

ECON 1A: Elements of Microeconomics

Department of Economics
University of California, San Diego

Fall 2003

Lecture: MWF 2:00 - 2:50pm, CogSci 002

Instructor: Augusto Nieto
Office: Sequoyah Hall 238
Office Hours: TBA
E-mail: anieto@econ.ucsd.edu

TA: Graton Gathright
Office: Sequoyah Hall 139
Office Hours: TBA
E-mail: ggathright@ucsd.edu

Course objectives: The objectives of this course are: (1) to help students understand the basic microeconomic principles and models, (2) to give students some feel for the economic theory of decisions as it applies to both the individual and the group, and (3) to develop an ability to apply these tools to current microeconomic problems.

Texts: Robert H. FRANK and Ben S. BERNANKE: *Principles of Economics*, 2nd Ed. McGraw Hill-Irwin, 2004 (**Required**).

The textbook is also on reserve in the Social Sciences and Humanities Library (SSHL). In addition, students are encouraged to read a major newspaper, such as the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*.

Course Structure: The course consists of formal lectures and group discussion sessions. The lectures will be devoted to an analysis of important microeconomic topics. The discussion sessions aim at furthering your understanding of these topics by reviewing recent assignments, answering questions, and reviewing lecture material.

Course Requirements: The requirements for the course are (i) Homework 20%, (ii) Midterm Examinations 40%, and (iii) Final Examination 40%. There will be two Midterm Examinations each worth 20 percent and one cumulative Final Exam.

There will be (almost) weekly homework assignments posted on the class web page. I will announce in class when each assignment is posted and when it is due. Homework is to be handed in at the *beginning* of class. Homework will not be accepted by e-mail or in department mailboxes. If you need to hand in an assignment early because you cannot be in class on the day the homework is due, then please make arrangements with your TA. Homework will be returned in discussion section a week after it is due.

Each homework assignment must have the following information:

1. Your name
2. Your Student ID Number
3. Your Section ID Number

Each homework assignment is worth 2 points and the grading is as follows: 2 points if all of the problems have been attempted AND you show your work, 1 point if only some of the problems have been attempted OR if you don't show all your work, and 0 points if the assignment is not handed in or is late. Note that your homework grade does not depend on whether you get the correct answer, but rather on whether you have made a good faith effort to complete the assignment. Correct answers are important, but the goal of these homework assignments is to give you practice at solving the types of problems that you will see on exams. The lowest homework grade will be dropped. This is to allow some flexibility for students who are sick or who have other critical conflicts. Answers will be posted on the web shortly after the assignment is due.

Exam Policy: Dates of exams are **not** negotiable and you **MUST** take your final exam during the time specified for your lecture.

Midterm 1: Friday, October 24, in class

Midterm 2: Friday, November 21, in class

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 10, 3:00-6:00pm

Academic Code of Honor: The class is conducted in accordance with the University of California, San Diego's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. All work on the examinations and the written assignments is to be the work of the individual student. Students may (and are encouraged) to work together in preparation for classes and in studying for the exams.

Contents (Subject to Change):

Topic

Assignment

I. Introduction:

Thinking Like an Economist (Scarcity, Decision-Making)

Chapter 1

Comparative Advantage (Specialization)

Chapter 2

Supply and Demand

Chapter 3

II. Competition and the Invisible Hand:

Elasticity

Chapter 4

Consumer Demand

Chapter 5

Costs of Production

Chapter 6

Efficiency and Exchange

Chapter 7

Profit

Chapter 8

III. Market Imperfections:

Monopoly and other forms of imperfect competition

Chapter 9

Thinking Strategically (Game Theory)

Chapter 10