

College Course Evaluations

ECON 20800: Theory Of Auctions

Section 01 - Winter 2012

Instructor(s): Reny Philip J

Number Enrolled: 37

Number of Responses: 22

Evaluation Comments

What were the instructor's strengths? Weaknesses?

- great instructor
- Reny is one of the best econ profs I've had. So clear. made auctions relatively easy to understand.
- Very clear lectures. Great professor, one of the bests
- The instructor was great. Found a way to make a completely impractical class interesting.
- Reny knows his stuff and is very responsive to student questions.
- Professor Reny is an amazing instructor. He held my attention throughout each class and explained this sometimes obtuse topic very clearly.
- Reny is phenomenal! He explains things extremely clearly. For anyone who has heard of this class, I would recommend you taking it. Don't worry about not understanding the material because Reny would explain at least 5 times before he moves on to the next concept.
- Amazing lecturer: brilliant, clear, in total control of the material and the class. Knows exactly what he wants to teach and communicates it in a powerfully intuitive manner, while also providing (some) mathematical background for the analyses. Exceptionally good natured about student questions, and also makes the material extremely accessible.
- Very clear and extremely patient. I wish he knew a little more about our backgrounds though.
- Professor Reny had a strong emphasis on intuition and presented every model such that we would have a strong grasp of the intuitive explanation behind it. This was a great contrast with other undergraduate economics courses, in which all models are imposed on us and intuition is not emphasized over mechanics. Because of Professor Reny's lectures,

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- Prof. Reny was enthusiastic and engaging, integrating students into the lecture and giving a lot of examples to clarify the material, which was very helpful and made the lectures more understandable.
- Reny is awesome. One of the best econ professors I've ever had. Extremely smart, meticulous in his lectures, and manages to make what potentially could have been a difficult and boring topic interesting.
- very organized, very good lecturer
- Great lecturer. Takes the time to make sure everyone understands what is going on.
- He was very clear and open to questions.
- Professor Reny must be the best lecturer in the econ department. He presents fairly difficult materials in very lucid, intuitive way without compromising much rigor. He also somehow makes the topics interesting although I can imagine that they can easily be dry and dull.
- Clear lecturer, but uses too many extraneous subscripts for variables. Petty, I know, but the subscripting really got out of hand.

What were the teaching assistant's or writing intern's strengths? Weaknesses?

- great TA

- hanzhe was amazing. was always prepared during discussion. very clear. held lots of OH. great TA overall.
- Hanzhe is very smart. He explains difficult concepts very clearly.
- This is going to sound mean-spirited, but it must be said that Hanzhe needs to improve his English if he wishes to be a strong TA or lecturer. His linguistic limitations made TA sessions almost entirely worthless, and so approaching him with questions was somewhat of a waste of time.
- Very nice and always willing to help. He also took into consideration my lack of knowledge in some fields and worked with me well.
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- Hanzhe was always available and willing to help. Kinda hard to understand at times but otherwise nice guy.
- His office hours and review sessions were helpful.
- N/a

What, if anything, what would you change about this course and why?

- nothing
- make homework count. also have more practice problems. a grade based on a midterm and final is too risky. especially since people cheated on the take home midterm which completely screwed up the average.
- nothing
- PSets should be part of the grade... and no take-homes.
- The 50/50 final grade split between midterm and final was a bit harsh. I would have liked some credit given to problem sets. When push comes to shove, it can be hard sometimes to prioritize optional problem sets.
- I hope the homework is not optional
- Maybe more/higher level math
- Have more than just a midterm and final... and not have a take-home midterm. It was hard to really see how well I knew the material.
- nothing
- Nothing. (Note, there are 3 problem sets, but none are grade; the grading is completely 50/50 midterm/final).
- Nothing
- More on auctions, less "trust me" calculus

Is there any topic in this course that you wished you had had previous background in?

- nothing
- more stats, specifically probability theory
- Nope.
- No
- nothing...maybe calculus
- No
- Statistics!!! Probability!!! Harder levels of Math!!!
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- nope
- game theory
- No
- I wish I remembered integration by parts...

Which texts were most useful?

- nothing
- none needed. i almost wish we had a textbook, so that we had another source to consult.

- Milgrom and Myerson.
- N/A
- N.A.
- Readings are optional---you only need to attend lecture
- I wish we had a textbook
- No textbook
- N/A
- N/a

Which least?

- nothing
- N/A
- no textbook
- N/A
- N/a

How productive was class discussion?

- great
- very, the professor covers everything in the class
- Pretty productive
- a great deal
- Occasionally helpful, but not often because Reny's initial presentation was so strong.
- none
- Useful.
- Good enough

How has this course contributed to your education?

- great
- made me appreciate how complicated an auction can be.
- It has definitely taught me how to survive in a course that is completely dependent upon 2 exams for my final grade.
- Made me think about markets in a unique way.
- It teaches how to use distributions practically

Why did you take this course?

Core requirement	0 / 0%
Instructor Reputation	8 / 36%
Faculty member recommended it	1 / 5%
Concentration Requirement	4 / 18%
Meets at a convenient time	4 / 18%
A student recommended it	7 / 32%
Topic interests me	11 / 50%
Concentration elective	15 / 68%

In summary, I had a strong desire to take this course

Strongly Agree	12 / 55%
Agree	4 / 18%
Neutral	3 / 14%
Disagree	0 / 0%
Strongly Disagree	0 / 0%

How many hours per week did you spend on this course?

Low Answer	0
Average Answer	4.6
High Answer	10

What proportion of classes did you attend?

All	20 / 91%
75%	0 / 0%
50%	1 / 5%
25%	0 / 0%
None	0 / 0%

Were the time demands of this course reasonable?

Yes	20 / 91%
No	1 / 5%

The Instructor

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Organized the course clearly.	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	86%
Presented clear lectures.	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	86%
Held my attention and made this course interesting.	0%	0%	5%	0%	14%	77%
Stimulated and facilitated questions and discussions.	5%	0%	5%	5%	14%	68%
Responded well to student questions.	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	86%
Was available outside of class.	36%	0%	5%	9%	9%	36%
Was helpful during office hours.	55%	0%	0%	0%	0%	41%

Motivated independent thinking.	0%	0%	5%	0%	36%	55%
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The Readings

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Fulfilled the objective of the course.	64%	0%	0%	0%	5%	18%
Were reasonable in number.	64%	0%	0%	0%	5%	18%
Were appropriately difficult.	64%	0%	0%	5%	0%	18%

Approximately how much of the reading did you do?

	N/A	None	25%	50%	75%	100%
	64%	14%	0%	0%	0%	5%

The Assignments

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
How helpful were the lectures and discussions in preparing for exams and completing assignments?	9%	0%	0%	5%	23%	50%
How appropriately were the requirements of the course proportioned to course goals?	18%	0%	0%	5%	9%	50%
How well did the requirements contribute to the goals of the course?	14%	0%	0%	5%	9%	59%
How timely and useful was feedback on assignments and exams?	18%	0%	0%	0%	18%	50%
How fairly were the assignments graded?	32%	0%	0%	5%	23%	27%

Overall

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course met my expectations.	0%	0%	5%	0%	14%	68%
This course provided me with new insight and knowledge.	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	73%
This course provided me with useful skills.	0%	0%	0%	5%	18%	64%
The content of this course was presented at an appropriate level.	0%	0%	0%	14%	5%	68%

I put my best effort into this course.	5%	0%	0%	5%	18%	59%
The class had a high level of morale/enthusiasm.	5%	0%	5%	0%	23%	55%

The Teaching Assistant(s)

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Were available outside of class.	14%	0%	0%	0%	9%	59%
Were helpful with assignments.	14%	5%	0%	5%	9%	50%

Discussion Sections, Problem Sessions, Writing Tutorials

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Were well coordinated with this course and contributed to it.	27%	5%	0%	0%	14%	36%
Provided well-designed materials.	27%	0%	0%	14%	5%	36%