ECO100A MICROECONOMICS A
(Section A00)
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO
WINTER TERM 2010
SYLLABUS

Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00pm to 3:20pm in CENTR 115
Sections: Wed. 6-6:50pm in CENTR222, Wed. 7-7:50 in CENTR222,
Fri. 11-11:50 in CENTR222

Professor:

Prof. Michael Noel:	Office:	ECON324
	Office Hours:	Tuesdays 11:00am – 12:30pm
	Email:	mdnoel@ucsd.edu

Teaching Assistants:
(Check back for updated times and room locations in the next day or two.)

Laura Gee:	Office:	SQH 231
	Office Hours:	Wednesdays 1 - 2:30pm
	Email:	l1gee@ucsd.edu
Philip Neary:	Office:	SQH 231
	Office Hours:	Fridays, time 3-4:30pm
	Email:	pneary@ucsd.edu
Erin Troland:	Email:	etroland@ucsd.edu
Denise Hammock:	Email:	dhammock@ucsd.edu

Alternate Teaching Assistant Office Hours:

If you cannot attend the office hours above, or you are attending all you can and you still would benefit from more help, you may attend these additional office hours as well:

Mondays 12-1:30pm, location ECON 128 (with Lawrence Schmidt)
Tuesdays 11-12:30pm, location ECON 113 (with Albert Yoon)
Thursdays 5-6:30pm, location ECON 126 (with Nicholas Turner)

This means you have access to help *every day of the week* and twice on Tuesdays. Use them well in advance of exams and use them often.

The Course

This is the first course in the upper division microeconomics sequence. In the sequence, we revisit the supply and demand model from the micro principles course but do so in a more rigorous and mathematical way. The first course in the sequence, 100A, analyzes the demand side. We work through the problem of utility maximization by consumers using optimization techniques from multivariate calculus and ultimately derive a demand curve and its properties. We consider a variety of choice applications and decision making under uncertainty.

Required Textbook

Perloff, J. (2007) Microeconomics: Theory and Applications with Calculus. Pearson/Addison-Wesley.

Required Handout

Machina, M. Economics 100A Mathematical Handout. This is an excellent overview of basic single and multivariate calculus, which we will use in the course. Download it from the course WebCT site.

Grading

There will be one eighty-minute term test (40% of the total grade) held in class on Thursday, February 18, 2010, and one three-hour final exam (60%) scheduled on March 18, 2010, during the final exam week. If you have other plans on those dates, you should not take the course. The only allowable reasons for rescheduling a test or exam is a medically documented and unexpected illness on test day, a death in the family immediately preceding test day, or as permitted under the university policy on religious observances, disabilities, and on UCSD athletics conflicts. There are absolutely no other exceptions, no make-ups, no rescheduling. Check your schedules well in advance. If you do have a valid excuse, there will be no makeup and your grade will be based on the one test you did take. If you miss both exams, you will be given a grade of incomplete. The test and exam are closed book. You do not need blue books. Exams are 100% electronics free. No calculators (you do not need them), no cell phones, no iPods, no headphones, etc. Also, no sunglasses or hats are permitted on exam days. The final exam is cumulative, but heavily weighted to material from the second half of the course.

Also note that the marking scheme set out here is final. Under university regulations, the posted marking scheme applies to all students without exception. A student may not have a poor result excused, or make up for it by doing extra assignments, taking makeup exams or any other kind of additional work. So be sure to do the problem sets thoroughly and be prepared for the test and exam.

Any regrade requests for the test or exam must be submitted in writing within one week after the exam, with an explanation of the specific dispute written on a separate sheet of paper and attached to the front of the exam. The entire exam, start to finish, will then be regraded and your

grade may go up or down. Be aware that exams, at the discretion of the professor, are photocopied prior to being returned to students the first time to eliminate the possibility of a student alterating an exam (in serious violation of academic integrity rules) before resubmitting.

Problem Sets

Problems sets will be distributed on WebCT about every week, generally on Tuesdays, and are not graded. Therefore there is no due date, but we strongly suggest you attempt every problem prior to your scheduled section. The suggested due date listed on the problem set is generally the Friday *after* they are taken up in section (the same day as your section if your section is on Friday). This date is the date that the problem set solutions will be posted on WebCT.

Exams draw very heavily from these problem sets and you want to understand how to solve these kinds of questions with confidence. Experience has shown that simply reading the solutions without really working through the problems beforehand leads to a false sense of understanding and is a sure way to a poor result.

Office Hours

See the listing of office hours above. If you cannot attend the office hours of the course teaching assistants, you may then attend the alternate office hours listed above. You may also attend alternate office hours if you are attending all the regular office hours you can and would still like additional help. Therefore, there are a great many opportunities (and many hours) every week for you to ask questions of the professor and of the teaching assistants. Use them! Office hours are historically underutilized, and there is absolutely no better opportunity for one on one help. Also use them to have your t.a. take up the questions he or she could not get to in section.

Private Tutoring

The course is difficult for many students, and for this reason, some students consider private tutoring (at additional cost to them). But you should not consider paid private tutoring unless you are fully utilizing all the resources in the course (sections, and the many hours of available office hours.) Your professor and teaching assistants are the best teachers around, and they are free for you to use. If you are using all the free resources and would still benefit from additional help, the professor can put you in contact with the economics department who in turn can provide information on qualified one-on-one private tutors. Off campus tutoring is not recommended. Private tutoring on a group basis is never cost-effective and is discouraged by the professor.

Academic Dishonesty

There is a zero tolerance policy in this class for academic dishonesty. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive an F in the course. If you are unsure what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask or consult with your college dean. In all cases, the student's name and test or exam will be immediately forwarded to the Academic Integrity Office, who will impose an additional penalty, up to and including expulsion from the university. Please do not even *consider* doing this. It is not worth it.

Some Advice

Please be aware that the course is substantially more advanced than the principles sequence and borrows heavily from multivariate calculus. We will do a multivariate calculus review in the first week of class, and students uncomfortable after the review may find the remainder of the course very difficult.

Begin studying for the test and exam starting on the first day of class. Do all the problem set questions well before section and before the solutions become available. By doing them in advance, you will know which ones you want to see taken up in section. The upper division 100 sequence moves **very** quickly and many students are not accustomed to the integration of calculus into economics problems. There are lots of resources available, experience shows that it is in your best interest to use them early and use them often! The professor and the teaching assistants are here to help.

Topics

All readings from the Perloff text.

I. Introduction to Microeconomics
- What is Microeconomics?
- Mathematics as a Language
- Calculus Review

Chapter 1 & Calculus Appendix CA
Machina Mathematical Handout

II. Supply and Demand
- Demand
- Supply
- Market Equilibrium
- Comparative Statics
- Elasticities
- Taxes and Price Control

Chapter 2

III. Consumer Choice
- Preferences
- Utility
- Budget Constraint
- Constrained Consumer Choice

Chapter 3

IV. Demand
- Derivation of Demand
- Effects of Income on Demand

- Income and Substitution Effects
- Revealed Preference

Chapter 4

V. Consumer Welfare & Policy

- Consumer Welfare
- Compensating and Equivalent Variation
- Market Consumer Surplus
- Labor Supply and Capital Supply

Chapter 5

VI. Decisionmaking under Risk and Uncertainty (time permitting)

- Expected Utility, Risk Aversion, and Insurance

Chapter 16