Introduction to Microeconomics – Honors’
Economics 402H

Dr. Karen Smith Conway
411 McConnell Hall

Office Hours through September 28th: 10 am - noon Tues., 3:30-5 pm Thurs., and by appointment
   After September 28th: 3:30-5 pm Tuesdays, 9-10 am Thursdays, 10-11 am Fridays and by appointment.

This course attempts to provide the student with a survey of economic theory, problems and policies at the microeconomic level of economic behavior. In particular, we will begin by studying how a market economy works and then look at situations in which the market doesn’t perform so well. We will also explore how it is affected by government policy and how incomes are determined in a market economy. It is hoped that by the end of the semester the student will be equipped to analyze and understand economic events and issues and, more generally, ‘to think like an economist’ (a scary thought!).

This course satisfies the Discovery Program (Social Studies) requirement, as do all Econ 402 courses. It also satisfies Inquiry and Writing-intensive requirements, as well as being an Honors’ level course. It therefore entails even more written assignments, critical thinking and academic rigor than a standard Econ 402 course. It is also likely that extra sessions will be held throughout the semester; most will be voluntary ‘help’ sessions during which you can work with your classmates and my teaching assistant on assignments, but a few may be integral parts of the actual course (e.g., experiments, make-up classes if we fall behind, or review sessions for exams). In pursuit of these objectives, several requirements and reading assignments are listed below.

**Required Reading:**

The required text is *Microeconomics* by Roger A. Arnold, 10th edition. The book is available at Durham Book Exchange and there should be used copies available for purchase. You can also use an older edition if you wish, although you should check with me for a reading list since the chapters do not line up.

The topics and readings from the 10th edition are listed on the last page of this syllabus, roughly in the order they will be discussed in class. The approximate dates that each topic will be covered are also listed. A few topics require a short supplemental reading that will be posted on Blackboard. It is strongly recommended that you read the assignment before it is covered in class. **A good policy is to lightly read the assigned reading before class, and then carefully re-read it afterward.**

**Use of Blackboard (http://blackboard.unh.edu) – check it daily!**

Every student should have access to Blackboard (Bb) and should check it daily. Course information (including this syllabus), announcements, articles and data pertaining to classroom lectures or homework assignments, answer keys to homework assignments, old exams and answer keys from past years’ Econ 402 classes (not Honors’ though!) are all posted on Bb. Grades will be posted as well. **Lecture notes and homework assignments will not be posted;** this practice is meant to encourage class attendance, which for most students is absolutely essential for success in the course.

**Classroom Courtesy**

You are expected to attend class. Arriving late or leaving early is disruptive to the class and is very inconsiderate to both me and your fellow classmates; therefore, such behavior will not be tolerated. If a special circumstance dictates that you must leave early, please check with me before class and try to sit near a door. Also, **please turn off cell phones and ALL other electronic devices before class begins.**
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 or visit them in 201 Smith Hall. If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide me with that information privately so that we can review those accommodations.

Academic Honesty

Academic Integrity is a core value of the University of New Hampshire. This syllabus incorporates by reference the UNH Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities Handbook, available at http://www.unh.edu/student/rights. Specifically, refer to Section 9 for the University's Academic Honesty policy.

There will be zero tolerance of academic misconduct. As a student, you have the responsibility to protect the integrity of your own work as well. There is to be absolutely no communication during nor collaboration on exams. As for homework assignments and writing assignments, brainstorming with your classmates and/or receiving guidance from the TA or me is fine; however, the work you ultimately turn in must be your own. You are welcome to ask me for clarification at any time; ignorance of academic honesty policies is not a valid excuse.

Assignments, Testing and Grading

1. Exams (65%). There will be two midterm exams (20% each) and one cumulative final exam (25%). Exam dates are listed on the last page so plan accordingly now, as no make-up exams will be given. If you must miss an exam due to an emergency, notify me before the test. The exams are writing intensive as well.

2. Writing assignments (20%). There will be several (4 to 6) short writing assignments throughout the semester. Some may entail peer review, where you are asked to evaluate – anonymously on both sides – each other’s work. At least one will provide you with the opportunity to revise your work – both your writing style and the content. I may post on Blackboard (again, anonymously) some of the best work I receive, both to promote friendly competition and to provide other students with a good role model of written work.

3. Homework assignments (10%). Five to seven homework assignments will be given during the semester. Answer keys will be posted on Bb immediately after the class in which they are turned in. The lowest homework assignment grade will be dropped.

**Writing and homework assignments are due at the beginning of class and late assignments will not be graded for credit. You will be given at least a week to complete every writing and homework assignment.**

4. Class participation (5%) We are very fortunate to have such a small class for an introductory course, so let’s all try to take full advantage of it! You are expected to attend class and actively participate in class activities.

5. Bonus points (extra credit!). We will conduct several classroom experiments and games throughout the semester as a way to help you understand fundamental economic principles and to show how well our economic models work – or perhaps don’t work, as the case may be! To encourage you to participate and behave as you would in the real world with real stakes, these experiments and games earn you bonus points based on your performance. You receive credit for class participation just for ‘playing,’ no matter how well you play. At the end of the semester, the bonus points you earn will be used to calculate an extra credit ‘bump’ in your total points (percentage) for the course that will be applied after the
grading scale is set. This bump will range from 0 to 3 percentage points and will depend how close your points are to the maximum possible earned. Specific details will be posted at a later date. **Note that you can only receive bonus points for the experiments and games if you are actually present for the duration – including the beginning – of the experiment. There are no make-ups for experiments/games missed.**

**Extra Sessions & Help:**

This class has been assigned a teaching assistant, Ben Brewer, who will also be available to help you with the course. He will hold help sessions/office hours every week. (The day, time and room will be announced later.) This time will be used to answer questions, go over homework assignments and exams, and to provide any other help you need with the course. Attendance is optional at most of these sessions. However, it is possible that a few of these sessions will be used to conduct experiments or cover course material. Such special sessions will be announced at least a week in advance. I also typically hold an (optional) review session, outside of class, before each exam.

The textbook offers several supplements. One is the web site. No matter how/if you purchased the book, you can access a limited set of free materials at

http://coursemate.cengage.com/CPReader/View/9781111474966/default.aspx?anon=True#1707682b-9c1c-4535-bc32-3ae7d595eac0

This can also be accessed via the book’s web site and following the link to “Students: Free access companion content.” (This is also where you can buy electronic versions.) Items with a padlock icon next to them are unavailable unless you pay for access. There are also a variety of other supplements that accompanies the textbook available on this web site. Finally, the textbook itself also offers many questions and exercises in two ways: 1) throughout each chapter, there are Self-Test questions with detailed answers provided at the back of the book in the Self-Test Appendix beginning on p. 496, and 2) at the end of each chapter there are a large number of problems (without answers provided).

**General Advice for Studying for this Course**

Microeconomics is a problem-solving course that builds on itself, during each lecture and throughout the semester. Given this, the most effective actions you can take in studying for this course are:

(1) **attending and participating in class.** It is a time-saving device to come to class; it takes most people much longer to learn the subject matter completely on their own without the help of class lectures. Participating in class will help keep you mentally involved in the lecture and make your time spent there more productive. Stay focused and engaged in class because if you miss a key point, you may have trouble understanding subsequent material that builds on it. If something confuses you, ask for clarification – your classmates will thank you. **Avoid all distractions – which also means turning off (and keeping off!) all electronic devices during classtime!**

(2) **keeping up with the coursework.** After each class, make sure that you thoroughly understand what has been covered and review your class notes and the book for any points of confusion. If you have difficulty with a topic, come see me, ask the TA, or work on your own with the book and supplements before moving on to the next topic. As you may know, economics builds on itself in that one topic is used in discussing the next. This is especially true of this course.

(3) **actively studying the subject,** rather than passively reading and memorizing the material. Use the supplements and the questions in the textbook to test your knowledge and understanding of the material as you are reading it. Try to work the homework assignments first without using your book or class notes (you won't have these come exam time!); use them to check your work. The real value of the homework assignments is to give you practice using Economics. Using them this
way will improve your performance on exams – which will have a much greater impact on your final performance in the course than the score you receive on the homework. Look for ways that the topics covered relate to each other and use those relationships to improve your understanding. When it comes time to review the material for an exam (you are in trouble if you are learning it at that point!), "practice" for the exam by solving problems and asking yourself questions without using your book or class notes. Exams and answer keys from my past Econ 402 classes are available online via a library link on Blackboard. I encourage you to ‘take’ these exams as if they were a real exam (i.e., without your notes or book and with a strict time limit) and then use the answer key to check your work.

(4) attending and actively participating in the help sessions and any extra review sessions (usually held by me before exams). Listening to the questions of others may help you to recognize concepts/situations that you too are having difficulty understanding.

**In general, view economics as a set of tools and basic ideas that can be applied to many different situations in trying to explain certain economic events, trends and behaviors. Study for it as you would a math class -- understand the concepts and how to apply them rather than trying to memorize each situation or problem. The biggest mistake that students make is trying to memorize rather than understand/use economic concepts and models.
Course Outline and Reading Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic (approximate dates covered)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>See appendix A for help with graphs</strong></td>
<td><strong>See appendix B for great info on what you can do with an economics major!</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Market Analysis</td>
<td>Chs. 3 and 4; Ch. 5 optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Demand, Supply and Market Equilibrium (Sept. 6-13)</td>
<td>Ch. 6 &amp; p. 309</td>
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<td>B. Elasticity and other concepts (Sept. 13-25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>III. Consumer Theory (Sept. 25 – Oct 2)</td>
<td>Ch. 7 &amp; pp. 75-77</td>
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------Test #1 on October 4th during regular class time -------

| IV. Production Theory and Cost Concepts (Oct 2-16) | Ch. 8, and supplemental reading |
| V. Different Market Structures | Ch. 9 |
| A. Perfect Competition (Oct 16-25) | Ch. 10 |
| B. Monopoly (Oct 25- Nov 1) | Ch. 11 |
| C. Between Monopoly and Perfect Competition (Nov 1-6) | |
| VI. Role of Government | |
| A. Regulation of Business (Nov 6-8) | Ch. 12 |

**Class does not meet on Tuesday November 13th because the University follows a Monday class schedule that day. However, note that we will likely have a review session that evening in preparation for Test #2**

------Test #2 on November 15th during regular class time------

| B. Market Failures (Nov 8 - 27) | Ch. 17; |
| C. Overview of the US Public Sector & Policies of Taxation (Nov 29-Dec 4) | supp reading; Ch 19 optional |

| VII. How Income is Determined in a Market Economy – the Labor Market (Dec 4-6) | Ch. 13 |

FINAL EXAM TAKES PLACE DURING THE TIME SET BY THE UNIVERSITY FOR OUR CLASS DAY/TIME – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH AT 1-3PM.