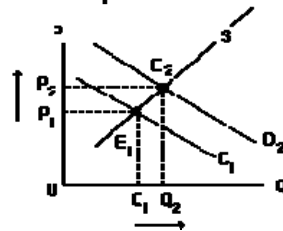


ECON 202: Principles of Microeconomics



Spring 2007
Syllabus

Section: **001 and 002**
Time: **MWF 9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.**
Classroom: **Beatty Center 115**
Textbook: **Principles of Microeconomics, 3rd Edition by Robert Frank and Ben Bernanke**
Accompanying Study Guide Recommended
Prerequisite: **ECON 201**
Instructor: **Calvin Blackwell**
Office: **Beatty Center, Room 333**
Office Hours: **Monday, Wednesday & Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., and by appointment**
Email: **blackwellc@cofc.edu**
Telephone: **(843) 953-7836**
Homepage: **<http://www.cofc.edu/~calb>**

Greetings! Welcome to Principles of Microeconomics. Although traditional microeconomics focuses on consumers and firms, by focusing on simple decision-making, I hope to show you that microeconomics really can be applied to a host of interesting questions and situations. For example: Why was it so hard to register for this class? An understanding of microeconomics would immensely help understand the forces involved in both your decision to take this class and the College's decision of how many sections to offer and how many students to allow in each section.

The College of Charleston's course description for this class:

The structure of the market is presented, including product and factor pricing, allocation of resources and distribution of income, market equilibrium analysis, and analysis of domestic and international problems and policies. A prerequisite for courses at the 300 level and higher.

Class Objective

Improve student's ability to think critically, "like an economist." This objective is reached when student has internalized the following concepts:

- The Scarcity principle
- The Cost-Benefit principle
- The principle of Unequal Costs
- The principle of Comparative Advantage
- The principle of Increasing Opportunity Cost
- The Equilibrium principle
- The Efficiency principle

Policies

- 1. You should come to class.** I lecture on material not explicitly treated in the book, and you are responsible for all the information in both the lectures and the text.
- 2. You must behave yourself while in class.** I expect all students to behave appropriately while in the classroom. If you have a question, raise your hand and I will be more than happy to answer your question. I expect you to arrive for class on time and prepared. Classroom disturbance of any kind will not be tolerated – you impose a cost not only on yourself, but also upon your classmates when you disrupt my class. Please do not talk to your neighbors while I am lecturing. If you must carry a cell phone or pager, turn it off while you are in my class!
- 3. You must turn in your assignments on time.** No excuses! Problem set deadlines will not be extended for any reason!
- 4. You must take the exams at the scheduled time.** I want you to take the exams at the times they are scheduled. If you have any problems with the timing of tests, please notify me in advance. You must give me your excuse before the test begins. You can send me an email or leave me a message, but you must inform me of your absence prior to the test. Failure to provide a legitimate excuse prior to the exam will result in a grade of zero. If you have a legitimate excuse you will not take a makeup exam; instead I will re-weight your final exam to cover the exam missed and the final exam. Example: You miss Exam 1, which is worth 15% of the course grade. Normally the final exam is worth 40% of the course grade, but for you it will be worth $(15\% + 40\%) = 55\%$ of the course grade.
- 5. Cheating will be dealt with severely.** All students are expected to adhere to the College Honor Code and Code of Student Conduct (consult your student handbook if you need to review the codes.) Any violation of the Codes will result in severe consequences.
- 6. Check the Aplia website weekly for important announcements.** You are responsible for weekly problem sets on Aplia (see below for more details). The website will also contain copies of paper assignments, practice questions for exams, and general class announcements.
- 7. Learning Disability.** If there is any student in this class who has a documented learning disability and has been approved to receive accommodations through SNAP Services, please feel free to come by and discuss this with me during my office hours.
- 8. If you have a problem, you must express it to me in writing.** If you have a “problem,” you must provide the proper paperwork for me to solve it. A “problem” could be any of a number of things. Some examples: You have to miss the midterm exam because you are going out of town and you need an excused absence; you feel that the class is moving too slowly/quickly and want me to speed things up/slow down; you believe that I graded an assignment unfairly. In order to address your problem, I need to know the nature of the problem and your proposed solution to this problem. This information must all be in writing, using my “**I have a problem...**” form. I will need **two (2)** copies of this form. I will keep one for my own records and return one to you with my response. You may only appeal my decision with another problem form. For certain requests I require supporting documentation, e.g. doctor’s excuse, court summons, etc. I will not consider **any** problem unless it is presented in this format. If you want to challenge a grade on an assignment, you must explain which problems were graded incorrectly and why you should receive more credit.



Student Registration and Payment Instructions

Weekly homework assignments are found on the Aplia website. These assignments will collectively count for 15% of your grade.

Course Name: ECON 202, Spring 2007

Start Date: 01/08/2007

Professor: Calvin Blackwell

Course Key: U6AM-L6YA-B69D

You can begin working on your homework as soon as you register!

- In this course, you will use a textbook and Aplia's website.
- You will save money if you buy these together.
- You have two purchase options.
- If you purchase a physical textbook directly from Aplia, your textbook will be shipped to you after you submit your payment and shipping information to Aplia. Once your book is shipped from Aplia, please allow 3-5 business days for it to arrive.

Registration Instructions

1. Connect to <http://www.aplia.com>.
2. Click the **System Configuration Test** link below the **Sign In** and **Register** sections to make sure you can access all of the features on Aplia's website. This takes just a few seconds and tells you how to update your browser settings if necessary.
3. Return to <http://www.aplia.com>.
 - If you have never used Aplia before, click the **New Student** button and enter your Course Key: **U6AM-L6YA-B69D**. Continue following the instructions to complete your registration.
 - If you have used Aplia before, sign in with your usual e-mail address and password and enter your Course Key when prompted: **U6AM-L6YA-B69D**. If you are not prompted for a new Course Key, click the **Enter Course Key** button to enroll in a new Aplia course. Enter your Course Key when you are prompted.
4. If you understand your payment options, pay now. Otherwise, postpone your purchase decision by choosing the option to pay later. Your payment grace period ends at the end of the day on 01/28/2007.

Payment

Option A: Pay Aplia Directly

- Purchase access to your course directly from Aplia on our website for \$87.50 USD. This option includes:
 - Aplia content that has been customized for your textbook and course (\$80.00 USD)
 - A physical black and white textbook shipped to you by Aplia (\$7.50 USD shipping and handling).
 - Free access to the first four chapters of an online copy of your textbook at Aplia. You can purchase access to the remaining chapters for \$25.00 USD at Aplia.

Option B: Purchase Textbook Bundle at Bookstore

- Purchase a textbook bundle from your school's bookstore. The textbook is bundled with an Aplia Access Card, which contains a Payment Code that you can enter on Aplia's website as payment for your Aplia course. Call or visit the bookstore for pricing information. This option includes:
 - A physical textbook.
 - Aplia content that has been customized for your textbook and course.
 - Access to an online copy of your textbook.

Aplia assignments: Most assignments come in pairs of practice problem sets and graded problem sets. Practice problem sets give you immediate feedback and an explanation of the correct answer. They do not count toward your homework grade. Use them to check your understanding of the material. If you feel confident about the material, you can go directly to the graded set and refer to the practice set only if you want some help.

The graded problem sets have a firm due date. You can change your answers as many times as you like before the due date passes. Once the due date passes, Aplia records your grade and you can no longer change your answers or complete the assignment. In other words, Aplia assignments must be done by the due date. The software does not understand excuses. Do your assignments early to keep last minute emergencies from getting in your way. After the due date, Aplia displays the correct answers and explanations for graded problems.

Student benefits of Aplia: Cramming is an ineffective learning method. Aplia lets you learn by doing -- you can apply what you hear and see in the classroom and what you read in the text. Think of the regular assignments on Aplia as a weekly economics workout. Regular work in Aplia will better prepare you for lectures and exams.

Disclaimer: I receive no monetary benefit from requiring Aplia assignments.

Tips for Success

This class is about learning how to “think like an economist.” The single best way to learn this process is practice. In addition to the Aplia problem sets, the textbook provides many extra problems. I strongly suggest using them. You will soon discover that I am also very concerned that you learn the intuition behind why we engage in the procedures. So in addition to knowing how to work each type of problem, you should also understand why we do each type of problem.

This is your course. You will find that I am extremely flexible with regard to many aspects of this class. I value your input and will use it to make the class better for you, so if there is anything that you feel will enhance your learning experience, please let me know.

You may find the following three websites helpful.

- College of Charleston Center for Student Learning: <http://www.cofc.edu/~csi/>
- St. Thomas Study Tips: <http://www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/>
- Economics Study Tips: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/handouts/1409.html>

Additional Help

If you are having trouble following the material in the course, you are encouraged to seek additional help early so that you do not fall behind. Do not wait until it's too late. You may see me during my office hours or you may make an appointment for some other time. If your class schedule and/or work schedule makes it impossible for you to meet with me during my scheduled office hours, please let me know by sending a list of times that you are free to my email address. You may also drop by my office for extra help any time you feel it is necessary, but you might want to call first to make sure I'm in. Remember, your tuition pays for my time, so use it!

Grading

I base your grade on four criteria:

- Knowledge of material covered in the textbook and in class
- Ability to apply knowledge

- Ability to relay that knowledge back to me
- Responsibility – assignments turned in on time, exams taken at the appropriate time.

Notice grades are only indirectly based on effort! Instead, your grade is based primarily on your competence with economics.

I will give you a zero if you fail to take an exam (and do not have an appropriate excuse) on time or fail to complete an Aplia assignment on time.

The breakdown for points is as follows:

Assignment	Value	Description
3 In-class Exams	15% each	Each covers approximately one-quarter of the course material. Two exams will consist of 25 multiple choice questions, while one exam will contain only essay questions. See calendar for dates.
Final Exam	40%	Cumulative final exam. 75 multiple choice questions.
Aplia Problem Sets	15%	You will be assigned two or three problems sets per week. Each problem set takes from 20 minutes to an hour to complete. Your grade will be calculated from the number of questions correctly answered. Throughout the semester, approximately 28 problem sets with 432 questions will be assigned; your grade will be out of 340 points, allowing you to miss several problem sets without penalty.

Your class grade depends on the total amount of points you earn. I do not rule out a curve, but I promise that I never curve down, only up. Therefore the following scale shows sufficient but not necessary conditions for a particular grade:

A	90%
B	80%
C	70%
D	60%

A final note on grades

Think of my grading as a neutral entity, like a bull's-eye. You shoot an arrow and it hits some part of the target. The target has no feelings about your shot; it merely indicates the quality of your aim. You may hit the bull's-eye, the side, or completely miss the target, but the target does not care. I am like that target when I grade – I merely evaluate your aim, not your intention.

Calendar

Date	Assignment	Lecture	Lecture Topic
8 Jan			Syllabus, Introduction to Aplia
10 Jan	Ch. 1	1	Cost-Benefit Analysis
12 Jan		2	Marginal Analysis
17 Jan		3	Decision-Making Mistakes
19 Jan	Ch. 2	4	Resources, Production and Opportunity Cost
22 Jan		5	Principle of Comparative Advantage
24 Jan	Ch. 3	6	Pit Trading Demo
26 Jan		7	Markets
29 Jan		8	Supply & Demand
31 Jan		9	Using Supply & Demand to Understand the World
2 Feb	EXAM 1		
5 Feb	Ch. 5	10	Utility & Demand
7 Feb		11	Substitution, Income & Demand
9 Feb		12	Mathematical Treatment of Demand
12 Feb	Ch. 4	13	Elasticity of Demand
14 Feb	Ch. 6	14	Introduction to Supply
16 Feb		15	Production, Costs & Supply
19 Feb		16	Marginal Cost & Supply
21 Feb		17	The Relationship Between Production & Cost
23 Feb		18	Elasticity of Supply, Mathematical Markets
26 Feb		19	Elasticity Application: Agricultural Markets & Illegal Drugs
28 Feb	Ch. 7	20	Introduction to Efficiency
2 Mar	EXAM 2		
12 Mar		21	Price as a Signal
14 Mar		22	Efficiency & Taxes
16 Mar	Ch. 8	23	Profit Maximization Demo
19 Mar		24	Profit Maximization & Economic Rent
21 Mar		25	Price, the Invisible Hand & the Efficient Markets Hypothesis
23 Mar	Ch. 10	26	Introduction to Imperfect Competition
26 Mar		27	Economies of Scale & Market Structure
28 Mar		28	Single-Price Monopoly
30 Mar		29	Price Discrimination
2 Apr	Ch. 11	30	Strategic Interaction
4 Apr		31	Prisoner's Dilemma
6 Apr	EXAM 3		
9 Apr		32	Sequential Games
11 Apr		33	Bargaining
13 Apr	Ch. 12	34	Externalities
16 Apr		35	The Coase Theorem
18 Apr		36	Tragedy of the Commons
20 Apr	Ch. 16	37	Public Goods
23 Apr			Final Review
30 Apr	FINAL EXAM: 8:00 – 11:00 am.		