Boston College

ECON 201.01- Microeconomic Theory
Spring Semester, 2013
Tentative Syllabus

Instructor
Satyam Panday
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Office and Hours: TBA

Class time: Mon, Wed 3:00PM
Class room: Campion 300

Course Description
The goal of this course is to introduce students to the theory and methods of microeconomic analysis and familiarize them with the many applications of these methods for analyzing important economic issues. The course focuses on the study of consumer and producer behavior and analyzes their interactions in a free enterprise market system.

We will cover topics such as consumer behavior, production and costs, partial equilibrium analysis under competitive and monopolistic markets, general equilibrium and welfare analysis, some of which you will have seen in an introductory economics class. We will use the tools we develop, along with some game theory, to study topics in information economics, externalities and public goods. The aim of this course is to provide you with the analytical/mathematical tools to structure and evaluate microeconomic problems.

Please note that this class requires knowledge of calculus, and in addition, you are expected to know the basic concepts of microeconomics.

Required Textbook: Microeconomics by Robert Pindyck and Daniel Rubinfeld, (Prentice Hall, Eighth Edition)

Supplemental References:
Varian’s Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach
Bob Frank’s Microeconomics and Behavior

In addition to the textbook, students are encouraged to keep informed of important economic issues in the United States and the global economy by reading the economic section of leading newspapers such as Wall Street Journal and Financial Times on a regular basis. Magazines such as Business Week or The Economist will also be useful for this purpose.
Course Organization

Assignments
There will be 6 problem sets. You are encouraged to work with other students in the class, but you must write your answers independently. No late problem sets are accepted.

There will be bi-weekly quizzes, 2 mid-term exams and a final exam. The final exam is cumulative.

There is no make-up for a missed quiz.

In the event of an excused absence from the scheduled midterm, a make-up exam will be arranged. The grade for an unexcused absence is zero.

University policy does not allow final exams to be given in advance of the published exam time. The make-up for an excused absence from the scheduled final exam will be administered by the Registrar, either on the “conflict resolution” day or after classes resume in January.

For a planned absence from the final (one that does not entail an emergency), the student seeking an excused absence must request an "excused absence from a final exam" in advance through the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

Midterms: in class, TBA.
Final: TBA

Grading
Problem sets: 20%; Quizzes: 10%; Midterms 20%; Final 30%.

Problem Sets are graded on a scale of 0 to 3. Submissions with serious flaws but showing sincere effort will earn one point. Submissions with some mistakes but showing basic understanding will earn two points. Submissions that are near perfect will earn three points.

Studying in small groups is highly recommended for this course.

Reading assignments: Prepare for each lecture by reading the assigned material in advance. A good strategy is to read quickly through the assigned material before the lecture and then read carefully after the lecture. This allows you to take lecture notes efficiently without duplicating text material.

In-class discussion is integral to making this course interesting, informative, and enjoyable. Please come prepared to contribute your thoughts on how the theory we are outlining relates to the real world. I also hope that you feel comfortable asking questions; if something is uncertain in your mind, it likely is uncertain in other minds as well. Though class participation is not included in the above percentages, regular involvement in the discussion helps determine whether a borderline grade gets the higher or lower of the two options (e.g., an A- versus a B+).

Lecture Notes will be posted on the class portal.
Academic Integrity

Academic Honesty: You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work.

You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see http://www.bc.edu/integrity). Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University.

Disability Information: If you are a student with a documented disability at BC and if you wish to request a reasonable accommodation for this class, please contact me immediately.

Course Outline
(Tentative--Subject to Change as the Term Progresses)

Economic Agents
Topic 1: Intro, Supply and Demand
Topic 2: Consumer Theory/Behavior
Topic 3: Individual and Market Demand
Topic 4: Theory of the Firm

Market Structure and Strategic Behavior
Topic 5: Monopoly and Monopsony
Topic 6: Pricing with Market Power
Topic 7: Oligopoly
Topic 8: Game Theory

Information, Role of Government, and Market Failure
Topic 9: Markets with Asymmetric Information
Topic 10: Public Goods and Externalities