

ECON 1 – Principles of Microeconomics, Syllabus

Tocoian, UCSD Spring 2020

** Various aspects of the course may change. Check the [Canvas course page](#) frequently for up-to-date information. **

Dated: Monday, 3/30.

Course meetings:

- **Class lectures** (will be **recorded** and **posted** on Canvas)
 - **MWF 12-12:50pm PST** – [Zoom ID 984-880-041](#)
 - **MWF 1-1:50pm PST** – [Zoom ID 991-182-893](#)
- **Discussion sessions** (will be **recorded** and **posted** on Canvas)
 - Wed, 4-4:50 pm – [Zoom ID 357-188-456](#), starting in week 2
 - Wed, 5-5:50 pm – [Zoom ID 274-982-761](#), starting in week 2
- **Study group sessions** (will be **recorded** and **posted** on Canvas)
 - Tue, 12-1:20 pm – [Zoom ID 228-835-493](#), starting in week 1
- **Quizzes/ exams** (will be **recorded** and **reviewed** internally to ensure academic integrity)
 - **during Friday's class on: April 10** (tech rehearsal), **April 17, May 1, May 15, May 29**
 - during the **scheduled final exam time: June 10 or 11** (your choice) from **11:30am-1pm**
[more information about exam scheduling on page 3]
- **Office hours** (instructor and TAs) – [Zoom ID 856-666-960](#)
 - Tentative schedule: Mon 4-6pm, Tue 6-8pm, Thu 4-6pm

Teaching team:

- Instructor: Dr. Oana Tocoian (UCSD PhD, 2011; Caltech BS, 2003)
- Teaching Assistants:
 - Vivian Aluoch <valuoch@ucsd.edu>, Zhiyun (Elaine) Jiang <zhj062@ucsd.edu>
Jianan Yang <jiy346@ucsd.edu>, Yuantong Zhang <yuz048@ucsd.edu>
 - Study group leader: Minnie Guo <siguo@ucsd.edu>

Course description:

- Beginning microeconomic theory: supply and demand, consumer theory, theory of the firm, competitive markets, international trade and labor markets. There are no prerequisites.

Webpage and other resources

- The class webpage is canvas.ucsd.edu. Everything will be linked through here.
- **Required textbook:** Frank, Bernanke, Antonovics, Heffetz – *Principles of Economics* 7th edition
 - The bookstore sells a bundle which includes the physical textbook and a “Connect” code that gives you access to the online portal, for \$106. You can also purchase the code online, directly from their website (it should NOT cost more than \$106). In the meantime, you can sign up for courtesy access for the first 2 weeks.
 - Assignments will be completed through this Connect online portal, and that will include interactive modules, and answering practice quiz questions based on short videos. In other words, even if you already have access to the physical textbook, there is real value to be gained from having access to the online resources. If purchasing the access code would pose an extreme financial burden for you at this point, let me know.

- Optional: Piazza
 - This term we will be using Piazza for class discussion. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates, the TA, and myself. Rather than emailing questions to the teaching staff, I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza. If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email team@piazza.com.

Find our class page at: <https://piazza.com/ucsd/spring2020/econ1/home>

Important note: Piazza has not been willing to formally agree to the Univ. of California's contractual terms about safeguarding student data privacy. (Their statement on data privacy compliance is here: <https://piazza.com/legal/ferpa>) If you have *any* concerns on this front, I encourage you to sign up under a pseudonym and with a non-identifying personal email address – perhaps even one that you open specifically for this purpose. If you do so, I recommend that you send me an email with the subject line “Piazza pseudonym – Econ 1” and the relevant information so that I can connect your Piazza alter-ego to your student information in my records. This way you can still receive extra credit if you are a helpful contributor to the discussion board.

- Optional: Moblab
 - Moblab is an online platform for interactive games. We're going to try it for free during the first 3 weeks. Afterwards we may or may not continue to use it, depending on how helpful/interesting we find it (the cost per student would be \$15). Instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Grade composition

This section lists how I *predict* that I will test you this quarter:

- There will be 5 tests: four graded quizzes and one final.
Of the 5 tests, only 4 will be counted towards your final grade, each with 22% weight.
 - If you have to miss any exams (e.g. due to illness), the remaining 4 will all count.
 - If you take all 5 exams, the lowest score will be dropped.
- We will also have a “rehearsal” test during week 2. This will count for just 1% of the grade, the primary purpose being to check that all the various technical details of the testing setup work.
- The remaining 11% will be awarded for completing assignments.
 - No late credit or extensions will be awarded on assignments, including if you add the class late. However, the bottom two scores will be dropped.

To summarize, the grade will be composed as follows:

- | | | |
|---|---------|---|
| • Assignments (~14-16) | 11% | (1 or 2 per week, bottom 2 dropped) |
| • Rehearsal test | 1% | (week 2) |
| • Best 4 tests out of 5 (quizzes+final) | 4 x 22% | (end of weeks 3, 5, 7, 9; finals' week) |

While I will do what I can to keep to the predicted assessments for this course, the evolving situation *may make it necessary for me to make a change*.

More about the tests

This section details the test schedule, content and mode of administration.

The tech rehearsal quiz and the 4 graded quizzes will be administered at the end of weeks 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, during Friday's lecture.

Side note about scheduling:

For quizzes: I sent out a survey to try to find a time slot that works well for everyone, but all the other possible slots were worse options than during class time: as of March 30 at 10am, there are only 2 students who CANNOT attend lecture, but between 10 and 20 who cannot attend the 5 alternate times suggested.

Similarly there are only 2 students who cannot attend at least one of the scheduled final exams. For those students: you may want to consider offsetting your sleep schedule for the length of the quarter, to make it easier to keep up with all your classes. If you are finding this impossible (but are still able to learn well from just the recordings), let me know. I may be able to set up a later time slot in which to personally proctor your test.

I will allow you to take the quizzes/final with the other section (not the one you are enrolled in). A separate sign-up survey will be sent out for these cases.

We plan to administer all tests in Canvas (as "quizzes") and to proctor them with Zoom, or maybe Loom. These programs use video and audio recording or 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.

Finally, I reserve the right to give an oral test if I feel it is necessary to uphold academic integrity.

Tests will be closed-book, closed-notes exam. You can use a couple of empty sheets of paper as scratch paper. You can have a basic (non-graphing) calculator nearby, although you are not likely to need it. We are currently planning to have you log into a Zoom meeting with your phone (or a tablet), and position that device in such a way that we can see you clearly, including your hands and work area. Part of the monitor should also be visible – so that we can see, for example, that there isn't a book or device leaning against it. During the exam, I will randomly place students in a "breakout room" with a TA or Reader, who will ask you to move the phone slowly in order to show your monitor, your ID held up to your face, and then a 360-degree pan of the room.

Let me be clear about why I put this much effort into enforcing academic integrity:

- I don't think cheating truly gives an advantage: first, cheating effectively is hard, given how easily we can introduce randomization components into tests (especially online tests!). Cheating is, at best, a way to scrape by. Second, grades really don't matter as much as you think – certainly not as much as one's deepest, inescapable beliefs about their own ability and moral worth. The most successful cheater still fails at cheating themselves. And what a terrible burden for someone to carry around: the sense that they need to cheat in order to keep up with their classmates.
- My point is, the first people I am trying to help by preventing cheating is the would-be cheaters themselves. Trust me, you can't run from yourself. That little voice will always be there, nagging at you, making you question even real accomplishments. By the way: if you feel pressured

- towards cheating on an exam because you are afraid you will fail the class, please talk to me. I will find the time to tutor you one-on-one, if that's what it takes. *I am here to help.*
- The other group I am trying to help, of course, are students who wouldn't cheat even if they *weren't* being monitored. I don't want them to be at an even minor disadvantage, or to *think* that they are. I want them to be able to trust their classmates and not feel like there's a price to be paid for acting with integrity.

About the content of the tests:

The tech rehearsal quiz (**April 10**) will ask some questions meant to test whether all the software involved runs correctly: whether the quiz itself, including formatted text and graphs, displays correctly in your browser, and whether you can connect with Zoom on your phone and position it correctly, perform random ID checks, etc. The test itself will *not* be hard, so just read the questions carefully.

The four graded quizzes (**April 17, May 1, May 15, May 29**) will typically cover incremental material (i.e. since the previous quiz), although some concepts unavoidably build on earlier material. The final exam will be cumulative: it will include *some* new material after Quiz 4, but its primary purpose will be to test students' wholistic understanding of all the important concepts covered.

Topics we hope to cover:

Chapter 1: Thinking Like an Economist	1-30 (30 pages)
Chapter 2: Comparative Advantage	31-54 (23 pages)
Chapter 3: Supply and Demand	55-86 (31 pages)
Chapter 4: Elasticity	87-112 (25 pages)
Chapter 5: Demand	113-148 (35 pages)
Chapter 6: Perfectly Competitive Supply	149-172 (23 pages)
Chapter 7: Efficiency, Exchange and the Invisible Hand in Action	173-202 (29 pages)
Chapter 15: International Trade and Trade Policy	397-422 (25 pages)

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to do their own work, as outlined in the UCSD policy on Academic Integrity. Cheating will not be tolerated, and any student who engages in suspicious conduct will be confronted and subjected to the disciplinary process. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will earn a failing grade for the course. In addition, the Council of Deans of Student Affairs will impose a disciplinary penalty.