

Principles of Microeconomics Syllabus (Fall 2019)

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Office Hours: Monday: 2:30pm – 3:30pm
Tuesday and Thursday: 10:30am – 12:30pm
or by appointment

Course Information

Course Outcomes

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Apply the theory of rational choice to explain individual behavior.
- Explain how markets allocate, produce, and distribute society's resources.
- Predict how government intervention impacts market outcomes.
- Critique market outcomes and government policies using concepts of efficiency and equity.
- Explain firm behavior under various degrees of competition.
- Extend the market framework to analyze market failures.
- Critically analyze the positive and negative impacts of markets as they relate to social justice and environmental issues.
- Represent and understand economic concepts and outcomes in numerical and graphical form.

How Outcomes Will be Met

This course will examine the behavior and interactions of individuals within the context of capitalist economic institutions, particularly markets and firms. The course will begin by

discussing how capitalism has shaped the economy and society. Given this context, students will analyze how individuals make decisions, given their economic constraints, and students will apply game theory to understand strategic interactions between multiple individuals. Students will then extend this analysis of constrained decision-making and strategic interaction to analyze and model the role of power in the economy, both in capitalist firms and markets. The course will conclude with a thorough examination of competitive and non-competitive markets, including market failures and policy solutions. The course lectures will emphasize collaborative exercises and discussion to foster critical thinking about existing economic institutions, how they influence individual decision-making, and how they might be improved.

Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as a weighted average of your grades in the following categories:

- 10% Weekly quizzes
- 25% Midterm exam 1
- 25% Midterm exam 2
- 30% Final exam
- 10% Participation

We will use the following scale in this class:

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| A 92 - 100 | B+ 88 - 89.99 | C+ 78 - 79.99 | D+ 68 - 69.99 |
| A- 90 - 91.99 | B 82 - 87.99 | C 72 - 77.99 | D 60 - 67.99 |
| | B- 80 - 81.99 | C- 70 - 71.99 | F 0 - 59.99 |

Once any grade is posted, you have one week to contact me with inquiries about your assignment grade if you feel it is unfair. Final grades will not be rounded up because a large portion of your grade comes from participation.

The College Grading Policy is explained in the current Course Catalog and can also be found at this link: [Grading Policy](#)

Books and Materials Required

The required book for this course is *The Economy*, written by the CORE team. The book is available in three formats:

1. Register for a **free** account at www.core-econ.org to read the ebook in a web browser.

2. Download the **free** app “The Economy by CORE” (produced by Fire and Lion) to read the ebook on your phone or tablet.
3. Purchase a printed copy of the text from the internet (about **\$50** for a new copy).

Regardless of how you read the book, I recommend studying the interactive figures and the unit questions in the free ebook using a web browser.

Important note: If you’re planning on taking Macroeconomics in a future quarter, I will be using this same textbook in my Macroeconomics courses.

Course structure

Each week you will have required readings and one weekly quiz. Most of your grade will be determined by the 2 midterm exams and the final exam. Your participation grade will depend on your completion of various in-class group exercises.

1. **Readings:** Students must prepare for each lecture by reading the assigned units, working with interactive figures, and answering the questions embedded in the text, **before the material is discussed in lecture**. Engaging with the textbook is crucial to succeeding in this course. The readings will provide you with a foundation to understand the lectures, participate during in-class discussions and exercises, and complete the weekly quizzes.
2. **In-class participation:** Lectures will consist of my presentation of course material, with substantial time for in-class discussion and group exercises. Your participation grade will depend on your completion of the in-class exercises. You will receive either full credit, half credit, or no credit for each in-class exercise given, so your participation grade will be determined primarily by *how many* in-class exercises you complete. In-class exercises will not be given during each class, but they also will NOT be announced ahead of class. This means that you should come to every class and be ready to engage to get a full grade for participation. You will be allowed to make up an in-class assignment if you have a school excused absence. Your lowest score will be automatically dropped, so it is ok to miss one over the course of the quarter.
3. **Weekly quizzes:** Each Sunday, by 11:59pm, you must complete a multiple-choice quiz covering that week’s material posted on Canvas (except on Sundays immediately followed by an exam – see the course schedule below for more detail). You will be allowed two attempts. These quizzes are graded automatically, and they will help you prepare for the exams. I encourage you to discuss these questions with your classmates, including before and after lecture. Your lowest score will be automatically dropped.

4. **Exams:** Your understanding of microeconomics will be tested in two midterm exams and a *non-cumulative* final exam. The exams will consist of both multiple choice questions and short-answer questions. You will need to bring an examination book (blue book) and a scantron for both midterms and for the final. You can purchase these at the bookstore. I suggest you buy materials for all three exams at the beginning of the quarter. **If you fail to bring a green book or scantron you will be penalized 5% for that exam.** Make up exams will only be given for school excused absences, catastrophic accidents, profound personal tragedy, severe illness, or other extraordinary circumstances. Poor planning, being overloaded with work, or travel plans do not constitute valid reasons for make-up exams. See the schedule below for the exam dates, and plan your schedule accordingly.

If you show up late for an exam, you will still be allowed to complete the exam by the same deadline as the rest of the students, as long as no other students have finished the exam yet. The deadline will not be extended for those starting the exam late.

Help with Canvas

Students can find help with Canvas by following the link here: [Student Canvas Help](#)

Classroom Learning Atmosphere

Instructor's Expectations

My goal is to teach you *how* to think, not *what* to think. This means that **YOUR** participation during in-class discussions and exercises is crucial to learning. The more each student participates and shares their voice in class, the more they and the other students will get out of the course. A positive relationship also exists between class attendance and performance in this course. Coming to class every day will have a positive effect on your overall grade and the knowledge you take away from this course. All of your assignments rely heavily on material and discussion covered in class as well as assigned readings.

Questions, comments, and active discussion are essential and will make class sessions more interesting, exciting, and educational for all, so I expect you to read the assigned reading before coming to class. Some of our discussions may touch on controversial topics on which student opinions differ strongly. I do not expect you necessarily to agree with the opinions of

the instructor or any of your fellow students, rather, the discussions and group exercises are intended to help develop your critical thinking skills so that you can come to your own well-founded conclusions, while also collaborating with others to answer difficult questions. To encourage learning, fairness and open discussion, it is expected that we all treat each other with respect and patience. Respect for the instructor and, more importantly, your fellow students is an expected courtesy. If anyone enrolled in this class is bothered by any distracting behavior of the instructor or any student(s) to the extent that it is inhibiting your learning during scheduled class meetings, please let me know immediately.

I normally ban electronic devices in my classes, but laptops, cellphones, and tablets *will* be allowed in this class, only because the required textbook is available for free online and in app form. I want you to be able to use the digital text during lecture, but **you should not use electronic devices during class for anything not directly related to the course material**. If you have an important phone call or absolutely have to use your laptop for some reason, it is perfectly ok to just step outside of the classroom for a moment to do so (just make sure your phone is kept on silent).

Accessibility

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

Affirmation of Inclusion

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

[Affirmation of Inclusion](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/>)

Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Reasonable Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience: Students who will be absent from course activities due to reasons of faith or conscience may seek reasonable accommodations so that grades are not impacted. Such requests must be made within the first two weeks of the course to the office of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (see Bellevue College [Policy 2950](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/>)). In the event you feel you are being discriminated against based on faith or conscience, you may refer to the procedures outlined in the college's [Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy 1440P](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/>).

Annual Notice Non-Discrimination

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates. Bellevue College is prohibited from discriminating in such a manner by college policy and by state and federal law. All college personnel and persons, vendors, and organizations with whom the college does business are required to comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations designed to promote affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Reports of gender and sex-based discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation by a student should be raised with the Title IX office (see 1440P2 for contact information). In cases where the impacted party is a student and the responding party is a college employee, the Title IX coordinator will direct the matter to the Office of Human Resources (HR). All other reports, including all reports where the impacted party is an employee, should be raised with the HR. If a report is against personnel in the Title IX office or HR, it should be submitted to the president's office for referral to an alternate designee.

[Equal Opportunity](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/>)

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms

of sexual misconduct (e.g. relationship violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-564-2641 and more information can be found at [Title IX](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/>).

If you have any concerns, you may report to: [Report Concerns](#).

Division Statements

Cheating, Stealing, & Plagiarizing

Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College.^[1] Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Dean of Student Services.

"Plagiarism includes the copying of language, structure, ideas, or thoughts of another, and representing them as one's own without proper acknowledgment. Examples include a submission of purchased research papers as one's own work; paraphrasing and/or quoting material without properly documenting the source."

This link provides a good, short summary of how to avoid plagiarism: [Avoiding Plagiarism](#)

This 22-minute video also provides a good overview of how to avoid trouble when using sources: From the college home page select *SERVICES*, then *LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER*, then *DATABASES*, then *FILMS ON DEMAND*. At their site, search by title for *PLAGIARISM 2.0: ETHICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE*.

Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication, and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Conduct Code of Bellevue College. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, repeatedly

talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Manager of Student Conduct for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Conduct Code at: [Student Code](#)

Important Links

See ["Important Links" page online](#) for more information about the E-mail and MyBC, Public Safety, the Academic Calendar, the Academic Success Center, and more.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD/ADHD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access in your classes, programs, activities, and any other services, please contact the DRC.

If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus.

The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by the office at B132, calling our front desk phone number (425) 564-2498, emailing drc@bellevuecollege.edu. Deaf students can reach us by calling TTY: (425) 564-6189, or by Skype (account name **DRCatBC**). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at [Disability Resource Center](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>).

Service Animals are allowed in this classroom. Emotional Support Animals need to be approved through the DRC. All other animals will be asked to leave. If you believe you need your animal with you, please connect with the DRC and refrain from bringing your animal until a decision has been made.

Final Exam Schedule

Your final exam will be Thursday, December 5, from 7:30 – 9:20 a.m. [Final Exam Schedule](#)

In case of an emergency during finals, these are some alternative options:

1. The student will receive an “I” (incomplete grade) until such time as the student is able to take the exam. (This may be a hardship on some students receiving financial aid.)
2. The student’s grade will be calculated based on what they have earned to date.
3. If the campus is still open, but I am not able to safely get here, I may arrange for a colleague or staff member to proctor the exam for me.

Course Calendar

| Date/Week | Reading | Topics | Coursework |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| Week of 9/16 | 1.1-1.10, 1.12 3.1-3.4 | The Capitalist Revolution; Modelling preferences | Quiz 1 due Sunday 9/22 |
| Week of 9/23 | 3.5 – 4.3 | Decision-making under scarcity; Game theory: key concepts | Quiz 2 on Sunday 9/29 |
| Week of 9/30 | 4.4-4.14 | Resolving social dilemmas | No Quiz |
| Week of 10/7 | 5.1-5.6 | Determining and evaluating outcomes | Midterm 1 on October 7/8 Quiz 3 on Sunday 10/13 |
| Week of 10/14 | 5.7-6.2 | Institutions and inequality; Firms: owners and managers | Quiz 4 on Sunday 10/20 |
| Week of 10/21 | 6.3-6.11 | The labor discipline model | Quiz 5 on Sunday 10/27 |
| Week of 10/28 | | <i>The Hunger Games</i> | No Quiz |
| Week of 11/4 | 7.1-7.13 | The firm and its customers | Midterm 2 on November 4/5 Quiz 6 on Sunday 11/10 |
| Week of 11/11 | 8.1-8.7 | Supply and demand: price- taking and competitive markets | Quiz 7 on Sunday 11/17 |
| Week of 11/18 | 8.8-8.11, 12.1-12.3 | Modelling perfect competition; Market failure: externalities | Quiz 8 on Sunday 11/24 |
| Week of 11/25 | 12.3-12.10 | Other market failures and correcting market failures | Quiz 9 on Sunday 12/1 |
| Week of 12/2 | Final Exam Thursday, December 5, from 7:30 – 9:20 a.m. | | |

Additional Information

A note about accessing Canvas from the People's Republic of China: some users have reported that they do not have full access to all Canvas functionality from within the People's Republic of China. This appears to be due to Canvas' parent company, Instructure, not fully committing to Chinese government requirements regarding internet operations within the country. The Chinese government does not inform foreign entities of their policy updates; therefore, Bellevue College cannot anticipate access to Canvas.

If you will be in China during the quarter, you should prepare for intermittent and uncertain access to Canvas.

Source: [Access to Canvas in China](https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/) (https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/)

Policy on children in class

Bellevue College does not have a policy on children in the classroom, but this policy reflects my commitment to student, staff, and faculty parents (and is borrowed heavily from a social media post). All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary. I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare can put parents in a position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your child requires special attention or is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their needs are met. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that supports your school-parenting balance.