ECON 630: Microeconomic Theory (Section 1)  
Fall 201

Professor: Quazi Shahriar  
Class: TTH 5:00pm-6:15pm, SH 260
Office: Nasatir Hall 311  
Office Hours: TTH, 12:45Pm – 1:45pm (and by appointment.)
Office Phone: (619) 594-4491  
E-mail: qshahria@mail.sdsu.edu

Required Text:
The required text is Microeconomic Theory: Basic Principles and Extensions by Walter Nicholson (10th edition).

Course Description/Objectives:
Microeconomics is about what goods get produced and bought, and at what prices. The course will provide the mathematical structure of microeconomic theory. It is designed for first year MA students. The formulation of the consumer’s and the firm’s problems is rigorously analyzed. Price determination is considered in the context of a monopoly and a competitive market structure. This is primarily a theory course aimed at developing your understanding of microeconomic models. We will learn how economists use theory to explain and predict the effects of public policy on individual behavior and market equilibrium.

Student Learning Outcomes:
By the end of the semester students will be able to:
1. Understand how buyers form their preferences and make their optimal buying decisions.
2. Apply the concept of preference to understand how a demand curve is derived.
3. Understand how sellers make their optimal production decisions.
4. Understand how a supply curve is derived.
5. Understand how demand and supply sides together determine market outcomes.
6. Apply the concept of competitive market to different situations.

Student Expectations:
Econ 321 is a prerequisite. You are expected to know basic calculus. You should be prepared to devote roughly 1-2 hours of your time for every hour of in-class time to studying, practicing techniques, solving problems. Any kind of behavior which is disruptive to the class will not be allowed. The course materials are all inter-related, so it is essential that you do not let yourself get behind. I strongly encourage you to see me whenever you encounter problems. If you are unable to attend office hours, I am happy to make an appointment, please do not hesitate nor wait until after you get a bad exam grade. You are also encouraged to form a study group. It helps in understanding the material when you are able to explain your thought to your fellow classmates.

Class Attendance:
You are not required to attend the classes. I might occasionally collect attendances just for record keeping purposes. But I highly recommend and suggest not to miss a class. Studies have shown that students with higher class attendance do better in exams.

Study Materials:
The lecture notes, together with the textbook, will be the guide for your study. During the class we’ll be going over the materials from the chapters we cover in this course and we’ll learn how to solve problems from those chapters. There might be some sections from a chapter that we don’t cover in the class. You will not be responsible for those sections, and quizzes and exams will not have questions from those sections.

I’ll also assign practice problems from each chapter we’ll cover through Blackboard. (They will not be graded. So you don’t have to turn in your works.) You will be responsible to download these materials from the Blackboard and practice them on your own (or in a group) as we cover the related topics in class. (I might occasionally assign additional practice problems during classes.) The solutions will also be made available on the Blackboard. You are strongly advised not to look at the solutions before you’ve solved the questions/problems or have tried to solve them several times. The practice problems will help you prepare yourself for the quizzes and exams. I suggest you talk to me during my office hours if you would like to discuss these problems.

Quizzes:
There will be in total 4-6 quizzes, depending on how much we cover. Each quiz will be given at the beginning of the next class following the end of a chapter (unless there is an exam on that day or an exception is announced). All the
quizzes together will be worth 25% of your course grade. The quizzes will be important also for your preparation for the exams. (The purpose of the quizzes, however, is not to suggest which questions are important for the exams.) So you are strongly advised not to miss a quiz. There will no make up quizzes under any circumstance.

Exams:
There will be two midterm exams and a final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive. You must take your exam at the scheduled time and place. All the exams together will be worth 75% of your course grade (with each exam carrying the same weight). There will be no make-ups. A student may miss at most one exam and this can happen only when a verifiable medical excuse is documented (such as a doctor’s note). In that case, his or her quiz scores and the other two exam scores will be used to replace the missed exam. (Your exam will be returned to you after each exam; you’ll have one week after an exam is returned to fix your grade in the instance where you think that there may have been a problem with the grading.)

There are no fixed cutoffs for grades in this course. Individual exams will not be curved. Final grades will be curved around class average at the end of the semester if necessary (i.e. if class average falls below C+).

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>75%</td>
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</tbody>
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Course Calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class meetings: (29 meetings)</th>
<th>Exams:</th>
<th>Holidays:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept: 1 6 8 13 15 20 22 27 29</td>
<td>Midterm 2: Tuesday 8 Nov (class time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov: 1 3 8 10 15 17 22 29</td>
<td>(3:30pm-5:30pm, in the classroom)</td>
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<td>Dec: 1 6 8</td>
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Tentative Course Outline (subject to change):

| Math review + Math of Optimization (Chap 2) | Income and substitution effects (Chap 5) | Profit maximization (Chap 11) |
| Preferences and utility (Chap 3)          | Demand relationships among goods (Chap 6) | The partial equilibrium competitive model (Chap 12) |
| Utility maximization and choice (Chap 4)   | Production functions (Chap 9)            | Models of monopoly (Chap 14) |
|                                           | Cost functions (Chap 10)                | Game theory (Lecture Notes) |

Honor Policy:
Cheating of any form (which includes plagiarism) will not be tolerated. Evidence of cheating by a student will result in an automatic “F” as that student’s grade. Any evidence will also be promptly reported to the Judicial Procedures Office.

Students with Disabilities:
Students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations for which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at 619-594-6473 (Calpulli Center, Suite 3101), please do so before making an appointment to see me.

Cell Phones Policy:
Please turn off cell phones before coming to the class. If your cell phone rings during the class, you’ll be required to leave the class.

Email Policy:
Include “Econ 630” in all of your emails to me. Please don’t email me to learn about the topics covered in a class you miss or to discuss the solution to a problem. I will be communicating with the class via emails regarding important issues/announcements. Please make sure that your email address is on SDSU’s system.

Calculator Policy:
A calculator might be useful during the quizzes and exams. But the calculators with only very basic capabilities will be allowed. Scientific calculators will not be allowed.