

**Microeconomic Theory**  
**Eco 206**  
**Summer 2013**  
**University of Toronto**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Microeconomic Theory is an economic methodology course. It aims to equip you with tools to answer microeconomic questions in a precise way. It will help develop your abstract thinking and analytic skills. Problem solving will be an important part of the course

The main topics covered will be individual decision making (consumers and firms) and the results of their interaction in the market. We will also cover different market structures, distortion, asymmetric information and Game theory.

The learning objectives for this course are the following, first, for students to learn how to use the basic tools of microeconomic analysis. They should be able to approach a problem, figure out which tool to use and use it correctly. It is important that they are able to identify the underlying assumptions and are aware of how they affect the results.

The other objective is for students to be able to evaluate economic arguments using the concepts covered in the course. They should be able to identify the reasoning and critically examine it. They should then be able to convey their analysis clearly and precisely to a general audience.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

*Meeting times:*

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 10-12noon Location: MP 102  
We will be using all three days. In general lectures will be on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and tutorials on Thursdays. Occasionally we will use Thursdays for lectures.

*Instructor*

Kripa Freitas  
Department of Economics  
Max Gluskin House, Room 224

[k.freitas@utoronto.ca](mailto:k.freitas@utoronto.ca)  
(416) 978-2268

*Office hours*

Wednesdays 12.30-2pm Location: GE 224  
Fridays 10-11.30am

## TA

TA information and office hours will be posted on Blackboard under the Contacts tab

## Textbook

The required textbook for this course is

*Microeconomics: An Intuitive Approach With Calculus* – Thomas Nechyba, 2010,  
South Western Cengage Learning

The chapters covered for each class are listed on the course outline below. You are expected to do the reading before class.

## Website

The course website will be on Blackboard (<http://www.portal.utoronto.ca>). All course material, announcements, problem sets, assignments etc. will be posted on the website. It will be the primary means of communication for this class. You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. Any communication will be emailed to the class list as it appears on Blackboard.

## Prerequisites

Students must have the following prerequisites as per the Calendar to be able to take this course: ECO100Y1(70%);MAT133Y1(63%)/(MAT123H1(63%),MAT124H1(63%))/ (MAT135H1(60%),MAT136H1(60%))/MAT137Y1(55%)/MAT157Y1(55%)

Exclusion: ECO200Y1, ECO204Y1. See:

<http://www.economics.utoronto.ca/index.php/index/undergraduate/load/prerequisites>

It is your responsibility to make sure you satisfy the prerequisites. The Economics Department strictly enforces them and you will be dropped from the course if you do not satisfy them.

## EVALUATION

### Due dates

The grade for this class will be based on three midterms, three writing assignments, weekly problem sets and a final. For the **required** term tests and assignments, the due dates are below.

	Due Date	Time and Location
Midterm 1	June 4th	10.10-11.30am, TBA
Midterm 2	July 9th	10.10-11.30am, TBA
Midterm 3	July 30th	10.10-11.30am, TBA
Assignment 1	June 12th	10 am, submission details below
Assignment 2	July 17th	10 am, submission details below
Assignment 3	August 6th	10 am, submission details below
Final	Final examination period, Location TBA	

In addition, you have the option of completing graded weekly problem sets via Aplia. The due dates for these are posted on the problem set.

### *Weights*

The weights on the term tests and assignments will depend on your choice to have your Aplia grades count towards your grade or not. The Aplia problem sets are worth 10% of your grade. If you choose not to have them count, then this weight gets distributed across the midterms and finals. Specifically, the weights are as follows:

	<b>With Aplia</b>	<b>Without Aplia</b>
Midterm 1	15%	17%
Midterm 2	15%	17%
Midterm 3	15%	17%
Problem Sets	10%	0%
Assignment 1	10%	10%
Assignment 2	Total	total
Assignment 3		
Final	35%	39%

### *Aplia Opt-Out Procedure*

If you **do NOT** want to have your Aplia grades reflected in your course grade you **are required to complete and sign** the “Aplia Opt-Out Form” available on Blackboard under the assignments tab. This needs to be uploaded onto Blackboard by **Wednesday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 at 5pm**. Your choice either way is binding and **cannot be changed under any circumstances** during the term. If you do not submit the form by the date/time above, your course weights will be calculated according to the “With Aplia” scheme.

### *Problem sets*

The purpose of the problem sets is help you work through the concepts introduced in class and to apply them to different examples. Microeconomics is best learnt by doing so this is an important part of the course.

Graded problems sets can be accessed through Aplia at <http://econ.aplia.com>.

Instructions on how to register with Aplia will be provided during the first day of class. Typically, there will be one graded problem set per topic. Assignment due dates will be posted on the assignments. The required textbook includes a complimentary copy of Aplia if it is purchased through the bookstore or Discount.

In addition the TA will post and cover ungraded problem sets during tutorial time. These problems will be different from the Aplia problem sets and better resemble the type of problems you are likely to see on the exam.

### Assignments

There will be **three individual writing assignments**. Very briefly for every assignment you will be given an article and will be asked to critically evaluate it. Further details will be provided on the course website. The total weight for all three assignments is 10%.

These assignments will help develop your abilities to analyze economic arguments and communicate your reasoning through writing. The goal is to get you to take the concepts and tools you have learnt in class and translate that knowledge to economic analysis. You will need to submit your assignments online on Blackboard and on <http://www.turnitin.com/> on the due dates and time mentioned. Check the General Assignment Instructions handout on Blackboard for more details. In addition you need to bring a hard copy to class.

**No extensions** are granted for any reason (illness, computer problems etc.) There is a 10 percentage point (out of 100) penalty per 24 hours, per assignment for handing in late assignments. For example, if you hand in two assignments less than 24 hours after the due date, your total penalty for the assignments part will be  $10+10=20\%$ .

### Midterms and Final

In general midterms cover material from the first lecture after the last midterm (the first class for the first midterm) and the lecture before the midterm. However, exact coverage will be posted before each midterm. The final is cumulative and will cover all of the material from the course.

### COURSE OUTLINE

Note: The course outline below is subject to change depending on the pace we move at during class.

Lecture	Day	Date	Chapters	Material
1	Tue	14-May	1 and 2	Introduction; Constraints
2	Wed	15-May	2,4 and 5	Constraints, preferences and utility
3	Tue	21-May	6	Choice
4	Wed	22-May	7 and 8	Income and Substitution effects <i>Aplia Opt out form due</i>
5	Tue	28-May	3A1,B1; 8A2,B2;9A2	Labor supply
6	Wed	29-May	9A1,B1; 18A1,B1 and 10	Demand and Elasticities
	Tue	4-Jun		<i>Midterm 1</i>
7	Wed	5-Jun	10	Consumer Surplus
8	Thu	6-Jun	17	Risk
9	Tue	11-Jun	17	Risk

10	Wed	12-Jun	11 and 12	Production, cost minimization and profit maximization <i>Assignment 1 due</i>
11	Tue	18-Jun	11 and 12	Production, cost minimization and profit maximization
12	Wed	19-Jun	13	Short and long run decisions
13	Tue	2-Jul	14 and 15	Competitive market equilibrium and the FWTE
14	Wed	3-Jul	16	General Equilibrium
	Tue	9-Jul		<i>Midterm 2</i>
15	Wed	10-Jul	23	Monopoly
16	Thu	11-Jul	23	Price Discrimination
17	Tue	16-Jul	24	Strategic Thinking and Game Theory
18	Wed	17-Jul	25	Oligopoly <i>Assignment 2 due</i>
19	Tue	23-Jul	25	Oligopoly
20	Wed	24-Jul	19	Distortion (1)
	Tue	30-Jul		<i>Midterm 3</i>
21	Wed	31-Jul	20	Distortion (2)
22	Thu	1-Aug	21	Externalities
23	Tue	6-Aug	22	Asymmetric Information <i>Assignment 3 due</i>
24	Wed	7-Aug	27	Public Goods

### MISSING THE MIDTERM

Term tests are an important part of this class. Missing a test does not automatically mean that the make-up test will count for your grade. You need to follow the policy below to request a make-up test. Please note that the make-up can only substitute for *one* missed test.

If you need to miss the midterm you need to do the following:

STEP 1 (EMAIL): You need to [email me](#) BEFORE the exam to say that you will not be taking the exam. In case of extreme emergencies (e.g. traffic accident right before the test) you have till 24 hours after the midterm to send the email.

The email should be sent from your official University of Toronto email address (no gmail, hotmail etc.. email ids)

The FORMAT of the email is as follows

1. The subject line should be "Eco 206 missed midterm"
2. The content of the email should be as follows
  - The first part should concisely explain your reasons for missing the test. You should specify why your reason does not permit you to take the test.
  - This should then be followed with a list of classes and term work due the day of the midterm and two week days days before and after the midterm. If no term work was due please state that for each other class you are taking.
  - Whether you attended (or will attend) the classes and/or turned (or will turn in) in any term work due.

- Names and contact information for the professors of those classes. I may contact the other professors to verify details.
3. The email should end with the following sentence “I understand that it is a punishable academic offence to present false or misleading information in support of my request for accommodation for missed term work”
  4. This sentence should be followed by your name and student number.

#### STEP 2 (DOCUMENTATION):

- If you missing the midterm for a medical reason you will need to hand in a medical note. At minimum it should be from the University of Toronto Health Service. It needs to be completed by a qualified medical doctor (e.g., not an acupuncturist, chiropractor, or other health care professional)
- If you need to miss the midterm for any *unexpected* other reason (like funerals etc..) you must provide documentation (like a funeral program/obituary, air tickets etc..). In addition I will need a note from a responsible adult which also has their contact information so I can verify the details.
- You have till one week after the test to follow up the email with the documentation. Please attach a copy of the email you sent me to the documentation. This needs to be handed in at the economics reception desk at Max Gluskin house.

STEP 3 (TAKE THE CUMULATIVE MAKE UP MIDTERM): When you email me you will get a short response with the information for the cumulative make-up test. If your reason is not accepted then you will be informed after writing the make-up test and will meet with me to discuss the issue.

If you do not email me or your email doesn't conform the format above or you do not provide the documentation in time or if your reason is not accepted then you will be assigned a grade of 0 for the midterm. The final decision to accept any reason lies with me or the undergraduate chair.

Please note that you may get your grades for the make-up *after* the drop deadline. The format may be different from the class midterm. Consistent with university policy, there is no “make-up” test for the make-up test. No medical excuses will be accepted, and grade of zero will be applied if a student fails to write the make-up test.

#### **GENERAL CLASS POLICIES**

##### *Re-Grades*

Requests for re-grades will be accepted in writing up to two weeks after each exam or assignment is returned. When requesting a re-grade, it is important to attach a detailed note on the front indicating the problem you want us to take a look at, and explaining in details why you think your grade should be changed. We re-grade entire exams, not just individual questions, so your grade could go up or down.

### *Email Policy*

I will try to respond to emails within 24 hours outside of weekends. However, I do not respond to emails that ask a question that can be answered by looking at the syllabus or course website. Most questions cannot be answered adequately over the email (usually those requiring more than a one sentence answer or questions requiring a discussion). For such questions, please come see me during office hours. Questions on grading will only be answered during office hours.

### *Academic Integrity<sup>1</sup>*

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behavior on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behavior at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

Plagiarism is a concern with writing assignments. Your writing assignments must be submitted via turnitin.com. You can find details about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it in class at <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>. Being unaware of what constitutes plagiarism is not a defense

The University disclaimer on Turnitin.com

*"Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com 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 Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site".*

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<sup>1</sup> From the UofT Academic Integrity Statement and Checklist