

Course Syllabus

ECO206Y5Y – Microeconomic Theory

Department of Economics
University of Toronto Mississauga
Fall 2022 and Winter 2023

Contact Information

Instructor: Xianwen Shi
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Office Hours: Thursday 11am-12 noon (or by appointment)
Course Webpage: <http://q.utoronto.ca> (Quercus)

Graduate TA (grading): Lara Wulandari (lara.wulandari@mail.utoronto.ca)
Undergraduate TA (tutorial/office hours): Shayan Chakravarty (shayan.chakravarty@mail.utoronto.ca)

Contact Hours

LEC9101: Thursday 9:00-11:00am, IB280 (Fall), IB270 (Winter)
TUT9101: Thursday 4:00-5:00pm, IB200 (Fall), IB270 (Winter)
TUT9102: Thursday 12:00-1:00pm, availability depending on enrollment, IB150 (Fall), IB379 (Winter)

We will have tutorials scheduled almost every week, but some of the weeks may not have tutorials. Please check course outline below and Quercus course webpage for details.

Communication

If you have questions about course materials, you should ask them during lectures, tutorials, or office hours. You will get prompt response to your questions. You can also post questions on the Quercus discussion board. Emails are reserved for personal, short questions.

- *If you email me, you must use your University email address and include the course code in the subject line.*
- *I will do my best to answer your questions within 48 hours.*

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course presents the basic analytical tools of economic analysis and demonstrate how these tools can be used to understand the behavior of firms and consumers and to evaluate a wide range of economic policies. We start by looking at the decision-making of rational, self-interested individuals (consumers, firms, workers, and investors), and study how they optimize and respond to changes in economic environment. We then investigate the social consequences when these rational, self-interested individuals interact and form markets. We ask when the active pursuing of happiness by rational individuals will lead to socially desirable outcomes and when it will not, and in the latter case we explore the causes and remedies.

The goal of the course is methodological. It will equip you with the tools and methods of economic reasoning necessary for upper-level courses and beyond. We will use math to make precise statements and to discipline our logic. We will use writing about economics to help you learn how to apply the economic logic. Critical thinking, application and communication skills are emphasized.

To succeed in this course, you should

- **Put in the time, consistently:** Plan to spend **8-10 hours a week** on this course. Last minute cramming leads to superficial understanding which gets exposed in the tests. Regular practice over a longer period leads to deeper learning that lasts beyond the final exam.
- **Use the time effectively:** Form a study group. As you solve problems, focus on the concepts not the procedure. Ask why do we get this? What if some elements were different? What are the similarities/differences with what you've seen before? If you struggle, get help early.
- **Know what we are looking for on the exams:** Problem solving is an important learning outcome and an essential job skill. It is what you do when you use your conceptual knowledge to answer a question you *haven't seen* before. The emphasis is *on how you approach the question and the quality of your reasoning*. Memorization and matching patterns will not help you.
- **Take ownership of your learning:** Remember you are taking this course to make yourself a better economist. Make your effort count. Read the material before class and come to lecture ready to actively participate class discussion and problem solving.

Course Materials

Required Text: Jeffrey M. Perloff, *Microeconomics: Theory and Applications with Calculus*, 5th edition.

A paid access to MyLab Economics (bundled with e-text) is required. We will be using MyLab (which is integrated into our Quercus) for online weekly homework. Its online study plan provides extra problems as well. Registration instructions are on Quercus course website. You are strongly recommended to purchase the access code bundled with e-textbook from the UTM bookstore (the first option below).

1. 9780134899657 Perloff 5e / MyLab Economics with Pearson eText for Microeconomics: Theory and Applications with Calculus Retail \$95.00
<https://www.campusebookstore.com/integration/AccessCodes/default.aspx?permalinkId=540f0c57-d000-4874-bd3c-c4974492edf9&frame=YES&t=permalink>
2. 9780137328642 Perloff 5E / Mylab Economics Without Etext Stand Alone Access Card For Microeconomics: Theory; Retail \$60.00
<https://www.campusebookstore.com/integration/AccessCodes/default.aspx?permalinkId=83050f5d-01dc-4fe4-a777-c47a2b1b4d0f&frame=YES&t=permalink>

Note: Those who are shopping for courses may want to choose a free temporary access for two weeks. This would allow you to try the course and then decide whether to buy afterwards.

Useful References:

- Thomas J. Nechyba, *Microeconomics: An intuitive Approach*, 1st or 2nd edition.
- Walter Nicholson and Christopher Snyder, *Microeconomic Theory: Basic Principles and Extensions*, 10th edition or higher.
- Hal. R. Varian, *Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach*, 6th edition or higher.

Course Outline (Tentative)

Week	Date		Topics	Book Chapters
1	September 8	Lecture	Supply and Demand	Ch 1, Ch 2
		Tutorial	Functions and Derivatives	Calculus Appendix
2	September 15	Lecture	Preferences and Constraints	Ch 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
		Tutorial	Properties of Functions	Calculus Appendix
3	September 22	Lecture	Utility Maximization	Ch 3.4
		Tutorial	Constrained Optimization	Calculus Appendix
4	September 29	Lecture	Demand Function	Ch 4.1, 4.5
		Tutorial		
5	October 6	Lecture	Income and Substitution Effects	Ch 4.2, 4.3, 2.6
		Tutorial		
	October 13		Reading week, no class	
6	October 20	Lecture	Labor and Time	Ch 5.4, 15.2
		Tutorial		
7	October 27	Lecture	Consumer Surplus	Ch 5.1, 5.2, 5.3
		Tutorial		
8	November 3	Lecture	Uncertainty	Ch 16.1-16.5
		Tutorial		
9	November 10	Term Test 1	Covering Weeks 1-8	
10	November 17	Lecture	Production	Ch 6.1-6.5
		Tutorial		
11	November 24	Lecture	Cost Minimization Writing Assignment 1 due	Ch 7.1-7.4
		Tutorial		
12	December 1	Lecture	Profit Maximization	Ch 8.1-8.4
		Tutorial		
			Winter Break	
13	January 12	Lecture	Competitive Markets	Ch 9.1-9.5
		Tutorial		
14	January 19	Lecture	Exchange Economy	Ch 10.1-10.3
		Tutorial		
15	January 26	Lecture	General Equilibrium	Ch 10.4, 10.5
		Tutorial		
16	February 2	Term Test 2	Covering Weeks 10-15	
17	February 9	Lecture	Monopoly	Ch 11, Ch12
		Tutorial		

Week	Date		Topics	Book Chapters
18	February 16	Lecture	Game Theory	Ch 13.1-13.4
		Tutorial		
	February 23		Reading week, no class	
19	March 2	Lecture	Oligopoly I Writing Assignment 2 due	Ch 14.1, 14.3, 14.5
		Tutorial		
20	March 9	Lecture	Oligopoly II	Ch 14.2, 14.4
		Tutorial		
21	March 16	Lecture	Public Goods and Externalities	Ch 17.1-17.6
		Tutorial		
22	March 23	Term Test 3	Covering Weeks 17-21	
23	March 30	Lecture	Adverse Selection	Ch 18
		Tutorial		
24	April 6	Lecture	Moral Hazard	Ch 19
		Tutorial		
	Exam Period	Final Exam		

Evaluation

There will be weekly problem sets, three term tests, two writing assignments, and the final.

Test/Assignment	Date	Time	Weight	Location
Term Test 1	November 10, 2022	9-11am	12%	In class
Term Test 2	February 2, 2023	9-11am	12%	In class
Term Test 3	March 23, 2023	9-11am	12%	In class
Writing Assignment 1	November 24, 2022	11:59pm	7%	Quercus
Writing Assignment 2	March 2, 2023	11:59pm	7%	Quercus
Final Exam	Exam Period, TBA		33%	TBA
Problem Sets	Weekly, every Thursday	11:59pm	14%	MyLab via Quercus
Class Participation			3%	

Term tests. There will be three term tests. If you miss one term test due to circumstances out of your control, the weight for that test will be shifted to the final. That is, the weight of the final exam will increase to 45%. However, tests are **NOT** optional and you must take each of the three tests.

Writing assignments. They serve two goals. First, writing about economics helps improve your ability to communicate economic reasoning which is a [valuable workplace skill](#). Second, it helps you learn economics in a way that complements problem-solving. The two writing assignments must be submitted to Quercus online before the due dates. Further details will be provided on Quercus.

Weekly homework. You must complete the (almost) weekly homework on MyLab before the due dates. No extension will be granted. Your six lowest homework scores will be dropped to account for this. You get two tries for each question as the purpose of the homework is to help you review what you learn in class. Using the “Help me solve this” function counts as one try.

Class participation. Active in-class participation is very important for your learning in this course. Every student is required to attend every lecture. I may randomly check class attendance. You are strongly encouraged to attend every tutorial as well.

Submission of Course Work

Term tests. You must write term tests at the scheduled date and time and submit them online through Quercus course website. No extension of submission will be granted.

Writing assignments. You must submit your writing assignments through Quercus course website.

- Late assignments will be subject to a late penalty of 20% per day (including weekends) of the total marks for the assignment. Assignments submitted five calendar days beyond the due date will be assigned a grade of zero. Assignments handed in AFTER the work has been returned to the class cannot be marked for credit. Accommodations due to late registration into the course will NOT be approved.

- If you require an extension of time please request this at least 5 business days in advance. Asking for an extension the day before, or the day of, is not a sufficient amount of time.
- Computer viruses, crashed hard drives, broken printers, lost or corrupted files, incompatible file formats, faulty internet, battery problems, and similar mishaps are common issues when using technology, and are not acceptable grounds for a deadline extension.
- It is every student's responsibility to ensure that their online submission is submitted successfully by the due date. Accommodations will not be made for unsuccessful submissions due to, but not limited to, i) the system timing out, ii) submitting the incorrect document(s), iii) poor internet connection / no internet connection etc.

Weekly homework. You must complete the (almost) weekly homework on MyLab before the due dates. No extension will be granted. Your six lowest homework scores will be dropped to account for this.

Missed Term Work

Students who miss a test because of circumstances beyond their control (e.g. illness or an accident) can request that the Department grant them special consideration. The following steps must be completed in order to be considered for academic accommodation for any missed term test.

1. Your absence must be declared on ACORN on the day of the missed test, or by the day after, at the latest.
2. You must notify your professor by e-mail within one week of the missed test.
3. Complete an online [Special Consideration Request](#) within one week of the missed test. The University is temporarily suspending the need for a doctor's note or medical certificate for any absence from academic participation. However, this policy may change at any point during the course.
4. Consult the Office of the Registrar should your absence be lengthy or affect multiple courses.

If no request is received, or if the request is deemed unacceptable, you will receive a grade of zero for the item you missed. If the request is granted – that is, your reason for missing the test is considered acceptable – then the weight for that test will be shifted to the final. That is, the weight of the final exam will increase to 45%.

Students who cannot complete their final examination due to illness or other serious causes must file an [online petition](#) within 72 hours of the missed examination. Late petitions will NOT be considered. Students must also record their absence on ACORN on the day of the missed exam or by the day after at the latest. Upon approval of a deferred exam request, a non-refundable fee of \$70 is required for each examination approved.

Students **CANNOT** petition to re-write a quiz/test once the test has begun. If you are feeling ill, please do not start the online or in-class test, seek medical attention immediately, and the policy on Missed Term Work will apply.

Regrade Request

All tests (term tests and final) will be graded by our Graduate TA. A [written request](#) for a re-grade of a term test must be submitted within one month after the date of the return of the test. If your request is granted, the whole test rather than the requested parts may be regraded and hence your new score may be lower than the old one after regrading.

Privacy and Use of Course Materials

Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Technology

MyLab Economics

We will use MyLab Economics for our weekly homework. It is fully integrated with Quercus. Its online study plan provides extra problems as well. Registration instructions are on Quercus.

Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Students are permitted, under our conditions of use, to opt-out of using the University's plagiarism detection tool. If you choose not to submit your assignment through the plagiarism detection tool, you should let me by email before **September 22, 2022 (the third class)**. In this case, you can directly submit your writing assignments to me and your assignments need to include annotated bibliographies and all website addresses of all sources cited in your assignment. I may also require a short meeting asking you pointed questions regarding your research methodologies.

Supplement

The [Supplement to Course Syllabi](#) (dated **August 9, 2022**) of UTM's Department of Economics should be understood to be an integral part of this syllabus. It describes

- time zone information;
- information regarding prerequisites and exclusions;
- your responsibility to adhere to the [Code of Student Conduct](#);
- your responsibility to adhere to the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#);
- expectations regarding academic integrity, including examples of violations;
- technology requirements for online learning;
- your responsibility to avoid course conflicts;
- your responsibility to honour the copyright of course materials;
- your right to receive accommodations for religious observances;
- the equity statement for this course;
- your academic rights;
- some resources that are available to students, including [Accessibility Services](#).