

San José State University – Economics Department
ECON 1B: Principles of Microeconomics
Section 83 – Fall 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s):	Brian Hurst
Office Location:	n/a
Telephone:	n/a
Email:	Canvas Preferred (or brian.hurst@sjsu.edu) <i>I work half-time, so you can expect a response within 1-2 business days.</i>
Office Hours:	Tue during “Coffee Hour” from 9:30-10 AM (no appointment needed) OR email me to schedule a custom date/time
Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous
Classroom:	online
Prerequisites:	May be taken concurrently with, or prior to, ECON 1A.

Course Description

Catalog Description: Allocation of resources and distribution of income as affected by the workings of the price system and by government policies.

Note: This class is a four-unit class, so students should expect a workload of up to 12 hours per week in addition to lectures; 3 hours per week, per unit as per SJSU guidelines. This time will be spent on non-lecture activities such as readings, homework, studying, etc.

Course Format

This is a fully online course that will require students to use a computer with internet connectivity, word processing capabilities, sound, and audio or video Zoom calls. All course announcements and materials including the syllabus, worksheets, grades, and more can be found on or are linked to from Canvas in the modules. You are responsible for checking Canvas and your associated email inbox regularly!

For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](#)

Course Goals

This course aims to teach students basic microeconomics principles that can be applied in their own lives. Applications of economic thinking range from understanding political implications, to interpreting events, to better decision making skills in every day life.

Course Expectations

Before taking this course, you should be comfortable with algebra, and with creating, manipulating, and interpreting XY graphs. You should also have good reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, and technical writing skills (grammar, organization, syntax, diction, style, tone).

Furthermore, I expect that students will demonstrate autonomy in this course. Online courses require a high degree of personal responsibility, because professors have less ability to keep you on track and ensure you are reading and listening to all instructions. In college more generally, your performance and progression through each course is your own responsibility. Professors play a supportive role, but it is up to you to ask questions and reach out for help when needed

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) **Describe comparative advantage**, and use it to evaluate and compare policies, and predict outcomes.
- 2) **Identify the role of specialization** within a market and the preconditions for specialization (prices, hierarchical structures, etc), and identify specialization and its role in regards to current events.
- 3) **Utilize microeconomic measures** to analyze the policies, actions, and decisions of individuals and businesses within the economy.
- 4) **Reproduce Microeconomic Models**, and describe how they relate to, and interact with, current events.
- Ex: cost curves, market failures.
- 5) **Conduct research and analysis** in an independent and unbiased manner.
- Ex: students should be able to distinguish between normative and positive statements, verify information through cross-referencing, construct accurate representations of theories with which they disagree, and identify incomplete or potentially misleading statistical analyses.

Required Textbook

Principles of Microeconomics, 9th Ed (2020) by N. Gregory Mankiw
ISBN-13: 978-0357133484 **ISBN-10:** 035713348X

Recent editions are also suitable, including the 7th and 8th ed.

Other Requirements - Note Taking Tools

For note taking, I highly recommend a regular pencil, several different colored pencils, a straight edge, and a calculator. When hand-drawing graphs, we will often use multiple steps that you need to keep separate in your mind.

Library Liaison

The librarian for the Economics Department is Christa Bailey. She is very helpful and can be reached at Christa.Bailey@sjsu.edu or (408) 808-2422

Course Requirements and Assignments

This course will comprise of one essay, several discussions (forums as well as live Zooms), homework, and three tests. Please note:

- Assignments will be completed or submitted online via Canvas. If a technical problem occurs, please submit via email ASAP.
- All assignments, materials, and instructions will be linked from the modules.

Grading Information

Essay instructions will be shared in a detailed prompt (in Module #3). I expect this to be well researched and edited, rather than a one-night effort.

Discussions - written discussions and live discussions are each 50% of discussion grade

- Written discussions (Canvas forums) will be based on extra material (podcasts, videos, excerpts). For full points, you must participate in every discussion by the due date: 1) post, 2) respond to another post.
- Coffee Hour (live discussions on Zoom) will be from 9-9:30 AM every Tuesday. I will have a few questions prepared to start off the conversation each time, based on the previous week's material. After 30 minutes I will stick around for office hours and general questions. You must attend at least two discussions for full points (please email me if you have scheduling conflicts; we will schedule additional sessions)

Homework is due for every chapter. Once you are enrolled, **late homework will not be accepted for any reason**, without exception. However, extra credit assignments can replace up to 3 HW scores per semester (see below). These drops are intended to account for sickness, technological issues, misunderstandings, emergencies, etc. Just like in a real job, I allow some flexibility but expect you to minimize your absences.

Extra Credit assignments are worth one HW assignment each, and may be completed up to three times per semester. The EC submission links will be available in every midterm/final module. To earn EC, you must listen to any "Planet Money" or "How I Built This" podcast, and turn in a short essay of 200 words or more that describes: 1) Three things you learned, and 2) How the podcast related to our course. EC is due no later than the start time of our final exam.

Online exams will consist primarily of multiple choice, graphical, or short answer questions; both mathematical and theoretical in nature. They will draw from lectures, assignments, worksheets, and readings. Please note:

- Tests in this class are **intentionally challenging**, and will be curved according to overall class performance (a widely practiced strategy for preventing cheating in online classes).
- If you miss Midterm 1 or 2 for any reason, your Final Exam will have that midterm's value added to it and will become 40% of your overall grade.
- **The final** will be comprehensive, with about 50% of the questions dedicated to the new material, and 50% dedicated to material already covered in Midterms 1 & 2. Please contact me at least one month before the final if: 1) The exam time conflicts with another class, or 2) You live in a significantly different time zone.

Your numerical grade will be based on the following categories and weights:

Essay	10%
Discussions	10%
Homework	20%
Midterm 1	20%
Midterm 2	20%
Final Exam	20%

Based on the above weights and categories, your letter grade will be assigned as follows:

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
98-100%	A+	93-97.9%	A	90-92.9%	A-
88-89.9%	B+	83-87.9%	B	80-82.9%	B-
78-79.9%	C+	73-77.9%	C	70-72.9%	C-
68-69.9%	D+	63-67.9%	D	60-62.9%	D-
0-59.9%	F				

This course must be passed with a C- or better for most students, although the minimum grade requirement may differ depending on your major. Please consult your advisor.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent to record a class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information](#), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Cheating

Cheating is a violation of the University Honor Code. If you are caught cheating, you will immediately lose all points for that assignment and may face additional disciplinary action. Cheating can jeopardize your entire degree, even after the degree has been awarded. It's not worth it!

Attendance Policy

Since this is an online class, there are no attendance requirements. However, please be diligent in completing all work and assignments. A "zero" is much worse for your grade than even an "F". Missing exams is not an option except under circumstances of medical excuse or a death in the family (documentation is needed in either case).

Classroom protocol

The lectures and the textbook cover similar material but are not identical. Exams and quizzes will contain questions from both sources, so I suggest that you be diligent with completing all aspects of the course.

Consent for Recording of Class or Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7 requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

“Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recording share the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

- Under certain circumstances, students may record instructor material in this class. In order to do so, a student must have written permission from the instructor that outlines what will be recorded, when the material will be recorded, the use of the material that is recorded, and with whom the material will be shared. The instructor will provide a form for this approval.
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, the permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.

“Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Course Schedule

In this course, I create lectures as we go. This allows me to respond to class needs, while still allowing students flexibility during the week. Although you will not be able to work several weeks ahead, you will have at least a week to complete each module.

Note: This flexibility extends to holidays! You are **not expected** to work, but you **are allowed** to. For simplicity, due dates are on Mondays, regardless of holidays. Please plan your schedule accordingly.

Week & Date		Modules and Topics	Material Covered <i>Read each chapter before watching lectures.</i>	Assignments Due <i>Complete all discussions AND quizzes for each chapter by the due date (shown left).</i>
1	8/19	#1: Course Intro	Syllabus & Introduction (Optional Reading - Ch 1)	
2	8/23	#2: PPF's and Trade, Gains From Trade	Ch 2 Ch 3	Course Introduction Module
3	8/30	#3: Supply and Demand	Ch 4 Essay Prompt Assigned	Ch 2 Ch 3
4	9/6	#4: Elasticity	Ch 5 Study Guide - Midterm 1	Ch 4
5	9/13	#5: Midterm #1	Midterm Review	Ch 5
9/15 - Midterm #1 (at any time)				
6	9/20	#6: Govt Intervention	Ch 6	
7	9/27	#7: Market Efficiency (Surplus) and The Costs of Taxation	Ch 7 Ch 8	Ch 6 Essay: 1st Draft
8	10/4	#8: Externalities	Ch 10	Ch 7 Ch 8
9	10/11	#9: Public Goods and Common Resources	Ch 11	Ch 10
10	10/18	#10: Design of the Tax System	Ch 12 Study Guide - Midterm 2	Ch 11
11	10/25	#11: Midterm #2	Midterm #2 Review	Ch 12
10/27 - Midterm #2 (at any time)				
12	11/1	#12: The Cost of Production	Ch 13	
13	11/8	#13: Competitive Markets, Monopoly	Ch 14 Ch 15	Ch 13 Essay: Final Draft
14	11/15	#14: The Markets for the Factors of Production	Ch 18	Ch 14 Ch 15
15	11/22	#15: Earnings and Discrimination	Ch 19	Ch 18
16	11/29	#16: Income Inequality and Poverty	Ch 20 Study Guide - Final Exam	Ch 19
17	12/6	#17: Final Exam	Final Exam Review	Ch 20
	12/9	Final Exam Thu 12/9 @ 5:15 pm - 7:30 pm *contact me at least one month early for alternative times/dates		Extra Credit due (before exam starts)

Note: Schedule is subject to change, with notice via Canvas/email