

[ECN101, Principles of Microeconomics, Spring Semester 2019]

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Edoardo BERETTA

Instructor's Email: eberetta@fus.edu

Office Hours (before/after classes): by appointment in Office 2 (Kaletsch Campus)

Class location: LAC2

Class meeting times: Monday/Thursday (8.30-9.45)

Final exam: Thursday, 9 May 2019 (8.30-10.30)

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an entry-level course in economics, covering fundamentals of microeconomics and aimed at students who choose it as an elective or plan to continue their studies in economics. Together with ECN 100, it provides the necessary prerequisites for any other upper-level course in economics. It is a program requirement for the majors in International Banking and Finance, International Economics, International Management, International Relations, and Environmental Science. It is also a prerequisite for Economics as a combined major as well as a minor. This course helps students develop basic analytical skills in economics and microeconomics. It provides students with a basic understanding of the market system in advanced capitalist economies. It examines the logic of constrained choice with a focus on the economic behavior of individuals and organizations. After a theoretical analysis of the determinants and the interaction of supply and demand under competitive conditions, alternative market structures will be investigated, including monopolistic and oligopolistic forms. The course examines the conditions under which markets allocate resources efficiently and identifies causes of market failure and the appropriate government response. The introduction to the role of government includes its taxing and expenditure activities as well as regulatory policies.

III. COURSE GOALS

This course aims at giving students a strong fundamental knowledge of microeconomic principles. Microeconomics forms an important foundational course for students, who are interested in understanding how real economies function. This course aims at providing students analytical tools to gain a better comprehension of economic agents, their interaction and impact on the economy as a whole. Through this course, students will also develop critical, analytical and problem solving skills.

IV. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- become familiar with fundamental concepts like demand and supply, resource allocation, markets and Governments' action in the economy;
- acquire analytical skills to solve economic problems;

- critically read and comprehend economic policy prescriptions;
- read and understand graphical presentation and economic data.

V. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Microeconomics by Paul Krugman and Robin Wells, 3rd edition (or any later edition)

Any other learning material may be provided during classes. Moodle may be also used for this course. In this case, please use the following Moodle code to enroll yourselves: ECN101. Students are responsible for checking this platform regularly.

VI. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Class participation: 15%

Midterm exam: 25%

Final exam: 40%

General recap and presentation (by students): 10%

General recap and presentation (by all students on all Chapters): 10%

Exams: there will be one non-cumulative midterm examinations and one non-cumulative final exam for this course. Make up exams will not be allowed. They will be allowed only when both the following conditions are met: 1) a state of illness or serious family emergency is explained in writing and formally certified; and 2) the student makes every effort to notify the Instructor in advance of the exam to be missed by e-mail. If these exceptional conditions should not be met, the score of the missed exam would be “0” (F);

general recap and group presentations (by students): in order to 1) maximize class participation, 2) give students those learning (as well as rhetorical) skills to explain economic concepts and phenomena, 3) clarify any remaining doubts before examinations there will be six general recaps and presentations (by students themselves). Therefore, there will be six group presentations (ideally, made of four or five students) aiming at summing up the theoretical and practical contents of the textbook chapters previously discussed. More precisely, the following group presentations will be organized as follows:

- **4 February 2019:** Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4;
- **25 February 2019:** Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9;
- **1 April 2019:** Chapters 10, 11, 12 and 13;
- **25 April 2019:** Chapters 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18;
- **29 April and 2 May 2019:** All chapters (by all students).

In order to do so students will have to write to the Instructor (eberetta@fus.edu) **by 28 January 2019** and tell him to which group presentations they want to be enrolled. Please note that each student has to opt for only one group presentation. After having reached the **maximum number of students per round (6 students)** the group composition will be not anymore changeable. Exceptions will be made only in case of a medical emergency. Proper official documentation will have to be provided. Any student, who should not have contacted the Instructor by the date stated above, will be enrolled by the Instructor himself to the remaining groups. During each presentation the Professor will let students explain once again relevant aspects of the textbook Chapters to be discussed and ask further (theoretical as well as practical) questions. After the presentation itself the

Instructor will evaluate each student's performance by assigning a corresponding grade;

general recap and group presentations (by all students on all Chapters): all students will have to intervene and answer specific questions on the subjects covered during the entire course (e.g. on all Chapters);

class participation: 15% of the final grade will be based on class participation. In fact, students are expected to participate in class discussions (this includes asking relevant questions, making thoughtful comments during class discussions, bringing in relevant issues to the classroom). More generally, professional behavior will be always required. Specifically, **more than four undocumented absences will also have a direct impact on the 15% of your total grade that is based on class participation and attendance.**

Please be aware that portable electronic devices (like PCs, tablets etc.) CANNOT be used during classes. Since taking notes is highly recommended, please take with you alternative (non-electronic) means of writing.

VII. GRADING POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

100 - 93 (%) = A	82 - 80 (%) = B-	69 - 67 (%) = D+
92 - 90 (%) = A-	79 - 77 (%) = C+	66 - 63 (%) = D
89 - 87 (%) = B+	76 - 73 (%) = C	62 - 60 (%) = D-
86 - 83 (%) = B	72 - 70 (%) = C-	59 - 0 (%) = F

VIII. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE (POLICIES / REQUIREMENTS)

Attend regularly and revise learning material on a steady basis: this course requires students to have a solid understanding of material taught in earlier classes. Please see above for attendance policy in this class;

contact with Instructor: please make sure that e-mails are sent from student.fus.edu accounts and ECN 101 is put in the subject line.

IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: STATEMENT ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

A student whose actions are deemed by the University to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the University and Swiss community, may be placed on Disciplinary Probation or become subject to dismissal from the University. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the University. Furthermore, cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity and is unjust to those students who have studied.

See the Academic Catalog for full statement (page 215): https://www.fus.edu/images/pdf/FUS_ACADEMIC_CATALOG_2016_2018_web.pdf

X. COURSE SCHEDULE

Calendar of topics with reading assignments (textbook chapters). Any other details on learning materials will be specified during classes.

21 January 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	First principles (Chapter 1)
24 January 2019	Economic models: trade-offs and trade (Chapter 2)

(Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	
28 January 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	Supply and demand (Chapter 3)
31 January 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Consumer and producer surplus (Chapter 4)
4 February 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	General recap and presentation 1 (by students)
7 February 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Price controls and quotas: meddling with markets (Chapter 5)
11 February 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	Elasticity (Chapter 6)
14 February 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Taxes (Chapter 7)
18 February 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	International trade (Chapter 8)
21 February 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Decision making by individuals and firms (Chapter 9)
25 February 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	General recap and presentation 2 (by students)
28 February 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Midterm 1
4 March 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	The rational consumer (Chapter 10)
7 March 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Behind the supply curve: inputs and costs (Chapter 11)
25 March 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	Perfect competition and the supply curve (Chapter 12)
28 March 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Monopoly (Chapter 13)
1 April 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	General recap and presentation 3 (by students)
4 April 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Oligopoly (Chapter 14)

8 April 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	Monopolistic competition and product differentiation (Chapter 15)
11 April 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	Externalities (Chapter 16)
15 April 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	Public goods and common resources (Chapter 17)
18 April 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	The economics of welfare State (Chapter 18)
25 April 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	General recap and presentation 4 (by students)
29 April 2019 (Monday, 8.30-9.45)	General recap and presentation 5 (by all students concerning all Chapters)
2 May 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-9.45)	
9 May 2019 (Thursday, 8.30-10.30)	Final exam