

Economics 131, Section B00

Fall 2020

Professor: Mark Jacobsen (m3jacobsen@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-11:00am – group office hours, Zoom
Fridays 2:30-3:30pm – individual office hours, Zoom waiting room
(Please check Canvas for Zoom links and any changes or additions to these times)

Class Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30pm–7:50pm, Zoom (and recorded on Canvas)
Web Page: <http://canvas.ucsd.edu>

Economics of the Environment

Economics 131 introduces environmental economics: we begin with the theory, including cost-benefit analysis, externalities, and concepts of economic efficiency that combine standard economic consumption with environmental benefits. We then turn to practical applications of the theory to policy, for example in the context of energy use, sustainability, and economic development. The questions will be treated mathematically using formal economic models, while at the same time the field is heavily influenced by the natural sciences and the role of politics.

Textbook

Markets and the Environment (Keohane and Olmstead, 2nd ed. 2016)
(required)

Problem Sets

The four problem sets will each start with graded questions, followed by an ungraded (but equally important for practice) section. Problem sets and due dates will be announced in class and also posted on Canvas. Grades will depend on showing your work and demonstrating you understand the question: ✓+ (perfect), ✓ (good), and ✓– (mistakes and/or work not shown). Many problem set questions are old exam questions so hopefully will help both in understanding the material and in preparing for the exams. We will post solutions on Canvas.

TAs

Your TAs will lead four sessions during the quarter in order to help review material needed for problem sets and to answer any other questions from lecture. These are optional but I encourage you to attend: many students find them very helpful. There will also be an additional review session before the final and extended office hours / reviews before exams. Please check Canvas as the class progresses for the latest TA office hours and session times and the associated Zoom links.

Exams

All exams will be offered at two times and should be taken (once) live. If circumstances prevent you from taking the exams at offered times please contact me or your TAs before the earliest scheduled time for that exam and we can offer an oral test as a substitute.

Midterm 1 (short): October 15th, offered at 12:30pm and 6:30pm

Midterm 2: November 3rd, offered at 12:30pm and 6:30pm

Midterm 3: November 24th, offered at 12:30pm and 6:30pm

Final exam: Offered December 15th 7:00-9:30pm, and December 18th 11:30am-2:00pm

Grades

Grades will be based on your best three problem sets (5% together), midterm 1 (10%), midterm 2 (25%), midterm 3 (25%), and final exam (35%).

Exams will be open book/notes. Collaboration with other students is not permitted and it is the policy of the economics department to turn any issues of academic integrity over to the university. We will use Zoom or other technology for proctoring: These programs use video and audio recording and other personal information capture for the purpose of facilitating the course and/or test environment. UC San Diego does not allow vendors to use this information for other purposes. Recordings will be deleted when no longer necessary. However, if cheating is suspected, the recording may become part of the student's administrative disciplinary record. We reserve the right to give an oral test if we feel it is necessary to uphold academic integrity.

If you miss one of the midterms and are excused ahead of time we can transfer the weight to the other exams. If you were not excused ahead of time a grade of 0 will be assigned. The final exam is required to complete the class.

Schedule and outline (please check Canvas for announcements and changes)

10/1 Costs and benefits (Ch. 1-2)	11/12 Cars and transportation
10/6 Costs and benefits (Ch. 3)	11/17 Sustainability (Ch. 11)
10/8 Externalities (Ch. 4-5)	11/19 Resources and energy (Ch. 6-7)
10/13 Externalities, Policy (Ch. 8)	11/24 Midterm 3, 12:30pm or 6:30pm
10/15 Midterm 1, 12:30pm or 6:30pm	11/26 <i>Thanksgiving holiday</i>
10/20 Policy (Ch. 8-9)	12/1 Resources and energy
10/22 Policy, applications (Ch. 9)	12/3 Fisheries (Ch. 7)
10/27 Tradable permits (Ch. 10)	12/8 Fisheries
10/29 Climate change	12/10 Concluding examples
11/3 Midterm 2, 12:30pm or 6:30pm	Final exam: 12/15 7:00pm-9:30pm
11/5 Valuing ecosystems and human risks	or 12/18 11:30am-2:00pm
11/10 Cars and transportation	