

Economics: The Global Economy (Macro)

G00A6a

Spring 2026
Christian Pröbsting

Lecture: Online knowledge clips, posted on toledo course website

Exercise session: Tuesday 4:15pm-6:00pm (starting on 31.03.2026) in QDV-03.120

Office hour: By appointment

Email: christian.probsting@kuleuven.be

TA: Bashige Salim (paterne.bashige@kuleuven.be)

This is the second half of the course “Introduction to economics” for computer science students and covers macroeconomics.

Topics covered in this course include:

1. Output, unemployment and inflation
2. Short run I: Goods and financial markets
3. Short run II: The IS-LM framework
4. Short run III: The extended IS-LM framework and the Great Recession
5. Long run I: The facts of growth + the role of capital accumulation
6. Long run II: Technological progress and growth

Goals:

By the end of the course, the student will be able to

- define macroeconomics concepts such as GDP, unemployment, inflation and know the general patterns of economic growth both across time and across countries
- explain what causes economic fluctuations and what policy can do to mitigate these cycles
- illustrate these concepts by applying them to real-world cases such as the Great Recession of '08-'09
- understand the drivers of economic growth
- weigh in the debate on inequality and growth and the debate on robots and the labor market

Prerequisites:

The course is accessible to students with a good grasp of high-school mathematics. Most analyses will make use of graphs. Some exercises require basic knowledge of algebra.

Structure:

This part of the course consists of 6 modules, each consisting of 4 - 7 chapters. Below is the structure of a typical module.

Module 1

Chapter 1-1

- Lecture 1-1: video (mp4) -> Knowledge clip (lecture)
Review question 1-1 -> Brief review question with solution
Lecture 1-1: PPT (pptx) -> PowerPoint presentation used in the knowledge clip

Chapter 1-2

...

Exercise 1 + Solution 1 -> Sample exercise with solution (formative assessment)

Problem Set 1 (pdf) -> Additional exercises, some of which are discussed in the TA session

Slides 1 (pdf)	-> PDF of all PowerPoint presentations of the module
Handout 1 (pdf)	-> Summarizes the content of the knowledge clips
Discussion forum 1	-> Ask any questions about the module here!

Going through each module

For each module, you should watch the knowledge clips of each chapter and do each chapter's review questions. After having watched all videos of a module, do the sample exercise to test your understanding of the material and check your answer.

Important!

Prepare each week's problem set before attending the exercise session. Some of the exercises will be discussed during the exercise session, but not all of them. **Note that neither videos of the exercise sessions nor solutions to the problem sets will be posted.** However, you have the option to submit to the TA the remaining exercises that did not get discussed during the exercise sessions. This way, you can get feedback on the exercises for which no solution is posted.

Additional material:

- Each module contains the presentations slides used for each knowledge clip.
- Each module also contains a handout that summarizes the knowledge clips.
- The knowledge clips are based on 1-2 chapters of the textbook (see below). The textbook provides additional material that can help you better solve the exercises.

Seeking help:

I expect quite a bit of heterogeneity & diversity among students. We all come to this course with different backgrounds. I see this as a big asset that can enrich our course.

All students of any background are welcome in my class and belong to this class. Any student who faces challenges that may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact their ombudsperson. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

All course materials are available in accessible formats. If you need any special accommodation, please contact me or the ombudsperson.

This course can be challenging at times. Based on my experience, the key is to

- Keep up with the course by watching the videos and doing the exercises
- Attending the weekly exercise sessions
- Ask questions if anything is unclear (make use of Toledo / talk to the TA / contact me)!

My main goal for this course is for you to succeed!

Toledo forum:

We have discussion forums on Toledo where you can ask any general questions (course material, exercises, admin). There is one discussion forum for each module as well as a general discussion forum. For questions related to your personal circumstances, you can always talk to me after class, email me or come to my office.

Office hours:

Office hours are by appointment or by drop-in. You are free to stop in at any time, though I may not be able to meet with you then. I am also happy to meet online.

Readings:

The lecture will closely follow the textbook "Macroeconomics: A European Perspective" by Olivier Blanchard, Francesco Giavazzi and Alessia Amighini, 4th edition, 2021 (BGA). We will only cover a small part of this textbook. The lectures will focus on the main concepts, while the textbook provides additional context and examples. Reading the assigned chapters is recommended but not mandatory.

If you are interested in learning more about economics ``on the go'', I recommend *Planet Money*, a podcast by the U.S. National Public Radio. Episodes cover both macroeconomic and microeconomic topics. The show is geared towards people with basic background in economics and is often quite entertaining.

Grading and exam:

The grade for this course will be determined by a 3-hour written, closed-book exam. The exam consists of two parts, one part for *Markets and Prices* and one part for *The Global Economy*. Each part counts for 50% of the grade. A mock exam is available online. Exam questions are similar to those found on the problem sets, requiring some algebra, graphical analysis and / or logical reasoning.

Important: To pass the course, students need to pass both parts (micro + macro) of the course.

Retake:

There is a possibility to retake the exam during the retake period. The grading criteria for the retake are the same as for the regular examination period.

Course schedule

Week 1:

- Lecture 1: Videos 1.1 – 1.5
- Reading: Chapter 2 (BGA)
- PS 1 discussed in exercise session on **March 31**

Week 2:

- Lecture 2: Videos 2.1 – 2.5
- Reading: Chapters 3-4 (BGA)
- PS 2 discussed in exercise session on **21 April**

Week 3:

- Lecture 3: Videos 3.1 – 3.4
- Reading: Chapter 5 (BGA)
- PS 3 discussed in exercise session on **28 April**

Week 4:

- Lecture 4: Videos 4.1 – 4.7
- Reading: Chapter 6 (BGA)
- PS 4 discussed in exercise session on **5 May**

Week 5:

- Lecture 5: Videos 5.1 – 5.5
- Reading: Chapters 11-12 (BGA)
- PS 5 discussed in exercise session on **12 May**

Week 6:

- Lecture 6: Videos 6.1 – 6.4
- Reading: Chapters 13-14 (BGA)
- PS 6 discussed in exercise session on **19 May**