.

• Assignments and other required items are to be submitted by the posted deadline. Any item submitted late will be given a grade of zero (0) unless there are serious extenuating circumstances.

• Maintain a sense of humor and have fun!

Your thoughtful participation and contributions to the class will enhance the learning experience for you and your classmates.

Class Attendance and Participation

The class sessions will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Student should come to class having read the material assigned for that class. We will cover a considerable volume of material in class, and you may find it difficult to catch up if you do not attend class. A portion of your grade (see below) will be based on class participation, so, obviously, if you're not in class you can't participate.Your thoughtful contributions to the class discussion will enhance the learning experience for you and your classmates. Students may contribute to the class best by asking and answering questions and participating in discussions in ways that demonstrate that they have read the assigned text material and assigned articles and have thought about the subject matter. During class I encourage you to suggest possible applications to the public and nonprofit sectors.

Study Suggestions

You cannot learn Microeconomics by simply reading through assigned materials in a casual manner. We all learn in somewhat different ways. Here are some important tips that will help you boost your understanding of the topics covered in this course:

1. Don't hesitate to do the assigned readings and look at video material more than once.
2. Take notes on what you read and see. This might consist of highlighting text and making margin notes, or summarizing important information on a separate sheet. 

3. Don’t hesitate to borrow one or two other Microeconomics textbooks from a nearby library, and use them to read about a topic you are having difficulty understanding. There are many other Microeconomics textbooks out there, and reading a different author who describes the same concept(s) using different words, exhibits and examples can be very helpful! 

4. By all means, use the learning tools that are available to you in “MindTap”. You get a 6-month access license as part of your purchase of the Mankiw textbook (in loose-leaf binder format). 

5. Practice what you’re learning by answering questions and doing problems associated with each chapter in the textbook. 

6. If you find yourself struggling with a particular concept, don’t hesitate to ask questions online to others in the class and to the instructor. 

7. Consider forming and meeting online with a study group to review key concepts and to discuss things you don’t fully understand. 

Academic Integrity

All students must be honest and forthright in their academic studies. To falsify the results of one’s research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an exam or assignment, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and may neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance. The instructor strongly supports and aggressively enforces the University’s Code of Conduct as it pertains to academic dishonesty, and strongly recommend that each student review the University’s Reference Guide to Academic Integrity which can be found at [http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html](http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html).

Grading

There will be two (2) in-class quizzes during the semester, one (1) in-class mid-term exam, and one (1) in-class final exam. The mid-term will cover all material up to that point in the course. The final exam will cover all material from the mid-term forward. There will also be three (3) out-of-class assignments. Your final course grade will be calculated using the following weights:

- Out-of-Class Assignments -- 5% each
- Quizzes -- 15% each
- Class participation -- 5%
- Mid-term exam -- 25%
- Final exam -- 25%

The quizzes and exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false and short answer questions. Except when there are serious extenuating circumstances that are beyond the student's control, out-of-class assignments that are handed in late will not be accepted, and there will be no make-ups for missed quizzes or exams.

Calendar

February 6: Introduction

- Read Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in Mankiw. 
- Find lecture slides here [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnjinsM).
- Take a look at this very interesting infographic video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnjinsM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnjinsM)
February 13: Supply & Demand

- Read Chapter 4 in Mankiw.
- As a follow-up to our discussion last class, please read this article on competition vs. cooperation.
- Find lecture slides here.

February 20: Elasticity & Applications of Supply & Demand Analysis

- Read Chapters 5 & 6 in Mankiw.
- Find Assignment #1 here. It's due in hard copy in class on February 27.
- Find lecture slides here.

February 27: Theory of the Consumer

- Read Chapter 21 in Mankiw.
- Quiz #1
- Printed Assignment #1 is due in class today.
- Find lecture slides here.

March 6: Markets & Welfare (Consumer & Producer Surplus)

- Read Chapters 7 & 8 in Mankiw.
- Find lecture slides here.

March 13 and 20: Externalities & Public Goods

- Read Chapters 10, 11 and 12 in Mankiw.
- Find lecture slides on externalities here.
- Find lecture slides on Public Goods and Common Resources here.
- Review for Mid-Term Exam scheduled for April 3.

March 27: Spring Break - NO CLASS!

April 3 and 10: Labor Markets, Other Factors of Production & Inequality

- Read Chapters 18, 19 and 20 in Mankiw.
- Mid-Term Exam is on April 3.
- Find Assignment #2 here. It's due in hard copy in class on April 17.
- Take a look at this video by the Brookings Institution entitled "How much does the tax code reduce inequality?" (http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2015/04/09-how-does-tax-code-reduce-inequality-wessel#.VSwcV715sEg.email)
- Find lecture slides on Markets for the Factors of Production here.
- Find lecture slides on Earnings & Discrimination here.
- Find lecture slides on Income Inequality & Poverty here.
- Find information on the Lorenze Curve & GINI Index here.
- Find optional extra credit assignment here.

April 17: The Costs of Production

- Read Chapter 13 in Mankiw.
- Hard copy of Assignment #2 is due in class today.
- Find lecture slides on The Costs of Production here.
- Check out this Break Even Analysis Calculator Spreadsheet that I've developed. As I mentioned in class, it's an easy way to analyze the fixed, variable and total costs associated with a project, program or event and what revenue is needed to "break even."

April 24: Theory of the Firm – Perfect Competition

- Read Chapter 14 in Mankiw.
- Quiz #2
- Optional Extra Credit Assignment due in class in hard copy.
- Find Assignment #3 here. It's due in hard copy in class on May 8. Here's a copy of this assignment in MS Word format if you'd prefer.
• Find lecture slides on Firms in Competitive Markets here.

**May 1: Theory of the Firm – Monoply**

• Read Chapter 15 in Mankiw.
• Find lecture slides on Firms in Less Competitive Markets here.

**May 8: Theory of the Firm – Monopolistic Competition**

• Read Chapters 16 in Mankiw.
• Out-of-Class Assignment #3 is due in class today.

**May 15: Theory of the Firm – Oligopoly and Course Review**

• Today is PIZZA Day! The instructor will supply the pizza for an early dinner (at around 4:00 pm), and each student is asked to bring their own (non-alcoholic) beverage.
• Read Chapter 17 in Mankiw
• Go here for the answers to Assignment 3.

**May 19: Final Exam, 1:00 to 3:00 pm in 187 Graham Hall (confirmed)**

**Important note:** This date, time and location for the Final Exam is now confirmed. Students should not make travel plans until the instructor confirms this date. Students will not be permitted to take the Final Exam earlier than officially scheduled.

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**Required Texts for this Course**


**Additional Learning Resources**

Many other standard microeconomic textbooks cover similar material. Students are welcome to peruse through other textbooks to see if the material is covered or explained in ways that are more to their liking (use the index to the book if you are looking for a particular concept). Some of these alternative textbooks are:

• E. Browning and M. Zupan, Microeconomic Theory and Applications (Wiley).
• J. Perloff, Microeconomics (Pearson).
• Pindyck and Rubinfeld, Microeconomics (Pearson).
• S. E. Landsburg, Price Theory and Applications (Dryden Press).
• E. Mansfield, Microeconomics: Theory and Applications (Norton).
• Nicholson, Intermediate Microeconomics and Its Applications (Dryden Press).
• P. Trivedi, Applied Microeconomics for Public Policy Makers (International Management Publishers).

Additional learning resource to be added periodically.

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**Course Information | Course Requirements | Grading | Calendar | Links and Study Guides**

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https://udel.instructure.com/courses/1352021/assignments/syllabus
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Mon Feb 27, 2017</td>
<td><a href="https://udel.instructure.com/courses/1352021/assignments/5698486">Assignment #1 - Supply &amp; Demand Analysis</a></td>
<td>2pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Apr 17, 2017</td>
<td><a href="https://udel.instructure.com/courses/1352021/assignments/5698487">Assignment #2 - Externalities</a></td>
<td>2pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon May 1, 2017</td>
<td><a href="https://udel.instructure.com/courses/1352021/assignments/5698488">Assignment #3 - A Perfectly Competitive Firm &amp; Industry</a></td>
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