

# Microeconomics Syllabus

## (Spring 2020)

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## Course Description

Investigates the responses of individual economic agents to incentives. This course provides the framework for analyzing simple models of choices for individual markets and industries within a mixed economy. The structure and outcomes of the basic model can then be modified to analyze a variety of market structures and be used to address a range of social issues, using the common policy goals of efficiency and equity.

## 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 the percentage of total points obtained from the following assignments:

150 points	Quizzes
150 points	Online discussion posts
250 points	Writing assignment
150 points	Exam 1
150 points	Exam 2
150 points	Exam 3
<b>1000 points</b>	<b>Overall course grade</b>

We will use the following grading scale in this class:

A 920 – 1000 points	B+ 880 – 899 pts	C+ 780 – 799 pts	D+ 680 – 699 pts
A- 900 – 919 pts	B 820 – 879 pts	C 720 – 779 pts	D 600 – 679 pts
	B- 800 – 819 pts	C- 700 – 719 pts	F 0 – 599 pts

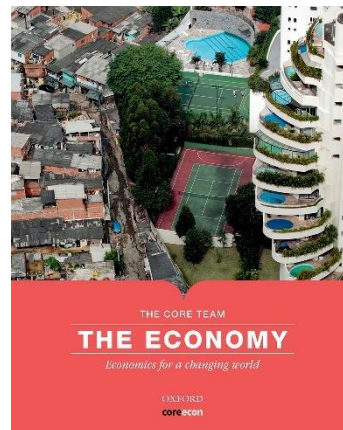
Once any grade is posted, you have one week to contact me with inquiries about your assignment grade if you feel it is unfair. Final grades will not be rounded up.

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](http://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 a weekly quiz, exam, or writing assignment. 45% of your grade will be determined by the exams. You will have to complete various short online discussion posts and one longer writing assignment.

1. **Virtual lectures:** Because class will be online for the entire spring quarter, **we will be having virtual lectures via Zoom during our normally scheduled class time** (8:30 – 10:20AM on Tues./Thurs. and 9:30 – 10:20AM on Friday). You can access these Zoom lectures during class time via this link: <https://bellevuecollege.zoom.us/j/9143522716> (If you haven’t already, I highly recommend taking some time to briefly familiarize yourself with Zoom). These video lectures will be recorded and posted on Canvas for your review. However, **you must attend the live lectures if you are able to because everyone will get more out of the lectures if you are able to interact with the instructor and the other students during the lecture.** It might seem easier to not attend the live lecture and just watch the recorded lecture, but if everyone does this you will all be left with a relatively boring video of me just talking to myself. If this happens, I’ll be forced to stop posting the recorded lectures. A camera and microphone are not required to interact during virtual lectures (you can still type in the chat window), but if you have access to them these will really help with interactivity.

2. **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, to participate during discussions both during lectures and online, and to do well in the weekly quizzes.
3. **Online discussion posts:** I normally reserve a significant amount of in-class time for graded in-class exercises. Since class will be entirely online this quarter, you will instead be required to write multiple posts in weekly online discussion forums on Canvas. There will be a total of 10 weekly discussion assignments, worth 15 points each, and you will receive either 15, 10, 5, or 0 points based on the quality of your posts in addressing the questions given, the other students' ideas, and in demonstrating your critical thinking. Each week, you will have to make at least two (2) posts, one in response to the given prompt and one in response to another student's post. The discussion posts will be due at **11:59pm each Wednesday**, except for the first day of class. Since I normally do these discussion exercises during class time, I will set aside 30 minutes of virtual class time each week to allow you more time to complete these assignments.
4. **Quizzes:** There will be six (6) quizzes this quarter, worth 30 points each. You must complete a multiple-choice quiz posted on Canvas, covering the week's material, by **11:59pm on six Sundays** throughout the quarter (see the course schedule below for exceptions and weeks without quizzes). The quizzes are timed (45 minutes), but you will be allowed two attempts on each quiz. These quizzes are meant to be frequent, low-stakes assessments that will help reinforce your understanding of the course material and 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 at the end of the quarter, so late quizzes will not be accepted.**
5. **Writing Assignment:** There will be one writing assignment due this quarter. It will be worth 250 points and will be a roughly 2-3 page paper based on an article, video podcast, or book chapter. *You may also select your own topic if the instructor approves your topic ahead of the assignment.* The writing assignment will require you to write about a topic in a way that demonstrates critical thinking, nuanced interpretation, and strong supporting arguments. All papers will be submitted to a plagiarism detection program. The writing assignment due date is listed in the course schedule. **Late writing assignments will be accepted, but grades will be penalized 25 points for each day the submission is late.** If you want to challenge the validity of your writing assignment grade, and you are not satisfied with the instructor's preliminary explanation, you may

submit in writing the reason(s) your writing assignment deserves a different grade within **one week** of receiving the assignment grade.

6. **Exams:** Your understanding of microeconomics will be tested in three (3) exams, including a *non-cumulative* final exam. The exams will consist of 15 multiple choice questions and two short-answer essay questions. Both portions of the exam will be administered as Canvas assignments. The multiple choice portion will be timed (60 minutes), and you will only have one attempt. The essay questions will be submitted on Canvas as a writing assignment any time during the stated 12-hour period on the day of the exam. Make up exams will only be given for school excused absences, catastrophic accidents, profound personal tragedy, severe illness, or other extraordinary circumstances. See the schedule below for the exam dates and plan your schedule accordingly.

## Help with Canvas

Lecture slides are posted on Canvas *before* they are covered in class, so that students may print the slides and take notes next to the printed slides during lecture. Writing assignments will be submitted digitally through Canvas. Weekly quizzes will be taken on Canvas. Grades for all assignments are posted on 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** attendance and 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.** Attending and participating in each lecture will have a positive effect on your overall grade and the knowledge you take away from this course. Each assignment relies heavily on material and discussion covered in class and the 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.

## **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 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.<sup>[1]</sup> 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](mailto: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 on Thursday, June 18. [Final Exam Schedule](#)

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

1. The student's grade will be calculated based on what they have earned to date.
2. 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	Readings	Topics	Coursework
Week of 4/6	1.3-1.7	Introduction; What is Capitalism?	No quiz
Week of 4/13	1.8-1.12; 3.1-3.5	The capitalist revolution; Production and preferences	Quiz 1 on Sunday, April 19
Week of 4/20	3.6-3.11; 4.1-4.5	Explaining work hours; Game theory	No quiz
Week of 4/27	4.6-4.14	Public goods game, Ultimatum game	<b>Exam 1 on Tuesday, April 28</b> Quiz 2 on Sunday, May 3
Week of 5/4	5.1-5.8	Institutions and outcomes, Choice and conflict	Quiz 3 on Sunday, May 10
Week of 5/11	5.9-5.11, 5.14; 6.1-6.8	Politics and the surplus; Firms, Labor discipline model	Quiz 4 on Sunday, May 17
Week of 5/18	6.9-6.11	Worker cooperatives; <i>The Hunger Games</i>	<b>Exam 2 on Thursday, May 21</b> No quiz
Week of 5/25	7.1-7.7	<i>The Hunger Games</i> ; Price-setting and profit maximization	Quiz 5 on Sunday, May 31
Week of 6/1	7.8-7.13, 8.1-8.3	Market power; Price-taking and competitive markets	<b>Writing Assignment due on Friday, June 5</b> No quiz
Week of 6/8	8.4-8.6, 8.8-8.11	Changes in supply and demand; Perfect competition	Quiz 6 on Sunday, June 14
Week of 6/15	<b>Final Exam (Exam 3): Thursday, June 18</b>		

## 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/)