

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Economics
Economics 101: Principles of Microeconomics

Spring 2007

<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~mbrown/101.htm>

Prof. Meta Brown

Lectures: TR 11:00am-12:15pm, 6210 Social
Science

Office: 7442 Social Science

Hours: 12:15-1:15pm TR (tentative)

Phone: 262-8789

Final Exam: May 17, 5:05pm

Email: ProfBrown101@gmail.com

Head TA: Jeremy Sandford, jasandford@wisc.edu, 7230 Social Science, 262-1981

In Economics 101 we will examine the behavior of individual decision makers, primarily consumers and firms. Topics will include agents' choices of how much to consume and how much to produce, the functioning of perfectly and imperfectly competitive markets, the conditions under which markets may fail to produce socially efficient outcomes, and arguments for and against government intervention in markets. Younger fields of economic research including game theory, information economics, and experimental economics will be discussed. The successful Economics 101 student will be able to apply the fundamental tools of economics to real world problems, which will ultimately lead to a better understanding of the behavior of individuals, firms, and governments.

Prerequisite Quantitative Reasoning A

Credits 4

Text N. Gregory Mankiw, [Principles of Microeconomics](#) (4th Edition: Thomson, 2006). Texts are bundled with passcodes for Thompson's online resource center, www.thomsonedu.com/thomsonnow. Online resources include study guide materials, Power Point lecture slides, and an electronic version of the text. Students may purchase access to the online resource center either with or without the hard copy of the text. The University Bookstore should offer both options, and the passcode alone can be purchased on the Thompson site. All students are required to purchase access to the online resource center.

Materials presented in lecture will include some excerpts from the periodical [The Economist](#). Subscriptions to [The Economist](#) are not required for the course, but if enough students are interested we can organize a group subscription discount during the first week of classes.

Discussion Sections

Each student is assigned to a weekly discussion section with a teaching assistant (TA). All teaching assistants for this course are Ph.D. students in economics. Discussion sections will focus on recent and upcoming problem sets, more challenging points from the lectures, student questions, and exam preparation. Discussion section attendance and participation are optional; please make responsible decisions about the role that these sections will play in your academic progress. Note that your TA is your primary grader and your liaison to me, and treat her or him appropriately.

Exams

There will be two midterms held during regular class periods and one cumulative final exam. Midterm exams will be given in class on February 27th and April 10th. No makeup midterms will be given (see Grading below). A cumulative 2 hour final exam will be given at 5:05 p.m. on Thursday, May 17th. This schedule cannot be changed, and alternate exam times will not be offered. Practice exams will be posted on the class web site and reviewed in discussion sections. They will represent the question style and level of difficulty of the actual exams fairly reliably.

Grading

PROBLEM SETS (10%): Weekly problem sets will be assigned during the semester. These will be collected and selected problems will be graded by the discussion section leaders. Problem sets will each be assigned one of three possible grades: check plus, for exceptional work, check, for complete and reasonably accurate work, and check minus, for incomplete or generally inaccurate work. Group work is permitted, and one problem set may be submitted by three or fewer group members. Each student may drop her lowest problem set grade. The problem set score will then be determined based on the student's average performance on the remaining problem sets. Take special care to understand all solutions to problem sets, as this will be important preparation for the midterm and final exams.

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS (90%): The overall exam score will be calculated using the two formulas below, and the higher of the two results will be the exam score used in determining the student's final grade.

- (i) Each (curved) midterm exam score and the (curved) final exam score count as 30% of the student's total grade.
- (ii) The highest (curved) midterm exam score counts as 40% of the student's total grade, and the (curved) final exam score counts as 50% of the student's total grade.

Any student who misses either midterm for any reason will be graded according to formula (ii).

QUESTIONS ABOUT GRADING: Grading errors do occur, despite the best efforts of your professor and TAs. If you believe that a mistake has been made in the grading of your problem set or exam, contact your TA. If you are unsatisfied with your TA's resolution of your grading problem, see me during office hours or contact me via email. Regrading may result in an increase or decrease in a student's exam or problem set grade, depending on the net effect of any corrected errors.

Class web site

The syllabus, problem sets, and most lecture notes will be posted on the class web site, which you can link to from www.ssc.wisc.edu/~mbrown.

Email

With roughly 460 registered students, email for one Principles of Microeconomics lecture can be overwhelming. I have established a new email address specific to this class. I will check this email either before or after each of my office hours. Feel free to email me with your questions and concerns, but be aware of the next day and time at which class email will be checked.

Preliminary Schedule of Topics

The following is a preliminary schedule of topics to be covered this semester. Topics and dates may change, depending on our rate of progress.

Date	Topic	Chapter	PS #	Problem Set Due (tentative)
January 23 & 25	Intro to Econ, Graphs	1, 2, 2A	1	1/31-2/2
30	Gains from Trade	3	2	2/7-9
February 1, 6&8	Utility and Consumer Behavior	21	3	2/14-16
13	Supply and Demand	4	4	2/21-23
15	Elasticity	5	5	Not graded
20	Government Policies	6	6	3/7-9
22	Market Efficiency	7		
27	FIRST MIDTERM (in class)			
March 1	Application: Trade	9		
6	Externalities and Public Goods	10 and 11	7	3/14-16
8 & 13	Taxation	8 and 12	6	3/7-9
15	Costs	13	7	3/14-16
20, 22, 27, & 29	Competitive Markets	14	8, 9	3/28-30 (8), not graded (9)
April 3 & 5	SPRING BREAK			
April 10	SECOND MIDTERM (in class)			
12, 17	Monopoly	15	10	4/18-20
19, 24	Game Theory & Oligopoly	Notes/16	11	4/25-27
26, May 1	Earnings and Inequality	18, 19, 20/Notes	12	Not graded
May 3 & 8	Fun stuff	22/Notes		
10	Wrap-up and exam review			
May 17	FINAL EXAM, 5:05pm			

Find your TA

The following is a list of the 4 TAs other than Jeremy Sandford leading discussion sections. After the first week of discussion sections, you should know who your TA is and may contact her or him with questions or concerns. TAs will announce their office hours during their discussion sessions.

TA Name	Office	Email	Phone
Jungwook Kim	6445 Social Science	jungwookkim@wisc.edu	x3-3274
Ju-Young Kim	7308 Social Science	jkim45@wisc.edu	x3-3866
Megan Ritz	6413 Social Science	mwatson@wisc.edu	x2-4542
Ke Zhang	7439 Social Science	kzhang2@wisc.edu	x2-4389