

SYLLABUS – SPRING 2019

ARE 150: Introductory Agricultural and Agribusiness Economics
Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am – 12:15pm, Percival Hall 334

Instructor	
Zohreh (Elham) Erfanian	
Office:	Ag. Sciences Building, Room 4411
E-Mail:	elhamerfanian@mix.wvu.edu
Office Hours:	Tues. and Thurs. 9 am – 10:30 am, 12:30 – 2 pm. or by appointment.

Required Course Materials

Principles of Microeconomics, Second Edition, by Mateer and Coppock. The book is available in various formats: a regular printed version, or the digital only, ebook edition.

Course Objectives

The objectives of ARE 150 are to introduce students to microeconomic concepts and their application, including demand, supply, and pricing under alternative market structures. This class will emphasize the use of microeconomic theory, intuition and graphics to better understand how resources should be allocated to best achieve individual and societal outcomes. Students are expected to actively participate in classroom discussions. In addition, students are encouraged to stop by during office hours.

This course satisfies General Education Curriculum (GEC) objectives.

- G04 (**Issues of Contemporary Society:** *Apply knowledge, methods, and principles of inquiry to contemporary problems, ideas, and/or values*).
- G06 (**Individual in Society:** *Develop an awareness of human experience, including both personal and social dimensions*).

Expected Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of the course, it is expected that each student will be able to: (1) Demonstrate an understanding of how social science such as economics can address contemporary issues (2) Develop analytical, synthesis and critical reasoning skills needed to better function in society; and (3) Obtain an appreciation for how individual decisions affect, and are affected by, others in a market-based economy shaped by global forces.

Course Methods The primary objectives of the course will be presented through lectures and class discussion. Readings from the required textbook and supplemental readings will be used to

support and reinforce lectures. The progress of student understanding will be measured through homework assignments, in-class discussion, and exams.

General Course Policies and Expectations

- Class attendance will be taken on a random basis. If you need to miss a class, you will need to let me know in advance so that I can excuse you from that class.
- Participation in class, where appropriate, is both expected and welcome. In particular, asking questions in class if you are confused is beneficial to both the instructor and other students.
- Please visit me during office hours if questions remain after reading the relevant chapter and attending the related lecture.
- Reading the assigned chapters of the textbook before coming to class is beneficial to understanding the material.
- Eating or drinking in class can be rude to your instructor and classmates and therefore is discouraged. However, water bottles and the like are acceptable, as I will likely have one in my hand during lectures.
- Engaging in private conversations, reading materials unrelated to the class, leaving the classroom unnecessarily, or any other activity that creates negative externalities for others in the class should be avoided. This includes use of electronic devices in the classroom in a manner that is not consistent with the educational process.
- As this is the year 2019, taking notes on a laptop is acceptable. However, if it becomes apparent that laptop usage has become a distraction, this courtesy will be revoked.
- Students should check their school email regularly as email will be my primary form of mass communication with the class.
- Students should also check the syllabus prior to contacting me with questions related to exam dates, make-up policies, or other course policy related questions.

Email Communication

The best time to ask questions is in class! That said, emails will be responded to in a timely manner—in most cases within a few hours. However, if emails are sent outside of normal business hours, I may not respond until the next day.

Grading

Exams – 75% of Final Grade: The regular graded material for the class will consist primarily of four exams: three plus the final. Each exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, short answers, and graphs reflecting the materials covered in class. *The lowest of the four exam grades will be dropped and the final exam is not comprehensive.* Please note that, with the exception of

the 4th exam (the final exam), all exams will be held during our regular class time and in our regular classroom.

Homework – 20% of Final Grade: Homework assignments will be assigned as we progress through the chapters, roughly biweekly. I will send an email announcement out when each homework assignment has been released. You will have at least one week to complete each assignment. **No late assignments will be accepted for any reason.** However, *your two lowest homework assignment grades will be dropped.*

Participation/Attendance – 5% of Final Grade: As mentioned earlier, participation in class, where appropriate, is both expected and welcome. In particular, asking questions in class if you are confused is beneficial to both the instructor and other students. This is not a large section class, so absenteeism will not go unnoticed.

Grading Summary

Activity	Percentage of Final Grade
Exam Grades (lowest dropped)	75%
Homework Assignments (two lowest dropped)	20%
Participation & Attendance	5%
Total	100%

Grading Components of 200 Points:

Exams (4): 50 points each:	Total of 150 points
Homework (6): 10 points each:	Total of 40 points
Participation & Attendance:	Total of 10 points

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

End of Course Grade	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
93-96.99	A
90-92.99	A-
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
77-79.99	C+
73-76.99	C
70-72.99	C-
60-69.99	D
Below 60	F

Grade Adjustments

At my discretion, if a grading adjustment needs to be made for a specific exam, I may adjust up the grades for that item for the entire class. However, there will be no additional curving or grade adjustment at the end of the semester.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit built into the course. However, from time to time, speakers or events related to the class might occur on campus that allow me to offer incentives for attendance. When these events arise, I will send out a class wide email providing the specifics. Also, please note that I do not “bump up” grades at the end of the semester, so take advantage of extra credit when it is offered in the event that you might need it.

Exam Policy

- Bring appropriate materials with you for exams, including a #2 pencil. Sometimes you will need a calculator. I will inform you of this in advance.
- Exams will take place in our regular classroom at the regular class time (with the exception of the final) and will be closed book. Students must take exams with their section of the class.
- Once you enter the classroom and receive an exam, you may not leave the classroom.
- Students arriving late have a 20-minute window following the beginning of the exam in which to arrive and get started. No exams will be handed out after 20 minutes.
- Cell phones and Laptops are not allowed to be used as calculators and must be turned off and put away before an exam starts. If a student is observed with cell phone out during an exam, he or she will automatically receive a zero on that exam.
- Students may not share calculators.
- I reserve the right to check the ID of exam takers. Thus, prior to turning in the exam, you need to be prepared to show identification, such as your WVU ID or a valid driver’s license.

Makeup Exams

There are no make-ups for homework assignments or exams. In case of an emergency or an unavoidable circumstance student should notify me **prior to the exam or homework due date when possible**. The key to avoiding most problems is communication. NOTE: Consistent with WVU guidelines, students absent from regularly scheduled exams because of authorized University activities will have the opportunity to take them at an alternate time.

Exam Dates

Item	Date
Exam #1	Thursday, January 31
Exam #2	Thursday, March 7
Exam #3	Thursday, April 11
Exam #4	Thursday, May 2

Course Outline

Below is a tentative course outline. I reserve the right to adjust dates/topics covered based on the progress of the class. Announcements related to any changes will be communicated in class and via email. Slides for each topic will be posted on eCampus for you to download and/or print out.

Dates	Topic	Required Reading
Jan. 8, 10	Class Structure & Introduction to Economics	Chapter 1
Jan. 15, 17	Model Building & Gains from Trade	Chapter 2
Jan. 22, 24	Supply and Demand HW #1 due by Fri. Jan. 25 - 5 pm.	Chapter 3
Jan. 29, 31	Catch-Up Lecture and Review Session (Jan. 29) EXAM 1 – Jan. 31	Chapters 1, 2, 3
Feb. 5, 7	Elasticity	Chapter 4
Feb. 12, 14	Efficiency of Markets HW #2 due by Fri. Feb. 15 - 5 pm.	Chapter 5
Feb. 19, 21	Price Controls	Chapter 6
Feb. 26, 28	Externalities and Public Goods HW #3 due by Fri. Mar. 1 - 5 pm.	Chapter 7
Mar. 5, 7	Catch-Up Lecture and Review Session (Mar. 5) EXAM 2 – MAR. 7	Chapter 4, 5, 6, 7
Mar. 12, 14	No Class – Spring Break	
Mar. 19, 21	Costs of Production	Chapter 8
Mar. 26, 28	Competitive Markets	Chapter 9
Apr. 2, 4	Monopoly, Monopolistic Competition HW #4 due by Fri. Apr. 5 - 5 pm.	Chapter 10
Apr. 9, 11	Catch-Up Lecture and Review Session (Apr. 9) EXAM 3 – APR. 11	Chapter 8, 9, 10
Apr. 16, 18	Price Discrimination HW #5 due by Fri. Apr. 19 - 5 pm.	Chapters 11, 12
Apr. 23, 25	Oligopoly & Strategic Behavior HW #6 due by Fri. Apr. 26 - 5 pm.	Chapter 13
Apr 30, May 2	Final Exam Week Catch-Up Lecture and Review Session (Apr 30) FINAL EXAM – May 2 8AM- 10 AM	Chapter 11, 12, 13

Economics Tutoring

For this course, there is an online tutoring program which one of the graduate students, Sara, will be offering help via Google Hangouts. She will be available Mondays and Wednesday from 4:00 PM till 9:00 PM and on Fridays from 4:00 PM till 6:00 PM. If you are interested in receiving help, then download the Google Hangouts from the Apple Store or Google Play and send Sara an email at sf0041@mix.wvu.edu with your name and the course in which you are enrolled. You can submit a question to Sara at any time but she will be answering questions during the times mentioned above.

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

Academic Dishonesty

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>.

Any student who commits any act of academic dishonesty will automatically receive a grade of "F" in this course. If an Academic Dishonesty form is submitted to OSJA, I will recommend that the "F" be "unforgivable".

Adverse Weather Commitment

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (by 8 o'clock/3 hours before class starts), using (MIX/eCampus) to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests or other assessments.