

ECON 201: INTRODUCTION TO MACROECONOMICS

Winter 2026 Course Syllabus

Meeting Time & Room: Tues. & Thurs., 6:30 to 8:20 pm, in THO 119

(No live streaming/recording of the class)

Instructor: Tsering Sherpa

Contact: tshep@uw.edu | Canvas

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4 to 5 pm, or by appointment, in SAV 319 C

Course Overview

ECON 201 is a 5-credit introduction to the core forces that shape national economic activity. We will study how output, employment, prices, and income are measured and how these variables interact within the broader macroeconomy. The course develops a foundational understanding of how the economy grows, why inflation and unemployment occur, and how policy decisions influence economic conditions over time.

Macroeconomics examines the economy as a whole, whereas microeconomics focuses on the decisions of individuals and firms. In this class, we will pay close attention to the government's role in stabilizing the economy through fiscal policy and the Federal Reserve's role in implementing monetary policy. Because the financial system is central to how modern economies function, we will also study the operations of banks, money creation, interest rates, and exchange rates in an open economy.

Attendance and engagement are essential. The concepts, problem-solving strategies, and examples covered in lecture form the core of what you will be assessed on in exams and problem sets. Please arrive on time and silence your phone as a courtesy to your peers.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Compute and interpret key macroeconomic indicators such as GDP, inflation, and unemployment, and demonstrate quantitative proficiency through problem sets and assessments.
2. Explain the structure of the banking system, the money creation process, and how the Federal Reserve conducts monetary policy.
3. Construct and interpret core macroeconomic graphs, including aggregate demand and aggregate supply, to analyze how shocks and policy actions influence real GDP and the price level.
4. Differentiate between fiscal and monetary policy tools and evaluate their effectiveness in addressing unemployment and inflation in applied scenarios.
5. Apply macroeconomic reasoning to real-world events by analyzing current news and explaining the economic implications of policy decisions in written assignments.

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Required Materials

- No purchased textbook needed. All readings are available on Canvas or through the UW Libraries.
- Laptop or tablet required for in-class exercises (PollEV).
- Pen and paper are necessary for handwritten writing assignments and exams.
- Simple 4-function or scientific calculators are allowed on exams. No graphing calculators or phones.

Deadline Policy

To maintain consistency and allow timely feedback:

- **Weekly Canvas Homework:** due **every Sunday at 11:59pm**
- **In-Person Writing Assignments:** completed **in class on Thursdays during the final hour**, on the week listed in the course schedule
- **Exams:** occur in class at the scheduled times; no late submissions
- **No late work** accepted unless approved through UW-recognized accommodations or documented emergencies

These deadlines support steady learning and exam preparation.

Late Work Policy

Assignments are due at the posted time. Late work is generally **not** accepted. Exceptions require:

- documented emergencies, or
- approved accommodations arranged in advance

Your **lowest Canvas homework score is automatically dropped** at the end of the quarter. In-person writing assignments, the midterm, and the final **cannot be made up** without official documentation.

Assessment Breakdown

Your grade is determined by:

- **Weekly Canvas Homework:** 15 percent
- **In-Person Writing Assignment 1:** 15 percent
- **In-Person Writing Assignment 2:** 15 percent
- **Midterm Exam:** 25 percent

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- **Final Exam:** 25 percent
- **Participation / In-Class Activities:** 5 percent

In-Person Writing Assignments:

- Completed during the **last hour of class on Thursdays**
- Handwritten, closed materials, prompt-based
- Designed to assess your ability to interpret real economic events using course concepts
- Eliminates concerns about AI or outside assistance

Participation includes short in-class exercises and quick problem-solving checks (completion-based).

Academic Integrity

You are expected to uphold the UW Student Conduct Code. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, use of prohibited materials during assessments, or misrepresentation of work will be reported to the Office of Community Standards. Sanctions may include a zero on the assignment or exam and further disciplinary action.

UW Libraries provide 24/7 citation support: <https://www.lib.washington.edu/>

Use of AI Tools

- **AI Use:** Tools such as ChatGPT or Grammarly may be used only for brainstorming or grammar support. They may **not** be used to draft assignments or exam-related writing.
- **In-Person Writing Assignments:** Since these are handwritten and completed in class, AI use is not permitted.
- **Violations:** Using AI to generate work submitted as your own, or failing to disclose AI use, will result in a zero and may lead to further academic consequences.

This course values originality, clarity, and integrity.

Tentative Schedule

This schedule highlights major dates and activities. Additional materials and posts will be added to Canvas each week. Students are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for updates, assignments, and schedule adjustments. Unless otherwise noted, all deadlines follow the schedule below.

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Week	Dates	Topics	Readings / Prep	Assignments & Deadlines
1	Jan 7, 9	Course introduction; Supply & demand review	Read syllabus; acknowledge on Canvas	HW 1 due Sun Jan 12
2	Jan 14, 16	GDP	GDP readings; FRED intro	HW 2 due Sun Jan 19
3	Jan 21, 23	Inflation & price level	CPI readings	HW 3 due Sun Jan 26
4	Jan 28, 30	Labor market & unemployment	Unemployment readings	HW 4 due Sun Feb 2
5	Feb 4, 6	Consumption, saving, investment	Saving–investment materials	In-Person Writing Assignment 1: Thurs Feb 6 (last hour of class) HW 5 due Sun Feb 9
6	Feb 11, 13	Financial sector & banking	Banking and money creation	HW 6 due Sun Feb 16
MIDTERM		Tues Feb 18 (in class)	Covers Weeks 1–6	No homework this week
7	Feb 20, 27	International finance; exchange rates; BoP	Exchange-rate materials; business cycle intro	HW 7 due Sun Mar 2
8	Mar 4, 6	Business cycles; IS-MP model	IS-MP notes	HW 8 due Sun Mar 9
9	Mar 11, 13	Phillips Curve & expectations	Phillips Curve readings	In-Person Writing Assignment 2: Thurs Mar 13 HW 9 due Sun Mar 16
10	Mar 18, 20	Fiscal & monetary policy	Policy readings; Fed excerpts	HW 10 due Sun Mar 23
11	Final Exam Week	No regular class	Study materials posted	Final Exam: 1.5 hours, cumulative, Closed book/notes, time and location TBD

University Policies

Academic Integrity

You are expected to know and follow the University of Washington Student Conduct Code. Plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, and the use of prohibited materials during

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exams are violations of academic integrity and may result in a failing grade for the assignment or course, and referral to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct. Instructors are required to report all suspected cases of academic misconduct.

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Religious Accommodations

Washington State law requires UW to provide reasonable accommodations for students who expect to miss class due to religious observances or conscience-related reasons. Requests must be submitted within the first two weeks of the course using the Religious Accommodations Request form:

<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>

Disability Resources / Learning Accommodations

If you have a disability or temporary health condition that may require accommodations, please get in touch with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) at 206-543-8925, uwdrs@uw.edu, or <https://disability.uw.edu/>.

If you have approved accommodations, notify me as early as possible so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

Student and Library Resources

Economics Undergraduate Board (EUB) Tutoring

The EUB offers free tutoring for introductory economics courses, including ECON 201. Tutors can help with homework questions, concepts, and exam preparation.

Website: <https://depts.washington.edu/ecnboard/eub-tutoring/>

UW Libraries

Access databases, e-journals, economic data sources, and research help. The 24/7 “Ask Us” chat service is available for quick questions.

<https://www.lib.washington.edu/>

CLUE (Center for Learning and Undergraduate Enrichment)

Provides free evening tutoring, academic skill workshops, and study support for undergraduates across subjects.

<https://webster.slc.washington.edu/clue>

Odegaard Writing and Research Center (OWRC)

Offers one-on-one writing support for students working on essays and assignments in any discipline.

<https://depts.washington.edu/owrc/>



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UW Counseling Center

Provides short-term mental health services, crisis support, and workshops.

<https://www.washington.edu/counseling/>

UW Campus Food Pantry

Free groceries for students, staff, and faculty with a Husky ID.

<https://www.washington.edu/anyhungryhusky/>

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

If English is an additional language for you, feel free to let me know. I can help connect you with campus resources and ensure you have the support you need.