

USC Marshall

School of Business

ECON 351: Microeconomics for Business

Spring 2014

Location: SOS B46

Day & Time: TTh 4:00-5:50pm

Section Number: 26346R

Professor:	Rahşan Akbulut
Office:	ACC 301 K
Office hours:	Tuesday 10:30-11:30am, Thursday 2:30-3:30am, or by appointment
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Course Description

Economic analysis is a cornerstone of fundamental decision making in virtually all areas of business. For example, the economics of consumer choice underlies much of modern marketing strategy, including pricing, segmentation, and advertising. The theory of the firm contributes to a sound understanding of cost accounting as well as production and location decisions. Economic analysis of decisions under uncertainty, form the foundation of financial practice. Finally, the study of social goods, market failures and industrial structure is necessary for an understanding of government's role in a market system. Business Economics is designed to examine all of those areas in which economic reasoning is a necessary basis for making informed business decisions. The student who successfully completes ECON 351 should be able to apply microeconomic analysis to issues of real world interest both within and beyond the area of business.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Apply graphical and algebraic analytical technics to the analysis of resource allocation through an understanding of economic theories and models.
2. Apply the basic demand-supply market model to goods markets and factor markets by identifying and analyzing the values of equilibrium prices and quantities as determined by market forces.
3. Differentiate and apply different aspects of neoclassical economic theory by examining the dynamics of consumer, firm, and market forces and calculating their impacts.
4. Apply the model of behavior in risky circumstances by calculating expected utility, expected income, and certainty equivalents.
5. Explain the role of game theory in economic models by representing various game-theoretic interactions.
6. Explore market power by examining the impact of monopoly and oligopoly on resource allocation.
7. Apply concepts of comparative advantage through calculation of gains from exchange, given two countries' (or individuals') production possibilities frontiers.

8. Analyze the impact of various forms of government interference in markets by calculating the changes in consumer and producer surplus, and deadweight loss.
9. Understand public goods, and positive and negative externalities and how they relate to potential market failure.

Alignment with Marshall School of Business Program Learning Goals

Learning Goals: In this class, emphasis will be placed on the USC Marshall School of Business learning goals as follows:

Goal	Description	Course Emphasis
1	Our graduates will understand types of markets and key business areas and their interaction <i>to effectively manage different types of enterprises</i>	High
2	Our graduates will develop a global business perspective. They will understand how local, regional, and international markets, and economic, social and cultural issues impact business decisions <i>so as to anticipate new opportunities in any marketplace</i>	Moderate
3	Our graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills <i>so as to become future-oriented decision makers, problem solvers and innovators</i>	High
4	Our graduates will develop people and leadership skills to promote their effectiveness as <i>business managers and leaders</i> .	Low
5	Our graduates will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills, understand social, civic, and professional responsibilities and aspire to add value to society	Low
6	Our graduates will be effective communicators <i>to facilitate information flow in organizational, social, and intercultural contexts</i> .	Moderate

Prerequisites:

I will assume that you are familiar with basic algebra and calculus. You should expect exam questions requiring calculations. MATH 118 is a prerequisite for ECON 351.

Required Course Material:

The required textbook for this course is *Microeconomics for Business*, a USC Custom Edition. Most chapters of this book are taken from the textbook *Microeconomics* (8th edition) by Pindyck and Rubinfeld, a few chapters are from *Microeconomics* (4th Edition) by Hubbard and O’Brien.

ISBN: 9781269407892

The custom text is bundled with a MyEconLab Student Access Code Card. MyEconLab (MEL) is an online study tool provided by the publisher designed to complement the full version of the textbook. So, in our case it will complement *Microeconomics* (8th edition) by Pindyck and Rubinfeld.

MEL has online practice tests, exercises, and other resources. You can also create your own study plan. **We will use MEL for graded Homework assignments.** Each topic has a homework assignment associated with it. These assignments are set up to help you understand and become comfortable with the material. You get automatic feedback as you do the problems, and your efforts are graded automatically. Detailed MEL registration and course enrollment information is provided at the end of the syllabus.

Course Notes:

Power point slides of the lectures and other course material (notes, articles, some assignments etc.) will be available on Blackboard. I will also use the site for announcements. You will receive an email notification each time an announcement is posted.

You will be responsible for all the material covered during lectures, including the articles we will discuss. **It is very important that you attend all classes.**

Technology Requirements:

If you are using a Mac for your MyEconLab assignments, use Google Chrome as your browser. Besides access to MyEconLab and Blackboard, you will also need access to Microsoft Excel software. You do not have to have prior knowledge of Excel. We will have an assignment that will allow you to acquire some basic Excel skills.

Expectations:

Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the reading assignment for each respective class period. The class period will typically be taken up with lecture, but discussion and student questions are very much encouraged. If I feel that a question leads us too far afield and would better be discussed outside of class, I'll say so. Otherwise, interaction among students and between students and me is encouraged.

<u>Grading Policies:</u>	Article Responses / other work	5 %
	MyEconLab Assignments	15 %
	Case Study	5 %
	Midterm 1 & 2	40 %
	Final	35 %

Article Responses / other work: Articles from the economic and financial press will be posted on Blackboard. They are intended to provide an applied perspective to the concepts that will be covered in this course. I will also post the questions that you should address in relation to these articles. I might also ask you to find articles related to the concepts we are covering. You will submit your response on Blackboard. You will get credit (1) or no credit (0) for it. I will record your grades on Blackboard. I will also assign other work throughout the semester that will require the use of Microsoft Excel. Your Excel Assignment will be worth 2 credit points.

MyEconLab - Assignments: You will have to do these assignments online. There will be assignments for every chapter. Some of them will be "Practice Assignments" and some "Graded Assignments". All of them will have due dates, but only the graded ones will count towards your course grade. You get instant feedback on your answers. If your answer is wrong, you can reattempt the question. There is a limit of 3 attempts per question. Late work will not be graded, no matter what the excuse is. But I will drop your lowest score on the graded assignments.

Case Study: During one of our lectures, you will work on a case in groups of 6-8 students. You will use a framework called START that was designed by Marshall faculty to enhance students' critical thinking skills. Critical Thinking is highly valued by employers, hence we want to make sure that our students at Marshall Business School develop those skills. You might use this framework in some of your other classes as well. Each group will submit a report on the case.

Midterm Exams: The first midterm exam will be on **Thursday, February 13th**, during scheduled class time. It will test material covered up to the exam. The second midterm exam will be on **Tuesday, April 1st**, during scheduled class time. It will test material covered after the first midterm. The weight of your midterm with the higher score will be 25% and that of the other one 15%. **No midterm makeup will be given.** In case of proven medical emergencies, the weight of the midterm will be added to the final exam.

Final Exam: The final exam will be on **Thursday, May 8th, at 4:30 - 6:30 pm**. It will be comprehensive. No makeup exams will be given, except for proven medical emergencies.

All exams will be closed book and notes.

Grade Appeals: If you are not satisfied with your grade on an exam, you can appeal to me in writing, within one week after the exam is handed out.

Class Etiquette:

This is a large class and I need your cooperation in ensuring orderly conduct of the lectures.

- You may use a laptop or iPad during class **only to take notes**. You might be asked to turn it off. Upon request, you must comply and put your device aside in off mode.
- Please turn your cell phones off before entering the class.
- Please arrive on time. If you are going to be late on a particular day, for a valid reason, please let me know in advance.
- If you have to leave early on a particular day, for a valid reason, please let me know in advance; also, try to find a seat near an aisle to minimize disruption to others.

Marshall tutoring Program:

The Marshall Office of Undergraduate Advising offers Peer Tutoring as a supplement to classroom instruction. Marshall Peer Tutors are able to assist students in understanding and clarifying difficult concepts, but tutoring sessions are effective only if students regularly attend class and actively engage in the process of thinking critically about the course content.

Marshall Peer Tutoring services are available for core courses that are traditionally challenging, including ECON 351x, ECON 352x, BUAD 310, and BUAD 306. Tutoring will begin on the Monday of the third week of classes for ECON-351x. Students can choose to participate in group tutoring sessions or drop-in tutoring sessions. Most students will benefit from group tutoring in particular, as the purpose of group tutoring sessions is to review and discuss content covered in the previous and current week.

Tutoring for ECON 351 will be offered every Monday-Thursday (group 8-9pm, drop-ins 9-10pm) and Friday's (drop-ins 12-4pm) in the Experiential Learning Center (ELC) in BRI-3. For more information on tutoring, see <http://students.marshall.usc.edu/undergrad/advising/> or contact the Marshall Office of Undergraduate Advising in BRI-104, by phone 213-740-0690, or email undergrad.advising@marshall.usc.edu.

Add/Drop Process:

If you are absent six or more times prior to **Friday, April 11th** (the last day to withdraw from a course with a grade of “W”), I may ask you to withdraw from the class by that date. These policies maintain professionalism and ensure a system that is fair to all students.

Statement on Academic Integrity:

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

Class Notes Policy

It is a violation of USC’s Academic Integrity Policies to share course materials with others without permission. No student may record any lecture, class discussion or meeting with me without my prior express written permission. I reserve all rights, including copyright, to my lectures, course syllabi, slides, prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in my class whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise. They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites. Exceptions are made for students who have made prior arrangements with DSP and me.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Please activate your course in Blackboard with access to the course syllabus. Whether or not you use Blackboard regularly, these preparations will be crucial in an emergency. USC’s Blackboard learning management system and support information is available at blackboard.usc.edu.

Statement for Students with Disabilities:

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. For more information visit www.usc.edu/disability.

Course Outline: ¹

Lect.	Date	Topic / Activities	Readings²	Deliverables and Due Dates
1.	1/14	Intro: Foundations and Models	1 +Appendix	
2.	1/16	Trade-offs, Comparative Advantage, and the Market System	2	
3.	1/21	Comparative Advantage and the Gains from International Trade	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5	
4.	1/23	Supply and Demand	4.1- 4.5, 4.7	
5.	1/28	Supply and Demand	5.1- 5.3, 5.5	MEL – for Ch.1 & 2
6.	1/30	Consumer Behavior	5.1- 5.3, 5.5	
7.	2/4	Consumer Behavior	5.1- 5.3, 5.5	MEL – for Ch.4
8.	2/6	Demand	6	
9.	2/11	Midterm Review		MEL – for Ch.5
10.	2/13	Midterm 1	1-6	
11.	2/18	Uncertainty	7.1-7.3	
12.	2/20	Case Study using START framework	Case	
13.	2/25	Production	8	MEL – for Ch.7, Survey
14.	2/27	Production, Cost	8, 9.1- 9.4	Team Report for Case
15.	3/4	Cost	9.1- 9.4	MEL – for Ch.8
16.	3/6	Profit Max. & Competitive Supply	10	
17.	3/11	Profit Max. & Competitive Supply Perfect Competition	10 11	MEL – for Ch.9
18.	3/13	Perfect Competition	11	
	3/18	<i>Spring Recess</i>		
	3/20	<i>Spring Recess</i>		
19.	3/25	Externalities & Public Goods	18.1	MEL – for Ch.10
20.	3/27	Midterm Review		
21.	4/1	Midterm 2	7-11, 18	
22.	4/3	Monopoly	12.1- 12.4, 12.7	
23.	4/8	Pricing	13.1- 13.4	MEL – for Ch.12
24.	4/10	Pricing	13.1- 13.4	
25.	4/15	Monopolistic Comp. & Oligopoly	14	MEL – for Ch.13
26.	4/17	Monopolistic Comp. & Oligopoly	14	
27.	4/22	Games and Competitive Strategy	15	Excel Assignment
28.	4/24	Games and Competitive Strategy	15	MEL – for Ch.14
29.	4/29	Asymmetric Information	17.1- 17.4	
30.	5/1	Review		
	5/8	Final Exam 4:30 - 6:30 pm		

¹ All details in this schedule are subject to change with adequate notice.

² Notice that the first three lectures are from *Microeconomics* (4th Edition) by Hubbard and O'Brien. The rest is from *Microeconomics* (8th edition) by Pindyck and Rubinfeld. The chapter numbers in this outline refer to our custom edition.

MyLab / Mastering Student Registration Instructions

To register for Econ351 - Spring 2014 - 4pm:

1. Go to pearsonmylabandmastering.com.
2. Under Register, click **Student**.
3. Enter your **instructor's course ID: akbulut31611**, and click **Continue**.
4. Sign in with an existing Pearson account or create an account:
 - If you have used a Pearson website (for example, MyITLab, Mastering, MyMathLab, or MyPsychLab), enter your Pearson username and password. Click **Sign In**.
 - If you do not have a Pearson account, click **Create**. Write down your new Pearson username and password to help you remember them.
5. Select an option to access your instructor's online course:
 - Use the access code that came with your textbook or that you purchased separately from the bookstore.
 - Buy access using a credit card or PayPal.
 - If available, get 14 days of temporary access. (Look for a link near the bottom of the page.)
6. Click **Go To Your Course** on the Confirmation page. Under MyLab & Mastering New Design on the left, click **Econ 351 - Spring 2014 - 4pm** to start your work.

Retaking or continuing a course?

If you are retaking this course or enrolling in another course with the same book, be sure to use your existing Pearson username and password. You will not need to pay again.

To sign in later:

1. Go to pearsonmylabandmastering.com.
2. Click **Sign In**.
3. Enter your Pearson account username and password. Click **Sign In**.
4. Under MyLab & Mastering New Design on the left, click **Econ 351 - Spring 2014 - 4pm** to start your work.

Additional Information

See **Students > Get Started** on the website for detailed instructions on registering with an access code, credit card, PayPal, or temporary access.