

ECON 80a: Microeconomic Theory

Brandeis International Business School

Summer 2021

Session II: July 6 – August 3, 2018

Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 8:30 – 11:00 AM (EDT)

Location: Virtual via Zoom

<https://brandeis.zoom.us/j/96553737558>

Instructor: Mengnan(Cliff) Zhu

Email: cliffzhu@brandeis.edu

Office Hours: I will be available for 30 minutes after each class meeting; otherwise by appointment.

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Textbook:

Goolsbee, Levitt, and Syverson, Microeconomics 2nd Edition (Worth Publishers, 2nd edition, ISBN-13: 978-1464187025; ISBN-10: 1464187029). Previous editions can also be used if currently owned, but the student will be responsible for assuring that the correct materials are studied, and correct homework exercises completed.

Prerequisites:

- Math requirement: You MUST have either (a) successfully completed Math 10A (C- or higher), (b) attained at least a 4 on the AP Math AB test, (c) received at least a 3 on the AP Math BC test, or (d) passed the calculus placement exam that is administered by the Economics Department.
- Economics requirements: You must have either (a) taken Econ 10A, or (b) taken Econ 2A and received a B+ or higher.
- Please contact Leslie Yancich lesliey@brandeis.edu, the ECON Department administrator, for any questions regarding course prerequisites.

Course Description:

This course aims to provide a better understanding of microeconomic principles, including both theory and empirical applications. Students will (1) develop deeper intuition on behavior of economic entities within a market economy framework, and (2) understand models of individuals' decisions as demanders of goods and suppliers of resources, and firms' decisions as suppliers of goods and demanders of resources under various market structures.

Learning Goals:

The goal of this course is to introduce students to intermediate microeconomics topics which are often viewed as abstract and theoretical. Upon successful completion of this course you should be able to apply mathematical models to solve economic questions. For students interested in economic, finance and business field, this course should prepare you with quantitative modeling skills which, when later combined with statistics/econometrics, can be used to understand market mechanism and economic entities' decision-making process.

Course Planning:

All class meetings will take place virtually via Zoom and recorded using the Zoom record function. Class recordings will be posted on the course website shortly following the end of each class. Should classes be cancelled for any reason, I will provide alternative material (including recorded short videos and/or readings) and post it on the course website.

Ideally, my goal is to cover most important topics given limited course time. I will not strictly maintain a steady pace through chapters as some of the materials are easily handled by assigned readings and class discussion and review, while other topics will be developed in more details in class. I will expect you to read each chapter in advance of the associated lectures.

A tentative class schedule is listed below (Please note this is subject to change):

Date	Class Meet	Associated Chapters	Assignments
Tue. July 6	1	Ch.2-3	
Thu. July 8	2	Ch.4	
Mon. July 12	3	Ch.5	PS1 due
Tue. July 13	4	Ch.6-7	
Thu. July 15	5	Ch.8	
Mon. July 19	6	In-Class Midterm Exam	PS2 due
Tue. July 20	7	Ch.9	
Thu. July 22	8	Ch.10	
Mon. July 26	9	Ch.11	PS3 due
Tue. July 27	10	Ch.12, Ch.14	
Thu. July 29	11	Ch.15	
Mon. August 2	12	Ch.16-17, Review	PS4 due
Tue. August 3	13	Final Exam	

Evaluation:**- Class Participation:**

Learning intermediate microeconomics is cumulative; each topic builds on the previous one. As a result, attendance is extremely important. I strongly recommend that you attend every class. Attendance will be taken in every class. Up to One (1) unexcused absence from class will have no effect on the grade.

- Problem Sets:

Four (4) problem sets will be assigned. Electronic copy of complete problem sets must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date via course website.

- Midterm Exam:

There will be One (1) midterm exam that is in-class and closed-book. The exam will cover all material in the first half of the course. You may consult one page of notes (8.5"x11", single-side) during the exam, but no other materials. (Your notes must be turned together with your exam answers.)

- Final Exam:

There will be One (1) final exam that is in-class and closed-book. The final exam will be cumulative, reflecting the content covered before the midterm exam, as well as content after the midterm exam. You may consult one page of notes (8.5"x11", double-side) during the exam, but no other materials. (Your notes must be turned together with your exam answers.)

Please note that there will be NO make-up exams given. Absence from an exam will be excused only for a serious illness or bereavement (which must be documented). A student who is unable to take the final exam for a legitimate reason MUST obtain advance authorization from the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules.

Grading:

The final numerical grade for each student will be the larger of the following two calculation methods:

Method #1:		Method #2:	
Midterm:	30%	Midterm:	0%
Final:	35%	Final:	65%
Problem Sets:	25%	Problem Sets:	25%
Class participation:	10%	Class participation:	10%

Workload Expectation:

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, homework assignments, preparation for exams, etc.)

Academic Integrity:

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult [Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities](#) for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Any allegations of academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at [LTS - Library guides](#).

Disabilities:

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you. In order to provide test accommodations, I need the letter more than 48 hours in advance. I want to provide your accommodations, but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.

Library:

The Brandeis Library collections and staff offer resources and services to support Brandeis students, faculty and staff. These include workshops, consultations, collaboration, materials and instruction on emerging trends in technologies such as machine learning, emerging trends in research such as data visualization, and emerging trends in scholarship such as open access. Librarians at the Circulation Desk, Research Help Desk, Archives & Special Collections, Sound & Image Media Studios, MakerLab, AutomationLab, and Digital Scholarship Lab are available to help you. <https://www.brandeis.edu/library/about/index.html>.

Student Support:

Brandeis University is committed to supporting all our students so they can thrive. The following resources are available to help with the many academic and non-academic factors that contribute to student success (finances, health, food supply, housing, mental health counseling, academic advising, physical and social activities, etc.). Please explore the many links on this Support at Brandeis page <https://www.brandeis.edu/support/undergraduate-students/browse.html> to find out more about the resources that Brandeis provides to help you and your classmates to achieve success.