People
Professor: Todd Fitch
Office: F526
Phone: TBD (note: email preferred)
Email: 
Office Hours: Tue 1400 – 1500, Wed 1030 – 1130, or by appointment

GSI: Alfonso Rojas
Email: 
Office Hours: TBD

Logistics
Meeting Days: Tue/Thu
Meeting Time: 12:30 – 14:00
Classroom: C135

Discussion Sections
UGBA101A-101
Meeting Days: Fri
Meeting Time: 08:00 – 09:30
Classroom: C125

Course Description
Microeconomics is the study of the economy at the level of customers, firms, and individual markets. It is essential as a tool for business decision-making as well as for general understanding of how markets work. Many of the concepts we will study are also key components for understanding macroeconomics. In this course, we will emphasize the applicability of the models to business management. Compared to a typical microeconomics course, there will be less emphasis on the theory and hard-core math.

Learning Goals
The overarching goal in the class is to learn how to think like an economist and apply that thinking in real-world settings. Economics provides a number of models, frameworks, and thinking approaches that are useful in guiding one to decisions about business, public policy, and in life whenever there are scarce resources and tradeoffs – which means all the time.
To that end, these are the learning goals that we hope you will take away with you by the end of the course:

- Recognize – Be able to look at a real-world problem and recognize which framework(s) will be useful to you in solving it.
- Translate – Be able to translate that problem into those economic frameworks.
- Solve – Be able to solve the problem.
- Decide – Be able to take your solutions and make decisions, recognizing the assumptions and limitations.

Course Materials

bCourses

bCourses will be used as a depository for materials where copyrights are not an issue, class communications, and grades.

Discussion Forums

We will use the discussion forums on Piazza mainly for you to post questions about course material that you might have. This is more effective and efficient than students emailing me and the GSI with the same question. I encourage you to answer other students’ questions that are posted as well – explaining things to others is a great way to learn and solidify your understanding of a subject. Generally, the GSI or I will jump in if there hasn’t been an answer after a couple of days or if the answers being posted are incorrect.

Textbook

Jeffrey Perloff, Microeconomics (7th Edition), Prentice Hall, 2015

Be careful with your purchase. There are many different versions that you can buy and prices will vary. Other editions will likely be OK, especially the 6th edition of the text. However, if you purchase a different edition or an international version, it is your responsibility to ensure you are reading the correct sections.

Note that regardless of which text you purchase, you MUST get MyEconLab access.

MyEconLab (MEL)

Some of the homework and quizzes will be assigned through MEL. Instructions on how to connect to our class will be posted separately in bCourses.

TopHat

We will be using TopHat for quizzes in class as well as for some other activities. You can sign up for an account at www.tophat.com or go to the course link at tophat.com/e/TBD and create an account from there.
Course Code: TBD

To get support, you can email support@tophat.com.

**Reader**
We will be using a course reader that contains a number of cases, articles, and selected chapters from other books. These are available through Study.Net (www.study.net). Not all articles will specifically be discussed in class — some are provided for your entertainment and to get you to think about the real-world applicability of what we’re learning in class. However, feel free to ask questions about any reading (or articles you find on your own) in class or through the class discussion board.

**The Real World**
You’re going to need to pay attention to what’s going on in the world. Current events are fair game for homework questions, quizzes, discussions, and exams.

**News Articles, Blogs, Etc.**
There are a number of great resources available. If you find others, please share.

To keep up with The Real World, I suggest the WSJ, The Financial Times (the “FT” if you want to be cool), and The Economist, although there are other decent sources.

You may find the following resources helpful and interesting:

- [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com) – The website for the Wall Street Journal
- [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com) – The website for The Economist magazine.
- [www.pearsonhighered.com/perloff](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/perloff) - The website for our textbook.
- [http://baselinescenario.com](http://baselinescenario.com) - Has many “beginner” topics and current events.

**Additional Optional Reading**


If it’s been a while since you took an economics class, then this is a good refresher. Concentrate on the micro chapters.


A fun read and gives good insights into consumer behavior.

Clearly illustrates some basic economic concepts with an interesting subject set – pirates!

**Prerequisites**
Introduction to Economics (Econ 1) and basic calculus are required. You should feel comfortable working with graphs, algebra, and simple functions.

**Class Policies**

**Attendance**
All students must attend the first three weeks of lectures for both registered and waitlisted students. After the first three weeks, attendance at lectures or discussion sections is not recorded and is not mandatory. However, there are three caveats:

1. You are responsible for content in the entire course, not just assigned readings or slide decks. If we discuss something during a class, it is “fair game” for being on a quiz or exam.
2. Also, there will generally be a quiz on each non-exam day. There are no makeups for these quizzes. Please see the section on Grading for the “Get out of jail free card” with regards to these quizzes.
3. Exams I and II are held during discussion section.

**Attendance at exams is mandatory on the days they are scheduled.** There will be NO makeups available except for medical reasons with a physician’s note. Please note that Exam I and Exam II are given during the discussion section timeslot. So, while attendance at discussion sections is normally not mandatory, IT IS MANDATORY on exam days.

**Communication**
Email is by far the most effective way to reach me when I am not on campus.

For questions about course content, your GSI is your first point of contact. Please email your GSI and copy me. Note that there is no guarantee that questions sent via email or posted on the forums will be answered if they are sent less than 24 hours before an exam. Questions about course policies should be directed to me.

**Group Work**
For homework assignments and any ungraded problem sets, you may cooperate with other students or work in small groups. However, each student must submit his/her own work individually and you are individually responsible for understanding the material. Group work or collaboration is not permitted on any quizzes or exams.

Groups of 4 -5 are encouraged for case studies and news article analysis.
Electronic Devices
During exams and quizzes, only simple calculators without storage may be used. No phones, laptops, or calculators with programmable functions or text memory are allowed.

Computers, tablets, or phones are needed for the TopHat quizzes so bring one to class every day and be prepared to use it.

Computers may be used only for purposes related to the course, and this does not include Tweeting or Facebooking about the awesomeness of the lecture or how funny I happen to be that day. You can do that after class. Similarly emailing, internet chatting, cruising web sites, and other activity not related to class is prohibited and runs the risk of me confiscating your computer for some unspecified period of time.

You may, if you wish, record lectures as long as you do not disrupt the class or the students around you. HOWEVER, you may not post recordings to publicly accessible venues without my written permission.

Class Courtesy
Cell phones should be turned off in class. If you are waiting for an important phone call that cannot wait then do not come to class that day. Make sure to be in your seat and ready by the time the lecture begins. If you know that you will have to leave early for some reason, get a seat near the door.

Come Prepared
I will come prepared to lecture, so I expect you to come prepared for class too. This means reading the material before coming to class and being ready to participate in discussions.

Feedback
Feedback on the course is important to the success of learning. If something isn’t working for you, let us know. It doesn’t do you (or me) any good to wait until the formal review at the end of class to let me know what could be done better. Tell me or the GSI immediately. If you’re worried, then leverage your class representatives to give anonymous feedback. Note that suggestions of “no homework, no exams, no reading” might make the workload less burdensome, but they’re not really conducive to learning (although maybe good for your social life). So, feedback on how to improve your learning in the class is where you should focus.

Campus Policies

ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS CREED

In compliance with Education code, Section 92640(a), it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to permit any student to undergo a test or examination, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student’s religious creed, unless administering the examination at an alternative time would impose an undue hardship that could not reasonably have been avoided.
Requests to accommodate a student's religious creed by scheduling tests or examinations at alternative times should be submitted directly to the faculty member responsible for administering the examination by the second week of the semester.

Reasonable common sense, judgment and the pursuit of mutual goodwill should result in the positive resolution of scheduling conflicts. The regular campus appeals process applies if a mutually satisfactory arrangement cannot be achieved.

The link to this policy is available in the Religious Creed section of the Academic Calendar webpage: http://registrar.berkeley.edu/DisplayMedia.aspx?ID=Religious%20Creed%20Policy.pdf

**CONFLICTS BETWEEN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

The Academic Senate has established Guidelines Concerning Scheduling Conflicts with Academic Requirements to address the issue of conflicts that arise between extracurricular activities and academic requirements. They specifically concern the schedules of student athletes, student musicians, those with out-of-town interviews, and other students with activities (e.g., classes missed as the result of religious holy days) that compete with academic obligations. The guidelines assign responsibilities as follows:

- It is the instructor’s responsibility to give students a schedule, available on the syllabus in the first week of instruction, of all class sessions, exams, tests, project deadlines, field trips, and any other required class activities.
- It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor(s) in writing by the second week of the semester of any potential conflict(s) and to recommend a solution, with the understanding that an earlier deadline or date of examination may be the most practicable solution.
- It is the student’s responsibility to inform him/herself about material missed because of an absence, whether or not he/she has been formally excused.

The link to the complete guidelines is available on the Academic Senate website: http://tinyurl.com/schedconflictguidelines.

A useful checklist to help instructors and students comply with the guidelines is available on the Center for Teaching and Learning website:

http://teaching.berkeley.edu/checklist-scheduling-conflicts-academic-requirements

**READING, REVIEW, RECITATION (RRR) WEEK**

In Fall 2009, the campus instituted a Reading, Review, Recitation (RRR) period before final exams. For the coming semesters, please keep these dates in mind:

RRR Week is intended to provide students time to prepare for exams, to work on papers and projects, and to participate in optional review sessions and meetings with instructors. Presentations of capstone projects, oral presentations, and performances are permitted, although flexibility in scheduling may be required to accommodate students’ individual schedules. The introduction of new material is not
permitted. Mandatory exams or quizzes and other mandatory activities are also not permitted, with some very limited exceptions (capstone presentations, for example).

Detailed, updated guidelines on permissible organized activities during the RRR week are available at http://registrar.berkeley.edu/RRRFAQ.html.

In addition, the Center for Teaching and Learning has prepared some suggestions on making RRR week productive for instructors and students http://teaching.berkeley.edu/ideas-rrr-week . If you have tips or ideas you would like to have added to this page, please contact the Center for Teaching and Learning teaching@berkeley.edu.

Course Requirements & Grading

Homework (15%)
Homework will consist of a mix of online problems using MEL and short essay questions. You will generally have a minimum of one week to complete the assignment, although I may change that certain circumstances. Answer keys for anything not automatically graded in MEL will be posted on bCourses.

Late homework is sometimes accepted for up to 4 days after the due date, with a 50% penalty, depending on how close to an exam the homework is due or for assignments that are discussed in class. Some homework has a shortened “late period” and some assignments will have none. Documented illnesses do not incur a penalty.

Quizzes (5%)
As noted above, you are required to use TopHat for the course. Generally, there will be a quiz on every non-exam day starting week 4 (i.e. during the first three weeks there will be no graded quizzes – graded quizzes start on Mon, Feb 10th).

Here’s your “Get Out of Jail Free Card”: I will throw out your lowest 3 scores. This means you can miss up to 3 classes without penalty from a Quiz perspective.

Participation (5%)
We will make use of case studies and news articles in class and sometimes in discussion sections. You may work individually or in groups when analyzing the readings. I will provide you with some questions to guide you in your analysis and these will be part of the questions we will discuss in class. Come prepared to participate. This means reading chapters and supplemental material and having good questions and/or good answers. “I don’t know” is also perfectly acceptable.

There will also be discussions on Piazza (www.piazza.com) in which you can participate (NB: Please use your REAL name in Piazza – I don’t like anonymous drive-bys. You can keep it hidden from the students if you like, but not from me). It is participation in these that will determine your grade for Participation.
Class is no fun if I end up talking to myself. I can do that at home, where my dogs hang on every word I say. So, speak up in class. Give us your opinion, analysis, and thoughts. If you don’t like speaking in class then leverage the forums. Send me articles relevant to class with your thoughts attached. Find SOME way to participate.

Lastly, I use the pictures in bCourses to identify you. So, if you don’t look anything like your picture or if you’re just worried that I’ll get it wrong, then put a name card up on your desk, wear a bowling shirt with your name on it, or get some of those cute embroidered Mickey Mouse ears (and wear them backwards!).

NB: Attendance is NOT participation!!

Exam I (20%)
Exam I is on Friday, February 20th. Please note that this is a Discussion Section day – you MUST attend to take the exam. The exam will consist of multiple choice, problem solving, and short answer questions. You may bring a single letter-sized double-sided 8.5” x 11” memory sheet to the exam. This MUST be in your own writing. You will also need an ID. We will check your ID and memory sheet before the exam. If you do not comply with this policy you will not be able to take the exam.

Exam II (20%)
Exam II is on Friday, March 20th. Please note that this is a Discussion Section day – you MUST attend to take the exam. The exam will consist of multiple choice, problem solving, and short answer questions. You may bring a single letter-sized double-sided memory 8.5” x 11” sheet to the exam. This MUST be in your own writing. You will also need an ID. We will check your ID and memory sheet before the exam. If you do not comply with this policy you will not be able to take the exam.

Final Exam (35%)
The final exam is scheduled per Haas policies and is set for Monday, May 11th from 1500 – 1800. The exam will consist of multiple choice, problem solving, and short answer questions. It will cover topics from the entire course, but will be weighted more toward the topics we covered after Exam II. You may bring a single letter-sized double-sided 8.5” x 11” memory sheet to the exam. This MUST be in your own writing. You will also need an ID. We will check your ID and memory sheet before the exam. If you do not comply with this policy you will not be able to take the exam.

Extra Credit
I will NOT provide “special projects” or other individual extra credit plans, so don’t ask. Any extra credit opportunities will be available to all students.
Grading

Distribution
Once your raw course percentage is determined (per the weights above), your relative position within the class is also determined. The Haas School has a maximum average across all students allowed for the course and our class average will be at or below that maximum. I do “curve” the overall grades in the class, again subject to the Haas policy. And, I have no problem giving students a D or failing them if their work is substandard. There is no “coasting” in my class – you’ve been warned.

NB: It will be difficult to give you an exact determination of your letter grade in class along the way, as the class is graded and curved as a whole, not on individual assignments. I will do my best to give you approximate letter grade ranges as we go so that you can have a sense for where you stand.

Grading Essays
Your answers are graded solely on their content and not their intent. We grade based on what you wrote, not what you “meant to say”. Further, if an answer is ambiguous or could be interpreted in multiple ways, then it’s incorrect.

Rambling or writing down everything you know in the hopes of possibly getting the right answer will be obvious and will receive poor grades. Similarly, it is not our responsibility to decipher your handwriting – if it’s illegible, you’ll get a zero for the question.

Grading Complaints
We take great care in grading exams. However, if an arithmetic error has been made in adding up the points on your exam, simply point this out to your GSI at the end of section when you receive your exam back. If you believe that there has been an error in the GRADING of your exam, here are the steps you must follow.

1. Within 7 days of the time that exams are first returned in section (which will be less than 7 days from the time you receive your exam if you missed section when exams were first returned), give your GSI your exam and a written request of what question(s) you think should be re-graded and an explanation of why. Do not change the answers on your exam; type out your request separately and give both your request and your original exam to your GSI. Note that including more information or clarification that is not included in the original answer doesn’t count.

2. We reserve the right to re-grade your entire exam, not just the question(s) mentioned in your re-grade request. Scores on any question can be changed—increased or decreased. Therefore, it is possible that you could wind up with fewer points at the end of the re-grade than you had originally.

3. I have advised the GSIs to reject any re-grade request that is for only 1 or 2 points per question. It is simply not a good use of anyone’s time. If you’re spending your (and your GSI’s) time
challenging the grading of anything less than 3 points, please get out your principles textbook and study the section on opportunity cost.

Exams are not just assessment tools, they are also learning tools. I hope you will learn from the exams. I encourage you to talk with your GSI or with me about what concepts you missed or were confused on so that we can help you be clear on the material. Just remember that the reason for the conversation is not about changing points, it’s about helping you understand the material.

**Gradebook**
Grades are posted on bCourses and it is your responsibility to ensure they are correct. If there is an error in the recording of a score, NOTIFY THE GSI IMMEDIATELY: DO NOT wait until the end of class to give us a list of assignments that have the incorrect scores listed. I will not correct incorrect grades after RRR week!

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities seeking academic accommodation in this course need to promptly notify the instructor by providing a Letter of Accommodation from the Disabled Students Program. Notice of accommodation later than three weeks may result in an inability to timely provide accommodations.

Students with disabilities granted extended time on examinations will be scheduled to start exams at the same time as other students unless there are extenuating circumstances such as another exam. Failure to notify me of such a conflict within three weeks of the start of the semester may mean that an examination cannot be timely rescheduled.

Information about special examination room accommodations will be provided via email a week before the exam is scheduled. Please immediately contact your instructor if you have not received an email with detailed examination accommodation information no later than three business days prior to the date the course examination is scheduled.

**Academic Integrity/UC Berkeley Honor Code**
For further information see: www.asuc.org/honorcode/

The student community at UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code:

“As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others.” The hope and expectation is that you will adhere to this code.

**Collaboration and Independence:** Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do with fellow students. This is recommended. However, unless otherwise instructed, homework assignments are to be completed independently and materials submitted as homework should be the result of one’s own independent work.
Cheating: A good lifetime strategy is always to act in such a way that no one would ever imagine that you would even consider cheating. Anyone caught cheating on a quiz or exam in this course will receive a failing grade in the course and will also be reported to the University Center for Student Conduct. In order to guarantee that you are not suspected of cheating, please keep your eyes on your own materials and do not converse with others during the quizzes and exams.

Plagiarism: To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, see, for example: http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html

Academic Integrity and Ethics: Cheating on exams and plagiarism are two common examples of dishonest, unethical behavior. Honesty and integrity are of great importance in all facets of life. They help to build a sense of self-confidence, and are key to building trust within relationships, whether personal or professional. There is no tolerance for dishonesty in the academic world, for it undermines what we are dedicated to doing – furthering knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

Your experience as a student at UC Berkeley is hopefully fueled by passion for learning and replete with fulfilling activities. And we also appreciate that being a student may be stressful. There may be times when there is temptation to engage in some kind of cheating in order to improve a grade or otherwise advance your career. This could be as blatant as having someone else sit for you in an exam, or submitting a written assignment that has been copied from another source. And it could be as subtle as glancing at a fellow student’s exam when you are unsure of an answer to a question and are looking for some confirmation. One might do any of these things and potentially not get caught. However, if you cheat, no matter how much you may have learned in this class, you have failed to learn perhaps the most important lesson of all.
Course Outline

This is the outline for the semester. I reserve the right to adjust readings and topics as necessary to accommodate the pace of the class as well as to incorporate current events.

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