

ECO380H1F: Markets, Competition, and Strategy

Fall 2022

LEC0101 (Tue 10:00-13:00, LM 162)

LEC0201 (Tue 14:00-17:00, UC 140)

Instructor: Yao Luo

Office: Max Gluskin House, 322

Email: yao.luo@utoronto.ca

Office hours: Tue 13:00-14:00, or by appointment

Head teaching assistant:

LEC0101: Hui Liu, Email: yihui.liu@mail.utoronto.ca

LEC0201: Weiyue Zhang, Email: vivianzhang.zhang@mail.utoronto.ca

TA office hours: TBA

Objectives

This course in applied microeconomics is concerned with the functioning of markets and the strategic behavior of firms. The focus is on strategic relationships between organizations, including competitive and cooperative relationships among firms. The first unit will cover basic models of imperfect competition and the impact of market structure. The second unit will focus on pricing strategies. The final unit will examine elements of firm competition that are not covered in the basic models.

Prerequisite

The Department checks whether students have the course prerequisites, and students are removed if they do not have them. It is the students' responsibility to read the calendar. The instructor cannot waive prerequisites.

Grading

There will be three problem sets, one term test, and a final exam. Each problem set counts for 5%. The term test counts for 35%. The final exam counts for 50%. We use Crowdmark.¹ Collaboration on the problem sets is encouraged. Collaborating students can choose to submit a single group answer (maximum group size: 3 students). You are encouraged to type your homework, but hand-written work will be accepted if it is clearly presented. No late problem sets will be accepted. Please note that all times listed in this syllabus are in Toronto time. We will NOT accept confusion about deadlines as an excuse for lateness or missed work. Homework due dates and exam dates are estimated and subject to change.

¹ This course will use Crowdmark, a collaborative online grading tool for marking and providing feedback on graded term assessments. Crowdmark provides efficiencies with grading, data recording, returning term assessments and handling regrade requests. Copies of student work marked in Crowdmark, including grading and feedback, will be available online to students for at least one year. Digital (i.e., online) copies will serve as the authoritative record for course administrative purposes, and paper copies of assessments scanned and uploaded to Crowdmark will be destroyed after the term has ended and final grades are approved. If you have questions about how your information is stored on Crowdmark, please contact your course instructor.

The following policy is intended to accommodate missing the assignment due to medical, personal, family or other unavoidable reasons. Each time a student misses a graded homework or the term test needs to fill in a simple form:

<https://forms.gle/93GZS7M5yuH1QtRF9>

No medical documentation is necessary for missing a graded homework. The marks for the missed problem sets will be calculated as follows:

1. If you miss one problem set, your mark for the missed problem set is equal to the lowest mark for the other two problem sets.
2. If you miss two problem sets, you will get zero for the second missed problem set. Your mark for the first missed problem set is equal to the mark for the submitted problem set.
3. You will get zero for all your problem sets if you miss all the problem sets.

Students who miss the term test for medical reasons need to submit a college registrar's letter within a week of the due date. Their marks for the missed term test will be based on their marks of the makeup term test:

1. The makeup term test will be held on Nov 15, 2022, time TBA, location TBA.
2. Consistent with university policy, there will be no "makeup" test for the makeup term test and a grade of zero will be applied if the students fail to write the makeup test.
3. The makeup test will include all the materials covered right up to the lecture before the makeup exam.

Students who miss the final exam for reasonable reasons may initiate petitions to the Faculty of Art and Science. See the website for details.

Textbooks

The main textbooks for this course are:

- [PRN, required] Pepall, L., Richards, D. J., & Norman, G. (2014, 5th Edition). *Industrial Organization: Contemporary Theory and Empirical Applications*.
- McAfee, R. P. (2009). *Competitive solutions: the strategist's toolkit*. Princeton University Press.
- Brandenburger, A. M., & Nalebuff, B. J. (2011). *Co-opetition*.

Although the lectures will generally follow PRN, they will depart frequently. The most priority should be on lecture slides and then the text. Additional readings may be assigned during the course of the class.

Important dates

1. Homework due dates: Oct 4, 2022 (HW1); Oct 28, 2022 (HW2); Nov 29, 2022 (HW3)
2. Term test: Oct 25, 2022 (location TBA)
3. Final exam: TBA

Academic misconduct

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, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources (for example, the University of Toronto website on Academic Integrity).

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>).

Email policy

Questions regarding homework and the results of the graded materials should be reviewed initially with the head TA. If you have additional questions once you have contacted the Teaching Assistant, contact the instructor. Any email to me or our head TA should originate from your UofT email. Please include "ECO380, Section XXX" in the subject line and your name and student number at the end of your email. I will respond to email within 24 hours on a weekday, 48 hours on the weekend, according to these policies: I only respond to emails posing questions that can be answered in 1-3 sentences. For detailed questions, please come to my office hours. I do not respond to emails that request information that can be found on the website or the syllabus.

Test score appeals

Please write a short paragraph explaining why you should obtain additional points. Turn in a hard copy of this by the end of the week following the week in which exams are first handed back. This holds regardless of whether you are in class when exams are returned. Conditional on this argument found persuasive by me, the entire exam will be re-graded. Your score may go up or down.

Privacy

We are all expected to respect university privacy and copyright restrictions in this course. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download session videos and materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Course outline

1. Introduction
2. Monopoly and Perfect Competition (PRN Ch.2)
3. Game Theory and Competitive Strategy (PRN Ch. 9)
4. Cournot and Bertrand Competition (PRN Ch. 9 and 10)

5. Stackelberg Competition (PRN Ch. 11)
6. Collusion and Repeated Games (PRN Ch. 14)
7. Pricing (PRN Ch. 5, 6, 7 and 8)
8. Entry, Exit and Predation (PRN Ch. 12 and 13)
9. Non-Price Competition: Advertising and R&D (PRN Ch. 19, 20 and 21)
10. Auctions (PRN Ch. 23)