

ECON 104-003: Macroeconomic Principles

Brigitta Jones

Fall 2024

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Class Hours: TR 1:30-2:45pm

Class Room: Planetary Hall 206

Office Hours: T 10:30-11:30am and W 2:00-3:00pm or by appointment

Office: Buchanan Hall D150

Course Description

What is economics? How does economics help us understand the world around us?

Specifically, why are some nations rich, while other nations are poor? What are “business cycles” and why do they occur? What causes unemployment? What is inflation and what causes it? And what is the government’s role in the economy?

These are some of the questions we will explore throughout this course. By the end of the semester you should have a good understanding of how the economy operates at the aggregate or “macro” level.

Textbook

Modern Principles of Macroeconomics (6th Ed.) by Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrok

You may use the 4th or 5th edition as the material covered will be mostly the same. To supplement your reading, there is a fairly exhaustive collection of videos, “Marginal Revolution University”, created by the textbook authors. Found at <https://mru.org>.

Prerequisites

Recommended Prerequisite: ECON 103

Course Structure

Class Structure

First off, I am very excited to teach you Macroeconomics!

To succeed in this course it will be important to keep up with readings, come to class everyday and actively participate.

Lecture

As outlined on the schedule, most days I will lecture on a given topic. Before these lectures it is expected you read the chapters in the textbook that are listed for that day as the "preclass reading" on the calendar and any other additional readings that I assign on Canvas.

Throughout the lecture we will be working through problems to practice the concepts. You are expected to come to lecture prepared and ready to actively participate.

Problem Sets

As listed on the calendar, every 2-3 weeks you will have a problem set due. This will allow you to work through the material as we cover it in class and receive feedback. You can work on these problem sets by yourself or with your classmates. There are 5 total problem sets throughout the semester and each will be due on a Friday by midnight on Canvas.

Assessments

On Thursday September 19th you will have your first midterm exam on Microeconomics which will cover everything we've learned up to that point in the course.

On Thursday October 24th you will have your second midterm exam on Economic Growth and Business Fluctuations which will cover everything we've learned since the first midterm.

On Tuesday December 17th you will have your final exam covering everything we've learned in the course, i.e., it is cumulative and includes material that was covered on both of the midterms. It will be in the same classroom that we normally meet and it will be from 1:30-4:15pm.

note: All quizzes and exams are closed note, closed book. You may use 4 function or scientific calculators.

Late Work

Problem sets submitted after the deadline but before the answer key is posted to Canvas on Sundays at 5p will be accepted with 20% late penalty. No problem set will be accepted after solutions are posted.

There will be no make-up exams unless you have previously discussed this with me. If a student must miss an exam, this should be discussed with me prior to the exam. In the event of an emergency, students should email me immediately.

Tutoring

Your success in this course is important to me, to our department/program, and to George Mason University. One resource beyond the standard class activities that might help your success is peer tutoring. Tutoring from a student who has done well in the class before may help you more effectively learn and retain the course material.

George Mason has partnered with a company called Knack to provide students in this course with free access to peer tutors who have previously succeeded in this course. Tutoring is available in person or online, at flexible hours. I strongly encourage you to consider this option to enhance your success in the class. To view available tutors, please visit <https://learningservices.gmu.edu/knack> and sign in with your student NetID and password.

Grading Policy

Your grade will be made up by the following:

- 20% Midterm 1
- 20% Midterm 2
- 30% Final Exam
- 30% Problem Sets and In Class Work

The grading scale will be:

- A+ (100-98) A (97-93) A- (92-90)
- B+ (89-87) B (86-83) B- (82-80)
- C+ (79-77) C (76-73) C- (72-70)
- D (69-60)
- F (59-0)

Course Policies

Academic Integrity and Honesty

The George Mason University Honor Code is as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

I expect each of you to abide by this code. Any student suspected of any violation will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. See <https://oai.gmu.edu/full-honor-code-document>.

Generative-AI

Any student use of Generative-AI tools should follow the fundamental principles of the Honor Code.

Recording

For the privacy and comfort of your fellow students, audio and video recordings, as well as photography, is strictly prohibited during class.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email:ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

Tentative Schedule:

| TUESDAY | THURSDAY |
|--|---|
| <div>Aug 27th</div> <p><i>Welcome to Macro</i></p> | <p>29th <i>Trade</i> preclass reading: ch 2</p> |
| <div>Sep 3rd</div> <p><i>What is Money?</i> preclass reading: to be assigned on canvas</p> | <p>5th <i>Demand</i> preclass reading: 3.1-3.3</p> |
| <p>10th <i>Supply</i> preclass reading: 3.4-3.7</p> | <p>12th <i>Equilibrium</i> preclass reading: ch 4 - Problem Set 1 due Friday 9/13 11:59pm</p> |
| <p>17th <i>Price Ceilings and Floors</i> preclass reading: ch 5</p> | <p>19th Midterm 1: Microeconomics</p> |
| <p>24th <i>GDP</i> preclass reading: ch 6</p> | <p>26th <i>What Causes Growth? - Factors of Production</i> preclass reading: 7.1-7.2</p> |
| <div>Oct 1st</div> <p><i>What Causes Growth? - Institutions</i> preclass reading: 7.3-7.4</p> | <p>3rd <i>What Causes Growth? - Saving and Investment</i> preclass reading: ch 9 - Problem Set 2 due Friday 10/4 11:59pm</p> |

| TUESDAY | THURSDAY |
|---|--|
| 8th <i>The Labor Force</i> preclass reading: ch 11 | 10th <i>Inflation</i> preclass reading: ch 12 |
| 15th <i>Business Fluctuations</i> preclass reading: ch 13 | 17th <i>Business Fluctuations</i> preclass reading: to be assigned on canvas - Problem Set 3 due Friday 10/18 11:59pm |
| 22nd Midterm 2 Review | 24th Midterm 2: Growth and Business Fluctuations |
| 29th <i>Public Choice and Political Economy</i> preclass reading: ch 21 | 31st <i>Public Choice and Political Economy</i> preclass reading: to be assigned on canvas |
| <div>Nov 5th</div> Election Day NO CLASS | 7th <i>The Federal Reserve</i> preclass reading: ch 15 - Problem Set 4 due Friday 11/8 11:59pm |
| 12th <i>Monetary Policy</i> preclass reading: ch 16 | 14th <i>The Federal Budget</i> preclass reading: ch 17 |
| 19th <i>Fiscal Policy</i> preclass reading: ch 18 | 21st <i>International Trade</i> preclass reading: ch 19 - Problem Set 5 due Friday 11/22 11:59pm |

| TUESDAY | THURSDAY |
|---|---|
| 26th <i>International Finance</i> preclass reading: ch 20 | 28th Thanksgiving NO CLASS |
| <div>Dec 3rd</div> Final Exam Review | 5th Final Exam Review: Q&A |
| 10th Reading Day NO CLASS | 12th NO CLASS |
| 17th Final Exam 1:30-4:15pm | 19th |