

## **Economics 2100: Survey of Economics Fall 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Vivek Ghosal

Office: 224 Old CE Building

Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:05-1:20PM in Room Van Leer W200.

Office hours: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30PM (starting Aug. 25) **and** by appointment.

The syllabus contains important details. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all the information provided here.

This is a **preliminary syllabus**. I may make some changes to the syllabus as we make progress during the semester. You will be informed of these changes via emails sent from GT's T-square site. It is **your** responsibility to have your correct email address in Oscar. It is **your** responsibility to stay updated with class lectures and postings on the T-square site. It is **your** responsibility to make sure your email is working and the inbox is not full so that you can receive emails and attachments via T-square. Create a folder "*Econ 2100 Fall 2015*" in your email account inbox to store all class emails sent from T-square; there will be lots of emails with announcements and handouts. Finally, the emails sent via T-Sqr will be sent **only to the email on file with GT**; make sure GT has your correct email, as recorded in the **Oscar account**. I will only sent out emails via the class T-square site (which has your Oscar email address).

### **Course Objectives**

The sequence of topics we will cover are as follows:

1. Learn the "Microeconomics" tools designed to help you understand the functioning of various markets (*e.g.*, goods and services, labor, financial, environmental, health).
2. Examine selected economic policy issues (*e.g.*, taxation, minimum wages, immigration, education, health, environmental regulation).
3. Briefly focus on some key "Macroeconomic" topics, such as: measuring GDP, business cycles, monetary policy (money supply, interest rates), fiscal policy (federal government revenues and expenditures, taxes), unemployment and inflation. We will briefly examine selected current macroeconomic events.

### **Required Textbook**

**Economics, Michael Parkin, 12th edition, 2016.** Make sure you get the right book: the book has 31 chapters (as a check: Part Four is labeled "Firms and Markets"; and Part Ten is labeled "Macroeconomic Policy"). The textbook (if you buy it new) contains information on internet resources regarding material, sample quizzes and test questions, etc. For the chapters we cover in class (noted below), it will be very important for you to follow the textbook closely and look through the online help items. This will supplement what we do in class. (I cannot vouch for other textbooks or older editions of this textbook. The materials in the chapter contents change, and I cannot guarantee that you will be able to precisely match contents of the older editions with the newer one.)

## Class Lectures and Attendance

Attending class is important as I will deviate from the textbook materials on many occasions. Such as for providing examples, covering current events, doing numerical exercises, among other aspects – these will **not** be posted on T-Square. It is **your** responsibility to attend class and be current with the material. **If you miss class and material from that class shows up on the test, good luck!** By necessity, the class lectures will be highly condensed; you will have to rely on the textbook for details. The best strategy for you will be to take only the essential notes during class. I will post many of the class lecture slides on the T-Sqr site. The slides will only provide the basic information – the details and discussion will be done in class. If you miss the class discussion, and those materials show up on the test, do not come to my office arguing about the test and materials. Take careful notes on which chapter, topic and the main points, and fill in the details from the textbook later. This will enhance your understanding of the material. Class lectures and textbook should **only** be used as complements and not substitutes.

If you miss class, talk to another student who attended class regarding what we covered. This is your responsibility. **If you miss class, I will not go over this material with you on an individual basis.**

## Tests and Grades

There will be THREE mid-term tests and a final. Each test (including the final) will be of 65 minutes duration. **All tests are mandatory.** Each test will be worth 50 points. All tests will start at 12:05PM and end at 1:10PM. Do not be late for the test as there will be **NO extra time provided.** Without exception, all students will have to turn in answer sheets at 1:10. **NO excuses accepted. Be in class latest by 12:05 for the test.**

All questions will be **multiple-choice** based on the materials covered in class, handouts, class discussions, plus related materials in the textbook. Each test will contain between 30-45 questions. The tests will be **cumulative** containing all materials covered for the previous test plus all the new materials. For example, Test 3 will contain all the materials covered for Tests 1 and 2 plus all the new material done after Test 2. The material for each test will be announced in class one week before each test. I will post the scores for each test 8 (eight) days after the test. **The final is cumulative.**

### **VERY IMPORTANT: There is NO makeup test.**

If you miss a test for health reasons or official GT events:

1. Your score on that test is **zero**.
2. Your score on the next test, will count as **double**. For example, if you missed Test 2 and your score on Test 3 is 40/50, then your score for Test 3 is 40/50 and Test 2 is also 40/50.
3. **The above option is available for only one missed test.** For example, if you miss two tests, your score on one test will be **zero** and the other will be entered based on your score on the scheme noted above.
4. To avail of the above option – that is, miss a test and have the next test count double – you will need to show the following documentation:
  - (a) If you are ill – the accompanying doctor's note must say that **you cannot (or could not) take the test**. If the doctor's note does not state this clearly, your score on the missed test will be zero and the next test will not count as double. Merely producing a note saying that you visited the GT health center does not count as a valid reason; the note must specifically state that **you were in not in a position to take the test**.

(b) For GT approved official activities that you have to participate in. You will have to produce the relevant official GT documentation noting this fact. The activity that you participate in has to be significant – e.g. you are on a GT team with an official participation date that is the same day as the exam day. Social or personal events of any sort do not count as valid reason to have the next test count as double. In these cases, your score on the missed test is zero and the next test will not count as double.

**To be fair to all students in the class, there will be no exceptions to the policy stated above.**

### ***Curve***

If the class mean on a **particular test** falls below 78%, I will add a curve to that test to bring it up to 78%. For example, if the class mean on test 2 is 73%, I will add a 5% curve to test 2; similarly for other tests. This protects you from tests that may be somewhat more difficult than others. If there is a curve, it will be posted on the T-square site when the test scores are posted. Only the individual tests are curved **if necessary**.

**There is NO additional curve at the end of the semester as each test is curved, if necessary.**

### ***Test Dates***

*\* I may change test dates. If I do, I will announce it well in advance. Since all tests are administered during regularly scheduled class time, this should not pose any issues.*

Test 1. Tuesday, September 15.	In class. 12:05-1:10PM. 50 points.
Test 2. Tuesday, October 20.	In class. 12:05-1:10PM. 50 points.
Test 3. Tuesday, November 17.	In class. 12:05-1:10PM. 50 points.
Test 4. Tuesday, December 8.	In class. 12:05-1:10PM. 50 points. (This is the final exam.)

The Final (Test 4) is the **same time, same room, same weight and same format as all other tests**. Final is **cumulative** and based on all materials covered during the semester.

### ***Letter grade cutoffs***

A: 90% B: 80% C: 70% D: 60% F: Below 60%

NOTE: the cutoffs are strict. That is, 89.9% is a B, 79.9% is a C, 69.9% is a D and 59.9% is an F. This scale is firm and **please do not send me emails or ask questions about this**.

### ***Posting of Test Scores and Answer Key***

1. The answer key to each test will be posted on the T-square site one day after the exam. This way you will be able to check how many answers you got right.
2. The scores for the tests will be posted on T-Sqr within **5 (five) days after the test**.

### ***Checking your Scantrons***

1. After each test, take the copy of the test home with you. This is yours to keep.
2. You can only use a **#2 pencil** to fill in the scantron. Any other writing material means that it may not scan properly. If you bubble in the scantron with a pen, it will not scan. Wrong writing materials impose a significant cost to me and my teaching assistant as we have to figure out why the scantron was not scanned properly. Please make sure that you bubble in the scantron correctly with the correct pencil. **If you use a pen to fill in the scantron, I will deduct 10 points from that test.**

**3. After each test scores are posted, you have a total of 7 (seven) days to check for any discrepancies on your scantrons and let me know.** There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Going through scantrons in a 200 student class imposes a significant burden. For example, you may not show up in November and ask to go through all the previous scantrons. **My answer will be NO, without exception.**

During each test, mark your answers on the test itself before you bubble in the correct answers on the scantrons. When you bubble in the scantron sheet, double check to see if you bubbled in the answer you want. If you do this, there should be no need for you to have to recheck the scantron you filled in. Please understand that going through scantrons in a 200 student class imposes a significant burden.

If there is any **systemic** problem in the way in which the scantrons were graded or there is a problem with a question, this will be taken care of automatically.

**IMPORTANT: There are no additional assignments, makeup tests, or extra-credit problems. The 4 (four) mandatory tests are the only items that count towards your grade in this class.**

### **Textbook Chapters**

For each chapter, I will only cover selected material in class. You will have to read the textbook to get the details. Before each chapter, I will announce the relevant material from that chapter. I may also marginally change the sequencing, and add/delete chapters – I will announce this in class if I do. All of this implies that attending class is very important. The relevant pages are indicated next to each chapter; where pages are not indicated, we will cover the entire chapter.

NOTE: I am indicating a tentative sequence of chapters and pages below. During the semester, I will make some changes to this sequence as well as the exact pages covered in the chapters. I will announce these in class as well as post the information on T-square. It is **YOUR** responsibility to stay up-to-date with what we are doing in class and look at the T-square site for new information and material posted.

#### ***A. Introductory Sequence***

*\* You should go over these introductory materials yourself.*

Chapter 1: What is Economics?

On your own, make a special effort to read the **Appendix to Chapter 1** which shows you how to interpret graphs, numbers, interpret percent changes, calculate growth rates, etc. I will not spend time on this in class. For the later chapters, the material in this appendix will be important as we will extensively use graphs, numbers and solve simple demand-supply equations.

Chapter 2: The Economic Problem.

#### ***B. Microeconomics Sequence***

Chapter 3: Demand and Supply.

Chapter 4: Elasticity.

Chapter 5: Efficiency and Equity.

Chapter 6: Government Actions in Markets.

Chapter 8: Utility and Demand.  
Chapter 11: Output and Costs.  
Chapter 12: Perfect Competition.  
Chapter 13: Monopoly.  
Chapter 17: Externalities.

### ***C. Macroeconomics Sequence***

*\* I will announce the exact pages to be read later in the semester. The posted class lecture slides will contain the exact materials that will be relevant.*

Chapter 21: Measuring GDP and Economic Growth.  
Chapter 22: Monitoring Jobs and Inflation.  
Chapter 23: Economic Growth.  
Chapter 27: Aggregate Demand and Supply.

*\* While doing chapter 27, we will also cover material that will be relevant for the following chapters:*

Chapter 30: Fiscal policy.  
Chapter 25: Money, the Price Level and Inflation.  
Chapter 31: Monetary Policy.

\* In the macroeconomics sequence we will briefly cover current economic conditions, and I will distribute supplementary readings via the T-Sqr site later in the semester.

### **Email Policy**

Due to the large number of students (200+ in this class), it will **not** be possible for me to reply to emails. The best solution is to stop by my office hours, or set up an appointment to see me. Emails are not a substitute for this. Also, please do not send me emails regarding material for the tests and class lectures – it is your responsibility to attend class and be up to date with all the information posted on the class T-square site and emails sent to you via T-square.