

Microeconomic Theory  
Econ 400  
Spring 2014  
TR 1:30-3:20

Melissa Knox

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<https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/knoxm/26751/>

Office: 333 Savery Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 11-1 or by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course presents the conceptual foundations and analytical methods of microeconomics. It covers the basic theories of consumer and firm behavior, perfect competition, imperfect competition (monopoly, oligopoly, and monopolistic competition), decisions under uncertainty and asymmetric information.

**Course Organization:**

This is primarily a traditional lecture course, with problem sets, quizzes, and exams.

**Prerequisites:**

You need to have successfully completed Econ 300 Math 126. You should be comfortable using multivariate calculus. Please reconsider this class if you are not.

**Text:**

Microeconomic Theory: Basic Principles and Extensions, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, by Walter Nicholson and Christopher Snyder. ISBN: 1-111-52553-6. This text is required and available at the university book store, but you do not need to purchase online access to the book. Earlier editions and international editions have both been found to be acceptable substitutes by previous students.

**Evaluation:**

Quizzes – 15% (5% each – I drop the lowest score)

Midterm Exam – 40%

Cumulative Final Exam – 45%

Final grades will be curved, if necessary. I expect the median to be between 3.1 and 3.3.

**Problem Sets:**

It's nearly impossible to learn the tools of economics without working problems. So, I will assign weekly problem sets every Thursday. These assignments will be not collected, and rough solutions will be posted the following Tuesday. You are encouraged to do the problems as preparation for the exams and quizzes.

**Quizzes:**

We will have four 20-minute quizzes during the quarter. They will be based on the homework assignment for that week. They will be on Thursdays and you can expect two before the midterm and two after (tentative dates: 04/17, 04/24, 05/22, 05/29). I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

**Absence Policy:**

There will be no make-up exams given, except in the case of extreme emergency or illness. Extreme emergencies and illnesses will need to be documented, preferably with a doctor's note, police report or other similar documentation. Please look at the exam dates below and plan your schedules accordingly. I will drop your lowest quiz score, so your first absence will be the dropped score. Subsequent missed quizzes will need to be excused as described above in order to be made up. No early final exams will be given – no exceptions!

**Course Outline:**

We will follow the general outline below. This is an ambitious plan, so we may not cover every topic listed. Time frames are flexible and will change as needed, but exam dates are set in stone. Please consult the class website at least once a week to obtain reading assignments and problem sets and check for any class announcements.

1. Mathematical Preliminaries (NS, CH 2)
2. Preferences and Utility Maximization (NS, Chapters 3 & 4)
3. Demand Relationships and Revealed Preference (NS, Chapters 5 & 6)
4. Uncertainty and Asymmetric Information (NS, Chapter 7 – if time)

**Midterm Exam: Thursday, May 1, 2014 (in class)**

5. Production Functions (NS, Chapter 9)
6. Cost Functions and Cost Minimization (NS, Chapter 10)
7. Profit Maximization and Partial Competitive Equilibrium (NS, Chapters 11 & 12)
8. Monopoly (NS, Chapter 14)
9. Strategy and Imperfect Competition (NS, Chapters 8 & 15)

**Cumulative Final Exam: Friday, June 13, 2014 (2:30-4:20 pm)**

## University of Washington

### Department of Economics

#### Examination rules

1. Material allowed during a closed book exam:

i. All books, papers, notebooks etc. must be placed inside your bag (backpack etc.) and the bag must be securely and fully closed. If you do not have a bag, you must place all your material out of your reach (classroom window sill etc.)

ii. Only keep writing tools and **basic calculators** (i.e. simple 4-functions calculators). Graphing calculators or calculators with memories will not be allowed. **Sharing of calculators is not permitted.**

iii. **Cellular phones** must be turned off before entering the class and placed in your closed bag (not in your pocket). You are not allowed to use a cellular phone during an exam. Doing so will result in the termination of your exam time (your exam being taken from you at this point). Likewise **i-pads** or **i-pods** (or similar devices) are not allowed. The use of **personal computers** is not allowed during an exam.

iv. Baseball caps with visors and any kinds of **headgear** hiding your eyes are not permitted.

2. Attendance and special accommodation:

i. You are expected **not to leave the room** during the exam except in case of emergency. This includes restroom use; be sure to use the restroom before the beginning of the exam. If you must leave the room, you will be asked to leave your phone with the instructor while you are gone.

ii. If you arrive **late** to an exam, you cannot expect to get extra time after the official end of the exam to make up for the missing time at the beginning.

iii. If you have a **documented disability**, please show your instructor your documentation from the Office of Disability Resources for Students on the first day of class, so that your instructor can make all the necessary arrangements if you wish to take your exam in a separate place.

3. Academic honesty: *Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the Department's rules for student conduct and evaluation of student learning. Students accused of academic misconduct will be referred directly to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct for disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Conduct Code and, if found guilty, will be subject to sanctions. Sanctions range from a disciplinary warning, to academic probation, to immediate dismissal for the Department and the University, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Dismissal can be, and has been, applied even for first offenses. Moreover, a grade of zero can be assigned by the instructor for the course.*

i. Exams are individual work and **cheating will not be tolerated**. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, bringing notes to a closed-note exam, consulting a classmate or any other source of information during an exam, or looking at a neighbor's paper. See here for a more exhaustive list:

<http://www.washington.edu/uua/advising/help/academichonesty.php>

ii. **My policy is to give a zero for an exam that I believe you have cheated on. This usually results in a failing grade for the course.**

01/02/14