

University of Toronto
Department of Economics
2017-2018

ECO204Y1Y
Microeconomic Theory and Applications (for Commerce)
Sections: L0501, L5101

Course Description:

The use of microeconomics to analyze a variety of issues from marketing and finance to organizational structure. Consumer preferences and behavior; demand, cost analysis and estimation; allocation of inputs, pricing and firm behavior under perfect and imperfect competition; game theory and public policy, including competition policy. Business cases are used to connect theory and practice and to highlight differences and similarities between economics and accounting, marketing and finance.

Note about prerequisites: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met all prerequisites listed in the Economics section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites you will be removed. No waivers will be granted.

Time and Location:

Lecture: L0501 – Thursdays 2pm – 4pm, OI 2212; L5101 – Thursdays 6pm – 8pm, MS 2172.
You can attend either lecture.

Tutorial: Fridays 12pm – 2pm, BR200

Contact Information and Course Website:

Instructor: Peter Foltin Email: peter.foltin@utoronto.ca	Office Hours (Drop-in): R, 12:45-1:45pm, 4:30 – 5:30pm, GE 264 <i>Limited availability via appointment in addition.</i>
TA: Dylan Gowans Email: dylan.gowans@mail.utoronto.ca	TA Office Hours: TBA <i>Additional office hours before midterms will be announced on the course website.</i>

The course website is accessible via <http://portal.utoronto.ca>
Students are required to check the webpage frequently for course announcements and materials. All announcements made on portal are considered to have been communicated to the class. Not having seen an announcement is not an accepted excuse for failure to follow guidelines or deadlines.

Email Policy

In all correspondence with course staff, **please identify yourself, your section, and include “ECO204” in the subject line.**

Email is not an appropriate forum for discussing detailed questions about course material; instead, I encourage you to use office hours and tutorials. Email can be helpful on occasion, and within limits I will try to email within 24 hours (except weekends) provided your question(s) can be answered with a one or two sentence response. Emails will be answered only within typical business hours (Monday-Friday, 9am – 5pm).

Only questions directly related to tutorial material should be directed to your TA. All other questions should be directed to your instructor. We shall not answer questions whose answers can be found on the ECO204 website (e.g. test dates) nor questions about grades. University policy stipulates a preference for the use of U of T email addresses, thus we strongly recommend students use their university email address.

Course Materials

Textbook: *Microeconomics*, 2nd Edition, by Goolsbee, Levitt and Syverson (Recommended)

Business Cases from Harvard Business School:

Please check portal for a link to the courseware. (Required)

It will require you to register as a student and pay by credit card.

Course Evaluation

	Weight	Due/When	Submission
Exams			
Midterm 1	15%*	Oct 20 – 6-8pm	Hard-copy
Midterm 2	15%*	Dec 7 – 5-7pm	Hard-copy
Midterm 3	15%*	Feb 9 – TBD	Hard-copy
Final	25%	3 hours; Time and Location TBA	Hard-copy
Writing Assignments			
Project 1	10%	November 17, 11:59pm	Blackboard
Project 2	10%	March 2, 11:59pm	Blackboard
In-Tutorial Group Assignments			
10 Assignments	10%** (total)	Various; see schedule below	Hard-copy

A note on reweighting of midterm marks:

* Students will have their midterm marks reweighted the following way: the lowest mark will be worth 10% of the student’s final grade while the highest mark will be worth 20%.

** The best 8 of 10 grades on the in-tutorial group assignments will count towards a student’s final grade.

Details on Course Components and Assignments

Lectures

In most weeks, lecture slides will be posted on portal before lecture Thursday mornings. If necessary, corrected slides will be posted as soon as possible after class. Lecture slides are a teaching aid meant to save time in lecture, convey important information, and support classroom discussion. They are not a substitute for attending class or tutorial, completing assigned readings, or for your own notes.

Students get the most out of class when they participate and answer questions. Student participation is a very useful component of student learning, it helps to keep class lively, and it helps me identify topics and concepts that we should spend more time on (either in lecture, tutorial, or in preparation for exams.)

I encourage you to use laptops or tablets only for the purposes of taking notes and I ask you to please turn off your cell phones and other communications devices before entering the classroom.

Tutorials

Tutorials are held every week and are a chance for students to help master the material introduced in lecture. There will be three primary formats for tutorials: the taking up of review problems, bonus lectures, and in-tutorial group assignments. There are two one-hour tutorial sessions held each week (the first from 12pm to 1pm; the second from 1pm to 2pm) and attendance is considered mandatory. Students registered in L0501 should attend the noon to 1pm session; students registered in L5101 should attend the 1pm to 2pm session.

In-Tutorial Group Assignments

Over the course of the year there will be ten in-tutorial group assignments. Students will form teams of three to five students to work with in-tutorial to complete a short assignment. These are intended to be a low-stakes environment to help build deeper understanding of various topics that students may overlook. Students will also gain valuable experience communicating, working, and consensus-building in small groups, skills that will prove valuable going forward.

Midterms and Exams

There will be three midterms and a final exam. Midterm exams will each focus on the material that has not previously been tested, but that may be built upon previous material. The final exam will be cumulative, although with some greater emphasis on previously untested material. All tests will be closed book although non-programmable calculators will be permitted. The tests may consist of short-answer questions, theory questions, and longer multi-part problems. All midterms are scheduled for Fridays. Should room assignments need to be changed for any reason, it will be announced at least twenty-four hours prior to the exam.

Writing Assignments

The purpose of these assignments is to provide students with experience translating economic concepts and analyses to well-written, concise documents. This is an essential skill for practically any path students choose in academics, government, or the private sector. Writing assignments will challenge students to solve problems and then effectively communicate their solutions to others. The intended audience of these assignments will vary, giving students experience communicating to different groups of people. Details about the various writing assignments will be made available on portal.

Practice Problems and Tests

Almost every week, a practice problem set will be posted to portal. These problems represent the sorts of things you can expect to see on midterms and finals. Solutions will be posted and will, occasionally, selected problems will be taken up in tutorial. In addition, last year's midterms and their solutions will be posted near test day. However, the order of material presented last year will be different than this year. Further, the emphasis of coverage will change as well. So last year's midterms will not be fully representative of the material on this year's midterms.

Test Policies

1. Bring a non-programmable scientific calculator and your student ID to all tests and exams.
2. If you have a direct conflict with a test, you must email your instructor no later than one week before the test to make alternative arrangements.
3. Tests begin at the time listed above: i.e. 12:30pm or 6:30pm. No extra time will be provided if you are late. You must be in the exam room no later than 10 minutes past the official start time.
4. During the test, you must show your student ID and sign the "signup sheet." You will need to stay seated until all tests have been collected and counted. You cannot leave the room in the last 10 minutes of the test.
5. It is your responsibility to write your name and ID number on tests as they appear on ROSI/ACORN. Failure to do so will result in a 5% penalty per incident.
6. Students can appeal test grades by typing up their reasons for the request and submitting them to the instructor via email at peter.foltin@utoronto.ca as soon as possible and at most two weeks of the tests being returned to the class. Students will receive a marking scheme after the test is returned and appeals must make explain how the marks they received do not align with the marking scheme. Please note that following an appeal, your test score can increase, decrease, or stay constant (according to University policy: "such a request entails a remarking of the work. Hence, if a remarking is granted, the student must accept the resulting mark as the new mark, whether it goes up or down or remains the same. Continuing with the remark or the appeal means the student accepts this condition.")
7. You will be given a zero score on any missed test(s) unless you give the instructor an appropriate and convincing typed explanation or medical note within 3 calendar (not business) days of the missed test. Please e-mail peter.foltin@utoronto.ca to make an

appointment to submit your explanation/medical note. If you miss a test due to an illness, then you must provide the instructor an original University of Toronto medical certificate (photocopies or emailed certificates will NOT be accepted). This note must list the physician's OHIP number and clearly state that on the date of the test you were too sick to write the test. "Illness before the test" is not sufficient grounds for missing tests nor are statements that you "would have performed sub-optimally."

8. If you are excused for missing Test 1 or 2, you will write the makeup test on Friday, January 5th. If you are excused for missing Test 3, you will write the makeup test on Friday, March 23rd.
9. Makeup tests cover all material through the last lecture before the make-up test. Makeup tests are not "bell curved". Consistent with university policy, there is no "make-up" test for the make-up test (in particular we will not accept medical excuses for missing the makeup test and a grade of zero will be applied).

Writing Assignment Policies

1. Please see and use [Economist Magazine Style Guide](#). You are encouraged to use the [Writing Centers at University of Toronto](#). Time in tutorials will be dedicated to discussing how to approach writing assignments. Information about the University of Toronto's English Language Learning program is available [here](#).
2. All papers and Excel files must be submitted through the relevant Assignment tab on ECO 204 Blackboard Portal and all files must be titled Lastname_Firstname.
3. Penalty for late submissions: 5% penalty per day. Penalty for failure to write your name on the paper as it appears in ROSI: 5% penalty per incident.
4. Students can appeal paper grades by typing up their reasons for the request and submitting them to the instructor via email at peter.foltin@utoronto.ca as soon as possible and at most two weeks after the project has been returned to the class. Please note that following an appeal, your paper score can increase, decrease, or stay the same.
5. 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.

In-Tutorial Group Assignment Policies

1. Students are required to work in groups of three to five students. Students may choose their own groups. Students without groups will be assigned by an instructor or a TA to a group.
2. Students are not required to work in the same group for all assignments; it is encouraged that students work with as many different people as possible during the course of the year.

3. Groups will submit a single copy of their group assignment to the instructor or a TA at the end of tutorial. Students should write their answers in pencil. The grade they receive is common.
4. Students must present their student IDs to the instructor or a TA in order to prove attendance. Only students that attend tutorial may be part of a group. Attempts to include an absent student in a group will be treated as cheating for all members of a group.
5. These group assignments will be open book. Time will be the primary constraint.
6. Only the best eight of ten assignments will count towards a student's final grade. Therefore, students can miss up to two group assignments for any reason without penalty.
7. Alternatively, students who have a legitimate reason for missing a group assignment must contact the instructor at least by the Monday before tutorial via email. (A legitimate reason involves a situation beyond the student's control, e.g. a medical appointment with a specialist.) If an exception is granted, the student will make up for the missed work by writing a brief reflective response to questions related to the missed assignment.
8. Students who miss a group assignment for illness-related reasons must provide the instructor an original University of Toronto medical certificate (photocopies or emailed certificates will NOT be accepted) within a week of the missed assignment. This note must list the physician's OHIP number and clearly state that on the date of the assignment you were too sick to write. The student will make up for the missed work by writing a brief reflective response to questions related to the missed assignment.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The [University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. **Ignorance of what constitutes an academic offense is not a defense.** It is your responsibility as students to be aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Please pay close attention to information on "How not to plagiarize" available at the writing centre and at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your

instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://sites.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>).

Course Schedule

Note: This outline is subject to change.

Fall Term

Week	Date	Lecture	Tutorial	Notes:	
1	7-Sep	Chapter 1	No Tutorial		
2	14-Sep	Chapter 4	Bonus Lecture		
3	21-Sep	Chapter 4	In-Tutorial Group Assignment Dry Run		
4	28-Sep	Chapter 4	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #1		
5	5-Oct	Chapter 5	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #2		
6	12-Oct	Chapter 5	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #3		
7	19-Oct	Chapter 6	Midterm 1 Review	Midterm 1	
8	26-Oct	Chapter 7	Bonus Lecture	Project 1 Posted	
9	2-Nov	Chapter 7	Project 1 Writing Tutorial		
10	9-Nov	Reading Week			
11	16-Nov	Chapter 8	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #4	Project 1 Due	
12	23-Nov	Chapter 8	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #5		
13	30-Nov	Chapter 2	Midterm 2 Review		
14	7-Dec	No Class	Midterm 2 on Dec 7		

Winter Term

Week	Date	Lecture	Tutorial	Notes:	
13	4-Jan	Chapter 3	Bonus Lecture	Makeup Midterm 1	
14	11-Jan	Chapter 9	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #6		
15	18-Jan	Chapter 9	Bonus Lecture		
16	24-Jan	Chapter 10	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #7		
17	1-Feb	Chapter 10	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #8		
18	8-Feb	Chapter 12	Midterm 3 Review	Midterm 3/Project 2	
19	15-Feb	Chapter 12	Project 2 Writing Tutorial		
20	22-Feb	Reading Week			
21	1-Mar	Chapter 11	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #9	Project 2 Due	
22	8-Mar	Chapter 11	HBS Business Case 1		
23	15-Mar	Chapter 14	HBS Business Case 2		
24	22-Mar	Chapter 14	In-Tutorial Group Assignment #10	Makeup Midterm 2	
25	29-Mar	Chapter 16	Makeup Tutorial April 5		

Getting Help

Instructor Office Hours: Students are welcome to drop by my office (GE 264) during my posted office hours. I am always happy to help students succeed! Coming to ask me

questions during office hours include fringe benefits like me talking about what to expect on midterms or advice for writing assignments. Extra hours will be posted near term tests.

TA Office Hours: Your tutorial leader will hold weekly office hours as well. Probably your second best source for help with course material. Location and hours will be posted on portal.

The Economics Study Centre: Located in GE110, the Economics Study Centre is staffed by third and fourth-year undergraduate students (peer mentors) who assist students on a one-to-one basis or in study groups. Starting in the beginning of October, mentors are available Monday through Friday. This is a drop-in centre, students do not need to book an appointment. [Click here for further details.](#)

Economics Tutors: If you are interested in a bit more extensive one-on-one help, you can consider hiring one of the economics department's graduate students listed [here](#). Be wary of other tutoring services, students frequently report a low quality of instruction and guidance.

Mental Health: This is something that the university and I, personally, take seriously. University can be tough and it's important to take care of your own well-being. Here is a link to get you started for the university's resources at [the health and wellness centre](#).