

# Syllabus · Foundations of Microeconomics

3 Credits, Fall 2018

**Time & Location:** MWF, 1:10-2:00 pm, Johnson C107

**Course Website:** <http://localhost:4000>

**Current Syllabus:** The syllabus and other relevant class information and resources will be posted at <http://localhost:4000> as well as on blackboard at <https://learn.wsu.edu>.

**Current Schedule:** The details course schedule is available on the course website at: <http://localhost:4000/schedule> and on blackboard at <https://learn.wsu.edu>.

**Professor:** Nicholas Potter, Hulbert Hall 123F (In the Impact Center suite), [nicholas.a.potter@wsu.edu](mailto:nicholas.a.potter@wsu.edu), Office hours: Thursday 3:10-5:00 pm

**Teaching Assistant:** Michael Mahoney, Hulbert Hall 207A, [michael.mahoney@wsu.edu](mailto:michael.mahoney@wsu.edu), Office hours: Wednesday 11:00-1:00 pm

*I receive ~100 emails per day. To manage this, I only check email from 4:00-5:00 pm. I prefer verbal communication, but if you want to use email, the subject line **must** start with "ECONS101" or your email will likely be lost. I will do you the same courtesy, and will never send an email or make a Blackboard announcement that requires action within 24 hours.*

*Note: Additional office hours by appointment. Schedules get very busy, so no appointments can be made less than 24 hours in advance.*

**Feedback:** Please leave feedback at any time at: <https://goo.gl/forms/8SiOwdi19kN8cINJ3>

## Texts

**Required:** *Microeconomics in Modules*, Krugman, P. and R. Wells. 3rd

Edition, Worth Publishers, New York, 2014.

We will also draw substantially from *The Economy*, The CORE Team, Oxford University Press, 2017. Available at: <http://www.core-econ.org>. This is a free ebook (also available in print) that has an accompanying iphone and android app.

### **Required Web Access**

- *Blackboard*: Course information, lecture material, course links including homework and writing assignment (<https://learn.wsu.edu>)
- *Sapling*: Online homework and potential extra credit. An electronic copy of the Krugman text is also available at this website. You may access Sapling via Blackboard in the *Homework* tab.
- *NetTutor*: Writing assignments must be submitted to [NetTutor](#). Please access NetTutor via Blackboard in the *Writing Assignments* tab.

### **Prerequisites**

MATH 101, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 171, 201, 202, or STAT 205 or 212; or concurrent enrollment in MATH 106, 107, 108, 171, 201, 202, or STAT 212; or ALEKS placement score of 40% or higher.

### **Course Description**

Students will be introduced to economic models that explain consumer and firm behavior, market and policies outcomes, and the gains from trade. We will study markets as a system for allocating scarce resources and determining prices and outputs, with a particular focus on when and where markets fail and markets succeed. We will also study perfect competition, monopolies, and oligopolies and the implications of each for social welfare. A short introduction to game theory will include strategic behavior under oligopoly and perfect competition. Finally, we will explore the role of government in creating or fixing market failure.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Learn the basic terminology of microeconomics.
- Apply the concepts of choice and opportunity cost to basic situations involving scarcity, and be able to clearly identify feasible choices.
- Understand how markets operate and be able to identify welfare outcomes for consumers and producers.
- Understand how different market structures, firm technologies, and economic and social policies affect market equilibrium and welfare outcomes.
- Understand gains from international trade.
- Develop information literacy skills as they relate to various microeconomic concepts and issues.

This course is designed to meet the following [WSU learning goals](#):

- LG1 – Critical and creative thinking
- LG2 – Quantitative Reasoning
- LG3 – Scientific Literacy

## Getting Help

### EconLab -- SES Economics Tutoring Center

An EconS 101/102 help desk is located in the Multicultural Student Services center, room 410 of the [CUB](#). They are available from 3 to 7 pm, Monday to Thursday (closed on Friday). They open starting the second week of instruction and close during Finals week. Graduate and undergraduate tutors are there to assist you in learning the material covered in this class. Please visit the help desk if you are having any difficulty with homework, quizzes, writing assignments, or exams.

### Counseling and Support Services

WSU can be a wonderful experience, but can also involve stressors and other difficulties. Counseling services are available at [Cougar Health](#). In particular, you may want to contact:

- [Crisis Support Services](#): 509-335-4511 (during business hours), 509-335-2159 (after hours).
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): 1-800-273-8255
- [Counseling Services](#)

**Most importantly, if you are struggling for any reason please come talk to me and I will do my best to help.**

## **Grading**

Grading will be based on the following components: **11 homeworks, 4 written assignments, two quizzes, a final exam, class participation** and any **extra credit** submitted. There are 430 possible points and 40 additional extra credit points. Total points from each element are:

- 11 Homeworks (drop 2 lowest): 90
- 4 Written Assignments (drop lowest): 90
- Quiz 1: 60
- Quiz 2: 60
- Final: 90
- Participation: 40
- Extra Credit: 40

Your total points are divided by 430, and your letter grade is determined according to the resulting percent as follows:

- **A: 93-100**
- **A-: 90-92.9**
- **B+: 87-89.9**
- **B: 83-86.9**
- **B-: 80-82.9**
- **C+: 77-79.9**

- **C: 73-76.9**
- **C-: 70-72.9**
- **D+: 67-69.9**
- **D: 60-66.9**
- **F: <60**

## Homework

There will be 12 homework assignments, due each Friday by 5pm. We will often (but not always) spend the last part of class on Friday discussing the homework. Answers will be available at 5pm, and as a result **no late homeworks will be accepted. There are no exceptions. However, I will drop the lowest two homework scores.** Each question can be submitted twice.

Sapling tech support is the only source for help with technical difficulties. Much to my chagrin, I do not have the ability to resolve technical issues with Sapling. To contact Sapling Technical Support, go to <https://community.macmillan.com/community/digital-product-support>, or call 1-800-936-6899. As a reference, the course ID in Sapling is **84139**.

There is a grace period before you have to pay, which means that, if you are waiting on Financial Aid, you can register to Sapling and receive access to the e-book and homework. Once you receive your Financial Aid, you may pay for access for the rest of the semester.

## Writing Assignments

There will be four written assignments, each roughly 1-2 pages in length. The due dates are listed on blackboard. **No late assignments will be accepted. There are no exceptions. However, I will drop the lowest score of the four writing assignments.**

The first assignment, and potentially the third and fourth, will be done through NetTutor. You **must** register on the NetTutor webpage in order to complete

the assignments.

The second assignment will be peer graded.

After the second assignment is completed, we will vote to determine whether to use NetTutor or use the peer grading method to grade the remaining two writing assignments.

In the case of NetTutor, each written assignment is graded on two components: economics and grammar. Each component is graded as either *Meets Expectations* or *Needs Improvement*. If both components are graded as *Meets Expectations*, you'll receive full credit (100%) for that assignment. If you receive a *Needs Improvement* on either metric, you can revise and resubmit your essay no later than one week after receiving feedback. It will likely be worth seeking help from the EconLab, your TA, or myself to discuss revisions.

### **Quizzes and the Final Exam**

There will be two quizzes and a final. Except for the final, the quizzes are on the [class schedule](#), in Blackboard, and announced in class. The quizzes will take place during class time and will involve only the material covered since the last quiz. The final exam will be cumulative, but with an emphasis on the material covered since the second test. **If your final exam score is better than one of your quiz scores, your lowest quiz score will be replaced by your final exam score.**

The format of the quizzes will be multiple choice questions. Bubble sheets (or *Scantrons*) will be provided for each quiz and for the final exam.

**I will not allow students to take a quiz late.** You can however arrange to take a quiz ahead of time if you have an official university-sanctioned event that conflicts with the quiz time. If you need to reschedule as a result of a non-official event (you've scheduled surgery for that day, or you need to attend a wedding, etc.) you can arrange to take the quiz ahead of time as well.

**Final Exam:** Monday, December 10, 1:00-3:00 pm in Todd 216.

**The final exam is comprehensive and is given in a block format.** This means that there are no exceptions for the time. I will only consider alternate

times for **documented** extenuating circumstances. **These circumstances do not include travel arrangements.** I will also not consider alternate times if you contact me three weeks before the final.

### **Special Instructions regarding the Final Exam**

- **Academic Rule 80:** A student will not be granted special examinations for the purpose of leaving the institution before the close of the semester.
- **NO EARLY EXAMS.** There are no exceptions to this policy. Students should determine final exam times and dates before making travel or vacation plans at the close of each semester.
- **Academic Rule 78:** During final examination week, if the scheduled arrangement results in students having three or more examinations scheduled for any one day, any one of their instructors is authorized to excuse the students from the regularly scheduled examination and give a final examination to the students during the special exams time blocks.

### **Class Participation**

Class participation points depend on two factors:

- Answering in-class questions in an online form that will be displayed during some classes. Each correct question will be worth one point.
- Asking a substantive question during class. Each question is worth five points.

You cannot accumulate more than 40 total participation points.

Extra credit will be given in the form of additional homeworks available on Sapling and will be posted and added to the schedule throughout the semester. There will be eight extra credit opportunities, each containing five questions worth one point. There is no option to retake or to turn in extra credit late.

### **Course Policies**

#### **Code of Conduct**

Life is hard enough without breaking each other down. In this class we will

seek to build each other up. Interactions should be professional and respectful, and should not seek to exclude, intimidate, or insult.

In particular, we do not tolerate harassment in any form. Prohibited harassing behavior includes but is not limited to:

- written or verbal comments which have the effect of excluding people
- causing someone to fear for their safety, such as through stalking, following, or intimidation
- the display of sexual or violent images
- unwelcome sexual attention
- nonconsensual or unwelcome physical contact
- sustained disruption of talks, events or communications
- incitement to violence, suicide, or self-harm
- continuing to initiate interaction (including photography or recording) with someone after being asked to stop
- publication of private communication without consent

Harassment is prohibited whether it occurs on- or offline, in class or outside of class, and the same standards apply to both.

Thank you for helping make this a welcoming, friendly community for all.

This is a modified code of conduct based on [The Carpentries code of conduct](#).

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance will not be taken. That said, I expect students to attend every class. Students who do not come to class typically do not do well.

### **Make-up policy**

There are no make-ups or late assignments accepted unless a documented medical emergency or death in the family.

In the event of a medical excuse or other serious problems, exceptions to this



no-makeup policy will be considered following University policies. See Office of the Registrar, Our Academic Regulations, No. 73 Absences:  
<http://registrar.wsu.edu/academic-regulations/> (you will need to scroll down).

### **Academic Integrity**

Any student caught cheating, plagiarizing, or fabrication will receive a zero on that assignment, quiz, or exam, and a written warning submitted to the WSU Office of Student Standards and Accountability. If caught a second time you will receive a failing grade and I will seek to have you expelled. I have zero tolerance for violations of academic integrity.

In addition, please see the WSU Academic Integrity Policy below.

### **WSU Policies**

#### **Academic Integrity**

As an institution of higher education, Washington State University is committed to principles of truth and academic honesty. All members of the University community share the responsibility for maintaining and supporting these principles. When a student enrolls in Washington State University, the student assumes an obligation to pursue academic endeavors in a manner consistent with the standards of academic integrity adopted by the University. To maintain the academic integrity of the community, the University cannot tolerate acts of academic dishonesty including any forms of cheating, plagiarism, or fabrication. Washington State University reserves the right and the power to discipline or to exclude students who engage in academic dishonesty. Students found responsible for academic integrity violations may receive an F on the particular assignment or exam, as well as an F for the course. Serious and/or repeated offenses may result in referral to the Office of Student Standards and Accountability and expulsion from WSU. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3).

Definitions of cheating can be found <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010>.

You can learn more about Academic Integrity on your campus using the URL

listed in the Academic Regulations section or to <http://www.academicintegrity.wsu.edu/>. Please use these resources to ensure that you don't inadvertently violate WSU's standard of conduct.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center ([Washington Building](#) 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. For more information contact a Disability Specialist at 509-335-3417, or on-line via <https://accesscenter.wsu.edu>, [Access.Center@wsu.edu](mailto:Access.Center@wsu.edu).

### **Safety and Emergency Notification**

Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is highly recommended that you review the Campus Safety Plan (<http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/>) and visit the Office of Emergency Management web site (<http://oem.wsu.edu/>) for a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information related to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community.

### **Classroom Safety**

Classroom and campus safety are of paramount importance at Washington State University, and are the shared responsibility of the entire campus population. WSU urges students to follow the "Alert, Assess, Act" protocol for all types of emergencies and the "[Run, Hide, Fight](#)" response for an active shooter incident. Remain ALERT (through direct observation or emergency notification), ASSESS your specific situation, and ACT in the most appropriate way to assure your own safety (and the safety of others if you are able).

If you haven't yet, consider signing up for emergency alerts on your account at [MyWSU](#). For more information on this subject, campus safety, and related topics, please view the [FBI's Run, Hide, Fight](#) video and visit the [WSU safety](#)

[portal](#).