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# ECONOMICS 200
# COURSE OUTLINE: SUMMER 2017

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*Course Website: On Blackboard (www.portal.utoronto.ca)*
*Lecture Location: ES B142*

## 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:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| o Term Test 1 | 20% | Tuesday June 20 |
| o Writing Assignment #1 | 4% | Friday July 7 |
| o Term Test 2 | 20% | Tuesday August 1[1] |
| o Writing Assignment #2 | 6% | Friday August 11 |
| o 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 do so for a certifiable reason will write a *comprehensive make-up* at the end of the summer (i.e., coverage of all materials, not just the test you missed). Medical notes MUST state clearly that you were too ill to write the test. An original ("hard copy") of the note should be provided within one week. You must use the *U of T Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form* found at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca

[1] Note that Test 2 comes after the "drop date". You should have a good sense of how well you are coming along with your preparation and understanding as of July 16th, the drop date. If you are uncertain, feel free to consult with me.
[2] Could be during the day, not evening.

## Appeal of Test Grades

- Solutions to tests will be discussed in tutorials only.

- An appeal of a test grade must be typed (on paper, not an email) and provided to me together with your full test. You must identify which question you believe was marked incorrectly, and provide an explanation of why you think your answer deserves additional marks. *The question/answer you point out, plus others, 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!*

- The appeal must be handed in within two weeks of the date on which tests were handed back (not when you picked up your test).[3] You can give me your appeal document at subsequent lectures or leave it for me at the Reception Desk, Department of Economics, Gluskin House, 150 St. George St. If the latter, notify me by email that you have done so.

## Text, Study Guide and Publisher Website

- The text is Microeconomics, 5th Edition (publisher Wiley), by authors Besanko and Braeutigam. (You can use the 4th Edition, if you wish.[4])

- There are various options available to you from the publisher: a soft-cover[5] 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 .

[3] Or released via the online Crowdmark website, if CM is used this summer.
[4] If you use the 5th or 4th edition purchased as a used text, you will not have access to the publisher's website, unless you purchase this separately.
[5] The 4th edition was published as a hard cover text; there is no hard-cover option for the 5th edition.

**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 *@mail.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 @mail.utoronto.ca email address correctly on ACORN. If it is incorrect, you will not receive emails from me or the webmaster.

- Your marks for Term Tests will eventually appear on Blackboard. It is wise to check that your marks have been recorded accurately. If not, email me at w.wolfson@utoronto.ca.

- 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**" (LAs) are 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.

- **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.**

- Note that the Lecture Assignments point you to pages in the text (where applicable) that reflect the contents of the lectures.

- Also posted on the website are **Web Quizzes** (MC questions), **Web Problem Sets** (including 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 answers. You will find, in the long run, that this approach contributes more to your mastery of the concepts.*

- 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 accessing 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. The **Tutorial Problem Sets** will be posted on the course website. Solutions to these Problem Sets will be provided in tutorials only.

- Also, there will be **Tutorial 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.

- Check the schedule carefully; tutorials do not occur every week. You are urged to try the tutorial problem sets in advance, rather than attend to just copy answers.

**Key to Success**

- The key to success in this course is the time spent doing problems ... the more, the better.[6] 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.

**Economists Need to Write Too!**

Yes, in addition to being a good problem-solver, you also need to be a good writer. ECO 200 includes two Writing Assignments (WAs) designed to help you build analytical reading and effective writing skills. More information will be provided later.

For now, I am advising you that TURNITIN will be used to assess whether an assignment is your writing or contains plagiarized passages. Be aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence.

[6] Does the "law of diminishing returns" apply to practice problems? Up to you to decide when marginal returns equal zero!

The University statement on Turnitin.com follows:

> *"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."*

If you choose to opt out of TURNITIN, there will be alternate requirements, including a list of every source you consulted, the passages in each source that are relevant to your WA, and the paraphrased component of your WA related to each passage. You may also be required to meet with a TA or me to discuss your assignment.

**Note that you must inform me with a signed document by June 1st that you plan to opt out of TI;** otherwise you are committed to submitting to TI. Once committed, failure to submit to TI results in as score of 0 on the assignment. [7]

**Take Notice!**

- Helpful warning message (particularly for those who have not taken a summer course before): This course is like a *sprint race* and a *marathon* at the same time! We go very quickly (the "sprint"), as there are lectures twice a week of at least 2.5 hours (and sometimes even more – yikes!); we go through a lot a material, pretty much equivalent to the regular fall / winter course (the "marathon"). You need to be prepared for both the sprint and the marathon!

- Unless you are *SuperStudent*, you should not take two summer courses if you are also working. Further, you will need to sacrifice some time in the sun in order to work at the desk doing ECO 200 problems.

- In other words, expect to experience significant opportunity costs when you take ECO 200 in the summer; *if you are not committed to bearing them, you probably should not enrol in the course.*

[7] There are penalties imposed for late submission to BB (where grading occurs) or to TI (where possible plagiarism is assessed). More information to be found in the General Instructions for WAs.

**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 soon on BB) or use Piazza for an online dialogue with fellow students with oversight from one of the Teaching Assistants assigned to this section of the course (information to be announced soon on BB).

- If, after trying the Aid Centre and / or Piazza, you are still having difficulty, please see me before or after class, email me at w.wolfson@utoronto.ca. 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 may 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 this summer, compared to previous summers prior to 2009 when I was teaching it.)

- These service providers are not associated with the University, and are not endorsed by the University or by me.

- 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, non-graphing calculator.[8] 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, iPads etc. in your bag/backpack at the side of the room. . [Recent change in rules: you can leave your bag/backpack 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.

- When picking up marked tests, taking a paper that is not yours is an academic offence.[9]

- Plagiarism on the Writing Assignments is also a serious Academic Offence. Be sure you know what constitutes plagiarism, so that you do not inadvertently commit an offence. Ignorance is not an acceptable explanation (indeed, there are NO acceptable explanations).

## 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 "search engine"! Indeed, some profs will not answer emails when the information is available elsewhere; I will give you one email "freebie"; thereafter, no response.

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

[9] This reference applicable only if the online Crowdmark system is not utilized and hard copy is returned.

- 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 Piazza for online 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**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Tuesday May 16 | First Lecture | |
| Tuesday June 20 | Test #1 | |
| Week of June 27 | Summer Break | |
| Friday July 7 | Writing Assignment #1 @5pm | |
| Tuesday August 1 | Test # 2 | |
| Week of August 7 | Make-up Test | Date TBD (Aug 9-11) |
| Thursday August 10 | Last Lecture | |
| Friday August 11 | Writing Assignment #2 @5pm | |
| August 15 – August 18 | Final Exam | Date TBD |

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**FOR HELPFUL HINTS!**

## TEN HELPFUL HINTS ON HOW TO FAIL ECO 200 THIS SUMMER (!)

1. Skip lectures.[10]
2. Do practice problems rarely, if at all.
3. Avoid tutorials and other prep sessions.
4. Do not get help when you need it.
5. Use the textbook as a doorstop only.[11]
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.[12]
9. Rarely consider how ECO 200 concepts apply to your daily life.[13]
10. Take two summer courses and have a full-time job too.

**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.

[10] Or attend lectures, but snooze your way through them with minimal intellectual effort. Example: don't try the in-class handouts; just wait for the answers and copy them.

[11] Electronic equivalent: pay for the eTextbook, but never access it.

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

[13] Or do not apply!

# ECONOMICS 200
# SUMMER 2017: READING LIST

*The flow of the lectures may not follow the sequence of the text. Lectures may contain material beyond that covered in the text.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

| | |
|---|---|
| Market Economy* | Ch 1, 2 |

(* Mostly ECO 100 items - you review)

## 2. CONSUMER THEORY

| | |
|---|---|
| Utility Theory | Ch 3, 4 |
| Basics of Indifference Theory | Ch 3, 4 |
| Revealed Preference | Ch 4 |
| Two-Period Consumer Theory | Ch 4 |
| More Applications | Ch 5 |
| Labour-Leisure Choice | Ch 5 |
| Choice under Uncertainty | Ch 15 |

## 3. THEORY OF THE FIRM

| | |
|---|---|
| Production Function | Ch 6 |
| Short-Run Cost Curves | Ch7 |
| Long-Run Cost Curves | Ch 8 |

## 4. INDUSTRY STRUCTURES

| | |
|---|---|
| Competition | Ch 9, 10 |
| Monopoly (Single Price) | Ch 11 |
| Price Discrimination | Ch 12 |
| Duopoly/Oligopoly | Ch 13 |
| Game Theory | Ch 14 |

## 5. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT*

| | |
|---|---|
| Public Goods and Externalities | Ch 17 |

* If time permits