

September 3, 2013

ECONOMICS 200
COURSE OUTLINE: 2013 - 2014

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Course Website: On Blackboard (www.portal.utoronto.ca)
Lecture Location: SS 2135

About the Course

- This is a "full year" course in intermediate microeconomics. A strong understanding of first year concepts will be helpful to you. Do not be misled by the appearance that second year is just "more of the same"; although that might on the surface appear to be the case, you will find that reality is much different!
- ECO 200 does rely on certain math concepts, including Calculus. *You MUST have these math skills to succeed!* Note that ECO 206, which is even more intensively math-based, is the course usually required for an ECO specialist degree.

Grades, Tests, Exam

- Your final grade will be determined as follows:

○ Term Test #1	13.3%	Thursday October 31
○ Writing Assignment #1 ¹	4%	Friday November 29
○ Term Test #2	13.3%	Thursday January 23
○ Term Test #3	13.3%	Thursday March 20
○ Writing Assignment #2	6%	Friday March 28
○ Final Exam	50%	Exam Week ²
- **The final exam** covers the entire course material.
- **Please do your utmost not to miss a test.** Those who miss T1, T2, or T3 for a certifiable reason will write a *comprehensive make-up* at the end of the term (likely during the last week). Medical notes **MUST** state clearly that you were too ill to write the test and should be provided within one week. You should use the *U of T Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form* found at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca

¹ More information about the Writing Assignments will be provided later.

² Could be during the day.

- **Note regarding appeal of test grades:** If you wish to appeal the marking of a test, please submit it with a note on why you believe that your test has been incorrectly evaluated. The areas you point out, plus other questions, will be reviewed. To use a term that will become clear later in the course, the Expected Value of a Re-mark request is not necessarily positive!

Text, Study Guide and Publisher Website

- The text is Microeconomics, 4th Edition (publisher Wiley), by authors Besanko and Braeutigam. (You can use the 3rd Edition, if you wish.³)
- There are various options available to you from the publisher: a hard-copy textbook (the most costly option); a binder version (unbound, three-hole punched, in a binder, no need to transport the entire text everywhere you go; lowest cost option); an eTextbook (available for download; lower cost); an online eTextbook (accessible online from any computer). You need to figure out what works best for you! In the past, most students have opted for the hardcover textbook.
- There is a Study Guide that accompanies the text, for your consideration; if you acquire an electronic textbook, the Guide is available that way too.
- The publisher also sponsors a website related to the text that you may find useful.
- For more information, visit www.wiley.com/canada/wileyflex .

Course Website

- The website for this course, on Blackboard (www.portal.utoronto.ca), contains all of the information you will need. You must have an @utoronto.ca email address registered on ROSI to access it. You will access it using your UTORID.
- You are expected to obtain course materials via the web. Check it frequently. You will also receive an email when the website is updated with new items.
- Be sure you have entered your @utoronto.ca email address correctly on ROSI. If it is incorrect, you will not receive emails from me or the webmaster.
- Your marks for Term Tests and Written Assignments will appear on Blackboard after you have received these papers. It is wise to check that your marks have been recorded accurately. If not, email me t w.wolfson@utoronto.ca.

³ If you use the 3rd edition purchased as a used text, you will not have access to the publisher's website, unless you purchase this separately.

- Note that a correction to marks will not show on BB until the next updating of the entire “grade centre”; this may be a few weeks after the correction has been approved.

Course Materials

- A series of "**Lecture Assignments**" will be posted on the website. These will be helpful to you as an outline of the lectures. *Note that there are topics in the lectures that are beyond those in the text; typically, you will typically receive additional handouts in class to cover these topics.* You must attend class to obtain answers to the Lecture Assignments; they are not posted on the course website.
- Note that the Lecture Assignments (LAs) point you to pages in the text (where applicable) that reflect the contents of the lectures.
- **You are strongly urged to bring a copy of the relevant LA to the lectures (or have it available on your laptop), to help you follow what I am presenting.**
- Also posted on the website are **Web Quizzes** (MC questions), **Web Problem Sets** (includes end-of-chapter questions taken from the textbook), and **Sample Tests** (from past years). Solutions to all these are posted as well. *However, you are urged to try these problems without immediately peeking at answers. If you face difficulties, try again and perhaps once more, before looking at the answer. You will find, in the long run, that this approach contributes more to your mastery of materials.*
- There is a **Preamble** to each of the folders (Lecture Assignments, Web Quizzes, etc.) on the BB course website. You are urged to read the Preamble before downloading any of the other items in the folder.

Tutorials

- There will be tutorials (time and place to be announced), at which Tutorial Problem Sets will be discussed. Also, there will be **Tutorial Problem Handouts** – problems for you to try in the tutorial – followed by a discussion of solutions to them. You must attend tutorials to receive these Handouts.
- The **Tutorial Problem Sets** will be posted on the course website. Solutions to these Problem Sets will be provided in tutorials only.
- Check the schedule carefully; tutorials do not occur every week. You are urged to try the tutorial problems in advance, rather than attend to copy answers.

Key to Success

- The key to success in this course is the time spent doing problems ... the more, the better. Sources of problems include the end of chapter questions in the text, the Study Guide that accompanies the text (should you choose to acquire it), and the many other problems provided to you. None of these are handed in or graded; they are for your study use only.
- The Wiley website is where you can find more problems, if you have purchased access to it.
- Do not be surprised if you find some of the problems difficult or if you “get stuck” on the first try. You will get better with practice. There is merit in working together with other students in a small group, where each one helps the other.

Take Notice!

- Helpful warning message for those who have not taken an evening course before: it is truly tough to stay focussed during a very long lecture, but you need to try your best to do so. Think of it as an endurance test, once per week! A lot of material will get covered in each lecture; we have no choice, as there are a total of 24 lectures (minus 3 for tests) to cover a full academic year’s work.
- In other words, expect to face significant challenges when you take ECO 200 in the evening; *if you are not committed to bearing them, you probably should not enrol in the course.*

Sources of Assistance

- If you are having difficulties, do not delay in seeking assistance. There are a number of sources of both informal and formal help. Ask a fellow student. Form a study group. Go to the **ECO 200 Aid Centre** (location and hours to be announced). E-mail your questions to the **ECO 200 e-TA Service** for a response from one of the Teaching Assistants assigned to this section of the course (e-mail addresses and “rules” to be provided soon). Or attend the **Department of Economics Study Centre** staffed by peer mentors; for more information, go to www.economics.utoronto.ca/index.php/index/undergraduate/load/studyCentre
- If after trying the Aid Centre and / or e-TA, you are still having difficulty, please see me before or after class, e-mail me at w.wolfson@utoronto.ca, or call me at (416) 487-1481. I always stay after lectures until all questions are answered, so do not hesitate to come forward with your enquiries.

More Things for You to Note

- There are entrepreneurs who offer services to ECO 200 students the week before tests / the exam. They typically promise “perfect understanding” through a few hours of intensive study for a fee. *Caveat emptor!*
- These entrepreneurs also sell copies of past tests with “correct answers”. Once again, *caveat emptor!* (For your information, there are considerable differences in the content and the approach to the course you are taking, compared to previous times prior to 2009 when I was teaching it.) Note also that past tests and (correct) solutions are posted on the course website.

Academic Integrity

- **Students should also be aware that cheating is subject to severe academic penalties. Consider yourself warned: DO NOT CHEAT! See www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/ for the Code of Behaviour.**
- Note that the only electronic device permitted at tests and the final exam in ECO 200 is a non-programmable calculator.⁴ The Academic Code says that mere possession (not use) of any other device while writing a test or examination is an academic offence; leave these other devices e.g., cell phones, iPods, berries, etc. in your bag at the side of the room. [Recent change in rules: you can leave your cell phone clearly visible under your desk.]
- You must stop writing when time is up for tests and examinations. Not doing so exposes you to academic sanctions.

⁴ Be sure your calculator is non-programmable. Possession, not use of the programmable or graphing features, is an academic offence.

Email Protocols

- You can expect a timely response to your emails to me. But to get a quick response, you need to follow some protocols, as below.
- The Subject Line of your email should include “ECO 200”.
- I prefer (but do not require) that you use your @utoronto.ca email address.
- For administrative questions (e.g., Is there a tutorial this week? Where is the test being held? What topics does the upcoming test cover?) , you should check the course website first, as it likely has the answer you are seeking.
- My role is not to be your personal librarian! Indeed, some profs will not answer emails when the information is available elsewhere; I will give you one email “freebie”; thereafter, no response.
- However, if I have failed to provide some information, or the web posting is delayed, or there is an error in a posting or the posted document is unclear, it is fine to email me.
- For questions on course materials, I encourage you to try the Aid Centre for face-to-face dialogue and/or e-TA for electronic support. Also, you can see me before class, at break or after class (I always stay until every question is answered). Or make an appointment to see me.
- Email is not a mechanism to receive an extensive private tutorial or to teach materials that were delivered in a lecture you missed. You do need to show evidence that you have worked on a problem before emailing for an explanation.
- Having said all that, you can still email me for help!

Summary of Important Dates

Thursday September 12	First Lecture	
Thursday October 31	Test #1	
Thursday November 28	Last Lecture, Fall Term	
Friday November 29	Writing Assignment #1 due by 5pm	
Thursday January 9	First Lecture of 2013	
Thursday January 23	Test # 2	
Week of Feb 17	Reading Week	No Lectures
Thursday March 20	Test #3	
Friday March 28	Writing Assignment #2 due by 5pm	
Week of March 31	Make-up Test	Date TBD
Thursday April 3	Last Lecture, Spring Term	
April 9 - April 30	Final Exam	Date TBD

Ten Helpful Hints on How to Fail ECO 200 (!)

1. Skip lectures.⁵
2. Do practice problems rarely, if at all.
3. Avoid tutorials and other in-class prep sessions.
4. Do not get help when you need it.
5. Use the textbook as a doorstop only.⁶
6. Cram for tests and for the exam.
7. Pay entrepreneurs to save you at the last minute.
8. Find an excuse not to work hard.⁷
9. Rarely consider how ECO 200 concepts apply to your daily life.⁸
10. Take a full-time course load and add to that many hours of paid employment.

**In sum,
if you do not challenge yourself to do the best you can do,
your results are not likely to be the best they can be!**

Comment by a former student:

“This course provided more than enough resources to succeed. There should be no excuses for not doing well; the only explanation is not enough effort!”

Cara L.

⁵ Or attend lectures, but snooze your way through them with minimal intellectual effort.

⁶ Electronic equivalent: pay for the eTextbook, but never access it.

⁷ Dislike of the prof, the lecture room, the evening lecture time, the lecture duration or some other feature of the course.

⁸ Or do not apply!

