

BOSTON COLLEGE

Department of Economics

EC 131.17: PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS - MICRO FALL 1999

Instructor: Maurizio Zanardi
Office: Carney 33A
Office Hours: TTh 3:00 - 4:00 and by appointment
Phone: 552-8703
E-mail: zanardi@bc.edu
Class: TTh 1:30 - 2:45 Cushing 331
Course Homepage: <http://www2.bc.edu/~zanardi/teaching.html>

1. Course Objectives

The main objective of this course is to introduce the fundamental topics in Microeconomic Theory. Consumer and production theory are the two main blocks analyzed. Special attention will also be paid to government intervention (with a particular emphasis on the U.S. experience).

The exposition will be as rigorous as possible even at the Principles level of this course. Some basic analytical tools will be extensively employed. In particular, the use of graphs will be emphasized throughout the course and a brief review of the implied techniques will be given in class.

2. Requirements

The required textbook is: Richard W. Tresch
 Principles of Economics
 West Publishing Company

or Richard W. Tresch
 Principles of Microeconomics
 West Publishing Company
 (available at the BC bookstore)

Exposition in class will closely follow the required textbook so that you are encouraged to read the book before coming to class. However, some extra material will also be covered and handouts will be distributed or references will be provided. Remember that you are responsible for any information and announcement made in class!

The midterm will be in class on October 19 and the cumulative final exam is scheduled for December 17 at 12:30 p.m.

Problem sets will be distributed almost every week and they will be due one week after. No late problem sets will be accepted since the solutions will be distributed and available on-line. You are encouraged to work together but you have to write your own answers otherwise the problem set will not be graded. Problem sets will be part of your final grade but only your best 7 grades out of 9 problem sets will be considered in order to give you some flexibility.

The problem set schedule is:

| Problem set: | Due: |
|---------------------|--------------|
| PS #1 | September 16 |
| PS #2 | September 23 |
| PS #3 | September 30 |
| PS #4 | October 7 |
| PS #5 | October 14 |
| PS #6 | November 4 |
| PS #7 | November 11 |
| PS #8 | November 18 |
| PS #9 | December 2 |

The overall grade for the course will be determined in the following way:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Problem sets (7 out of 9): | 20% |
| Midterm exam: | 35% |
| Final exam: | 45% |

Class participation is an important element of learning. You are encouraged to ask questions and interact as much as possible. Feel free to come to my office hours for any possible question you may have and check the course homepage for assignments and solutions. You may also consider to get tutoring at the Academic Development Center (for appointments: 552-0611).

Be advised that cheating on any exam will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failing grade. Please refer to page on Academic Integrity in BC Student Handbook.

3. Course outline

1. Introduction: Fundamental Economic Principles and Issues

Tresch: Chapter 1 through 4

Chapter 1: pages 4 - 14

Chapter 2: pages 18 - 33

Chapter 3: pages 38 - 49

Handout: How to use graphs

Chapter 3: pages 49 - 62

Chapter 4: pages 70 - 91

(2 weeks)

2. Competitive Markets: the Law of Supply and Demand

Tresch: Chapters 5 through 9 and 23

Chapter 5: pages 100 - 122

Chapter 6: pages 128 - 151

Chapter 7: pages 156 - 177

Chapter 8: pages 182 - 198, 202 - 208

Chapter 9: pages 212 - 237

Chapter 23: pages 642 - 662

(6 weeks)

3. Consumers' and Producers' Economic Problem

Tresch: Chapters 10 through 12

Chapter 10: pages 244 – 252, 254 – 265, 270 - 275

Chapter 11: pages 278 - 307

Chapter 12: pages 312 - 325

(2 weeks)

4. Market Structures

Tresch: Chapters 13 through 17

Introduction: pages 338 - 343

Chapter 13: pages 346 - 378

Chapter 14: pages 390 - 416

Chapter 15: pages 422 - 442

Chapter 16: pages 446 - 461

Chapter 17: pages 466 - 478, 484 - 490

(2 weeks)

Please note that other handouts may be added.

Tentative class schedule:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday 2 September: | Introduction Chapter 1 |
| Tuesday 7 September: | Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Handout |
| Thursday 9 September: | Chapter 3 Chapter 4 |
| Tuesday 14 September: | Chapter 5 |
| Thursday 16 September: | Chapter 5 PS #1 due |
| Tuesday 21 September: | Chapter 6 |
| Thursday 23 September: | Chapter 6 PS #2 due |
| Tuesday 28 September: | Chapter 7 |
| Thursday 30 September: | Chapter 7 PS #3 due |
| Tuesday 5 October: | Chapter 8 |
| Thursday 7 October: | Chapter 8 PS #4 due |
| Tuesday 12 October: | Chapter 9 |
| Thursday 14 October: | Chapter 9 PS #5 due |
| Tuesday 19 October: | Midterm |
| Thursday 22 October: | Chapter 23 |
| Tuesday 26 October: | Chapter 10 |
| Thursday 29 October: | Chapter 10 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Tuesday 2 November: | Chapter 11 |
| Thursday 4 November: | Chapter 11 PS #6 due |
| Tuesday 9 November: | Chapter 12 Introduction |
| Thursday 11 November: | Chapter 13 PS #7 due |
| Tuesday 16 November: | Chapter 13 Chapter 14 |
| Thursday 18 November: | Chapter 14 PS #8 due |
| Tuesday 23 November: | Chapter 15 |
| Thursday 25 November: | Holiday |
| Tuesday 30 November: | Chapter 16 |
| Thursday 2 December: | Chapter 17 PS #9 due |
| Tuesday 7 December: | Review session |
| Friday 17 December: | Final exam |