

AEB 6106: Microeconomic Principles and Analysis
Fall 2021

Instructor Information:

Kelly Grogan
1185 McCarty Hall A
kellyagrogan@ufl.edu
352-794-7633

Office Hours:

Tuesdays 11:30AM - 12:30 PM, Thursdays 9:30AM - 10:30 AM
**Please wear a mask to attend office hours

Course Logistics:

Tuesdays 10:40AM – 11:30AM
Thursdays 10:40AM – 12:30PM
Classroom:
MAEB 0234 **Please wear a mask to class

or

Zoom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/2417157921> (password: AEB6106)

Course Description:

This course provides students with an in-depth examination of a variety of topics in microeconomic theory including consumer and producer theory, uncertainty, game theory, asymmetric information, externalities, and public goods. We will use both mathematical and graphical methods to illustrate concepts with increased emphasis placed on mathematical rigor. We will use various application assignments to further develop concepts.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, each student should be able to do the following:

- 1) Apply mathematical concepts such as the Envelop Theorem and Implicit Function Theorem to economic problems.
- 2) Solve constrained optimization problems.
- 3) Set up and solve the primal and dual consumer and producer optimization problems.
- 4) Build economic models to answer research questions.

Required Knowledge:

Students are expected to know how to graph basic equations and take derivatives. If this knowledge has gotten rusty, it is the student's responsibility to re-learn these skills.

Required Textbook:

Nicholson, W. Any Year/Edition. *Microeconomic Theory: Basic Principles and Extensions*. Southwestern, Thomson. (All editions have largely the same material but may vary by chapter number and applications)

Suggested “Tools”

This class includes many graphs that benefit from using color. Purchasing colored pencils or pens is recommended.

UF Grading Policy:

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Course Grade and Assignments:

Your grade will be determined by

- Six problem sets (20% in total, 4% each, lowest score dropped)
- Two policy debates (30% total, 15% each)
- Three exams (45% total, 15% each)
- Effort (5%)
- Wellness bonus points (up to 6 per exam)
- Mask bonus points (up to 5 per assignment)

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93 and higher

A- = 90 – 92

B+ = 87 – 89

B = 83 – 86

B- = 80 – 82

C+ = 77 – 79

C = 73 – 76

C- = 70 – 72

D+ = 67 – 69

D = 63 – 66

D- = 60 – 62

E = less than 60

Problem Sets:

There will be a total of 6 problem sets. Students are encouraged to discuss problems with others but you are expected to write up your own assignments. Please write on your assignment the names of students with whom you discussed the assignment. Writing up assignments individually implies that assignments or any portion of the assignments will not be identical. Late problem sets will not be accepted. Make-up work for missed problem sets will not be given. If a student is absent when an assignment is due, they are still responsible for submitting it online before the start of class. The student's lowest problem set score will be dropped. The book provides many practice problems with answers to odd-numbered questions. Students should take advantage of this resource for additional practice problems. I am also happy to help with even-numbered problems for which solutions are not available.

Policy Debates:

The best way to learn economic theory is to apply it. For each policy debate, you will be given a current policy. You will be asked to construct an economic model that could be used to assess the impacts of the policy and determine your stance on the policy. In class, you will be asked to briefly discuss the model used and its predictions about the policy. After all students have presented, the floor will be open for debate. 50% of your grade will be determined by the instructor's evaluation of your model and participation. The remaining 50% will be determined based on peer evaluation.

Exams:

There will be three exams covering portions of the course material. The third exam will occur during the final exam period for the course, which is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 7:30AM – 9:30AM. The final exam is not cumulative. Exams will be submitted electronically. Please bring a mobile device with scanning app to class on exam day. Devices should only be taken out at the end of the exam period to submit the exam. There will be no make-up exams. If a serious, unforeseen, and documentable situation arises that prevents a student from taking any of the exams, the average of the other 2 exams will be entered for the missed exam.

Effort:

“Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential.”
- Winston Churchill

This portion of the grade used to be titled “participation.” After researching about the effects of rewarding the learning process instead of rewarding learning outcomes, I have changed this to “effort.” Please see the attached article for more information on this line of research. You will be rewarded for demonstrating effort in this class. Effort includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Attendance: Attending class (in-person or online) and actively participating in activities, asking questions, and providing comments and insight regarding course material are the basis of the learning process.
- Arriving on time: Late arrivals impede your learning process as well as the learning process of your classmates and will result in lowered effort scores.
- Engagement: Use of cell phones, laptops for non-noting takes purposes, etc. during class interferes with your learning process and will result in lowered effort scores.
- Time and energy spent on assignments and exams: Assignments and exams are meant to be learning experiences. There is little learning benefit from rushing through them at the last minute. Rushed, sloppy, and/or “bare bones” answers demonstrate a lack of effort.
- Utilizing office hours for additional help or clarification: Most students will face at least some material that they do not immediately understand. Following up with questions during office hours is a great way to gain a better understanding.

Bonus Points:

Wellness: Graduate school has notoriously been challenging for students' mental health and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exacerbate this effect. To incentivize activities to support well-being, students will be able to accumulate bonus points, to be applied to each exam, by exploring activities proven to support well-being. Students can earn one point per week by attending an event put on by the University of Florida College of Medicine Wellness Program (<https://wellness.med.ufl.edu/>) or by trying one of the practices provided by the University of Berkeley's Greater Good in Action Program (<https://ggia.berkeley.edu/>). To document the activity, the student should complete all sections in the wellness log (included at the end of this syllabus). Students are welcome to repeat activities they found beneficial in future weeks. The student's wellness log should be scanned and submitted with its corresponding exam.

Masks: As a simple, yet effective tool to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, you will be incentivized to wear a mask, covering both your nose and mouth, in our classroom. On every assignment, students start with a base of 5 bonus points. For each day of class in which you fail to wear your mask properly in the classes leading up to that assignment, you will lose one bonus point. If you refuse to wear a mask during all classes leading up to that assignment, you will lose all bonus points (even if there are fewer than 5 classes prior to the assignment). Note, this "endowment" of points means that you are not penalized for attending through Zoom. This incentive will be in effect for as long as masks are recommended in indoor/school settings by the CDC.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

Lecture Resources

Lectures are recorded and will be made available through e-learning. When applicable, handouts will be used to disseminate clear pictures of graphs and figures. Written class notes will not be provided because the act of taking notes during class and then re-organizing your notes after class has been shown to improve student learning outcomes.

Feedback

I welcome feedback on lecture style, course content, and assignments. Periodically throughout the semester, I will email out a link to an anonymous survey to gather any feedback you may have and/or solicit feedback through assignments. You are also always welcome to provide feedback directly to me. I want this course to be the best possible learning experience for all students.

Academic Honesty:

Any student found to be in violation of the Student Honor Code will receive, as a minimum penalty, a grade of "0" on the assignment or exam. Students may also be asked to attend seminars on ethical decision making and/or avoiding plagiarism.

Attendance:

Attendance counts towards your effort grade, so students are strongly encouraged to attend class (in person or online). If circumstances cause an extended absence from class, please talk to me in advance.

Course COVID Safety Plans

Requirements for students:

- *Masks:* Students are expected to wear a mask covering both their nose and their mouth for the duration of class. The mask should not be removed at any time.
- *Illness:* If you have any COVID-19 symptoms or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, please do not come to class. All classes will be livestreamed and recorded in Zoom. Students can join synchronously from home or watch later when they are feeling better. As with any other illness, please contact the instructor as soon as possible if you will miss an exam or need additional time to complete an assignment due to illness. Documentation of the illness will be required.

Requirements for instructor:

- *Masks:* The instructor will wear a mask covering both her nose and her mouth for the duration of class.
- *Illness:* In the event of mild instructor illness, class will move online, and students will be notified of this change by email by 8AM on the day of class or earlier. In the event of more severe illness, class will be canceled, and the class will determine ways to make up missed class time.

Contingency Plans if in-person instruction is canceled:

- We will meet synchronously through Zoom during our scheduled class times.

Course Outline:

I. Choice and Demand

1. Preferences and Utility (Ch. 3)
2. Utility Maximization (Ch. 4)
3. Income and Substitution Effects (Ch. 5)
4. Demand Relationships Among Goods (Ch. 6)

II. Production and Supply

5. Production Functions (Ch. 7)
6. Profit Maximization (Ch. 8)
7. Cost Functions (Ch. 9)

III. Competitive Markets

8. Partial Equilibrium Competitive Model (Ch. 10)
9. Welfare Analysis (Ch. 11)

IV. Imperfect Competition

10. Monopoly (Ch. 12)
11. Imperfect Competition (Ch. 14)
12. Pricing Models (Ch. 15)

V. Uncertainty, Information, and Externalities

13. Uncertainty and Risk Aversion (Ch. 18)
14. Information (Ch. 19)
15. Externalities and Public Goods (Ch. 20)
16. Political Economics (Ch. 21)

Tentative Schedule of Assignments and Exams

Dates subject to change based on progression through material.

	Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	
Aug	1	23	24 First Day of Class	25	26	27	
	2	30	31	1	2 PS 1 Given	3	
Sept	3	6	7	8	9 PS 1 Due	10	
	4	13	14	15	16 PS 2 Given	17	
	5	20	21	22	23 PS 2 Due	24	
	6	27	28	29	30 Exam 1	1	
	Oct	7	4	5	6	7 PS 3 Given PD 1 Topic Given	8
		8	11	12	13	14 PS 3 Due	15
9		18	19	20	21 PD 1 PS 4 Given	22	
10		25	26	27	28 PS 4 Due	29	
Nov	11	1	2	3	4 Exam 2	5	
	12	8	9	10	11 No class	12	
	13	15	16 PS 5 Given	17	18 PD 2 Topic Given	19	
	14	22	23 PS 5 Due	24	25 No Class	26	
	15	29	30 PS 6 Given	1	2 PD 2	3	
Dec	16	6	7 Last day of class PS 6 Due	8	9	10	

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 15, 7:30AM – 9:30AM

PS: Problem Set, PD: Policy Debate

University Policies

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students are notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled.

The only allowable purposes are: (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be

subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the [Notification to Students of FERPA Rights](#).

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road,

Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.](#)

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

Wellness Activity Log, Exam 1

Week	Date Range	Date of Activity	Activity Chosen	Things I liked	Things I disliked	Other Observations	I would like to do this again (Y/N)
1	8/23 – 8/28						
2	8/29 - 9/4						
3	9/5 - 9/11						
4	9/12 - 9/18						
5	9/19 - 9/25						
6	9/25 – 9/29						

Wellness Activity Log, Exam 2

Week	Date Range	Date of Activity	Activity Chosen	Things I liked	Things I disliked	Other Observations	I would like to do this again (Y/N)
6	9/30 – 10/2						
7	10/3 – 10/9						
8	10/10 – 10/16						
9	10/17 – 10/23						
10	10/24 – 10/30						
11	10/31 – 11/3						

Wellness Activity Log, Exam 3

Week	Date Range	Date of Activity	Activity Chosen	Things I liked	Things I disliked	Other Observations	I would like to do this again (Y/N)
11	11/4 – 11/6						
12	11/7 – 11/13						
13	11/14 – 11/20						
14	11/21 – 11/27						
15	11/28 – 12/4						
16+	12/5 – 12/14						

