

Macroeconomic Theory

ECON 82b

Online Session - Summer 2020

Course Syllabus - *Draft: May 12th, 2020*
Subject to change

Instructor

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Please contact me by email or during office hours.

Meeting Times

Summer School Online Session

June 1st to August 9th, 2020

Office Hours

T & Th 2:00-3:00 pm, via Zoom (link will be posted on LATTE)

Course Description

This course will cover the principles of macroeconomic theory, the measurement of economic aggregates and the role of policy interventions. Topics covered include determinants of economic growth, business cycles, money, and the international economy. Measurement includes variables from national accounts such as income, consumption, and investment, as well as interest rates, exchange rates, inflation, and unemployment. It will also cover the effects of fiscal and monetary policy and promote the analysis of current economic events.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Interpret macroeconomic data and review current and past economic events.
2. Recognize different schools of macroeconomic thought to critically read data and theory.
3. Manage models that allow them to assess how capital, labor and technology affect a country's standard of living.
4. Compare approaches to assess the key determinants of unemployment.
5. Explain the relationship between money and inflation.
6. Identify long run and short run models.
7. Develop tools to understand the functioning of the international economy.
8. Familiarize with government policies and their effect on macroeconomic outcomes.

9. Use rigorous, mathematical models to analyze these questions.

Teaching/learning strategies:

This is an asynchronous class. We will use different modalities to engage in the online classroom using various tools available to us, such as Zoom, voice thread and discussion forums where you can share your knowledge with each other. In addition to the readings and problem sets that will require focused efforts on your part, you will have the opportunity to support each others' learning through group presentations and peer support activities. I will be available to answer questions that you may have during scheduled office hours.

Class preparation time

Success in this four-credit 10 week online course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 18 hours of study time per week for this class (inclusive of all activities, including but not limited to: readings, laboratories, discussion sections, projects, etc.)

Prerequisites

ECON 20a. Students must earn a C- or higher in MATH 10a, or otherwise satisfy the calculus requirement, to enroll in this course. Students should contact Leslie Yancich, the ECON Department administrator, lesliey@brandeis.edu, for a Consent Code to enroll in this class in SAGE. She will verify that you have completed course prerequisites to enroll.

Course Requirements

Academic Integrity

Every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. A student shall not submit work that is falsified or is not the result of the student's own effort. Infringement of academic honesty by a student subjects that student to serious penalties, which may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension from the University or other sanctions (see section 20 of R&R). 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. A student who is in doubt regarding standards of academic honesty as they apply to a specific course or assignment should consult the faculty member responsible for that course or assignment before submitting the work. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards. Citation and research assistance can be found at [Brandeis Library Guides - Citing Sources \(https://guides.library.brandeis.edu/c.php?g=301723\)](https://guides.library.brandeis.edu/c.php?g=301723).

Assignments

Students should submit their assignments through LATTE. No late assignments will be accepted.

Group presentations will be video recorded by students.

Percent	Assignment/Assessment (with short description)	Outcomes Met	Week Due
20%	<u>Participation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answer two short questions before class - Weekly reflection activity - Recitations. 	Prepare for class, review material. Peer review and collaboration.	Every class/week
20%	<u>Problem Sets:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theoretical and applied exercises - Peer support through discussion forums. 	Review of theory, use math to solve problems.	Every week
20%	<u>Midterm evaluation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual midterm exam. 	Apply theoretical and mathematical models.	Week 6
20%	<u>Two group presentations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1. Analyze a news article on current economic events with emphasis in data (record a podcast) - 2. Application to the international economy. 	Team work, presentation skills.	Weeks 2 and 8
20%	<u>Final Assignment:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual final paper, analyze an economic event using tools learned in class. - Anonymous peer review: mock referee report on another student's paper. 	Application of tools, assessment of models and theory. Critical reading.	Week 10

Late assignments will not be accepted and there will not be make-up exams. The due dates will be posted ahead of time and you should plan accordingly. If by an extreme circumstance you miss a deadline, the reason should be justified and documented. In that case, please contact me and we will analyze the situation.

Participation

- You are expected to answer two review questions before each class.
- You will have to record a weekly personal reflection activity: 5 minute video/audio where you reflect on what you learned at the end of the week.
- I will be hosting weekly recitations live via zoom to go through Problem Sets, you are expected to actively participate in them.
- For each individual Problem Set, you are expected to make a post in the class forum with at least one question to your peers about how to solve some exercise.

- You will also have to thoughtfully and constructively answer at least one of your peers' questions. This will be a part of your Problem Set's grade.
- You should also use the class forum to raise questions as soon as ideas become unclear.

Essential Resources

Accommodations

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, 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 of requesting accommodations, please contact [Student Accessibility Support](mailto:Student_Accessibility_Support) (SAS <https://www.brandeis.edu/accessibility/>) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.

Course Materials

If you are having difficulty purchasing course materials, please make an appointment with your Student Financial Services or Academic Services advisor to discuss possible funding options and/or textbook alternatives.

Readings

Textbook: Mankiw, N. Gregory (2019) *Macroeconomics*, Worth Publishers, 10th edition.

I will follow this textbook closely. The Library will be able to scan the print copy of this book and make the file available from a link in the catalog. You will be able to read the whole book online. There can also be other intermediate macroeconomic textbooks that you might find helpful. If you have any questions please contact me or Brandeis Library.

You will find that your understanding of both current economic events and economic analysis will be bolstered by regularly following the specialized news in periodicals such as *The Wall Street Journal* or *The Financial Times*. Brandeis University students can gain access to these through the University subscriptions. You may also enjoy listening to podcasts like NPR Planet Money, following blogs such as Money, Banking and Financial Markets, or watching specialized YouTube videos like those available at The Economist channel.

Apps or Tools/Equipment

This is an online class, you will need to have access to a computer and have internet connection. You will also need to watch and listen to recorded classes and record yourself in video/audio.

LATTE

LATTE is the Brandeis learning management system: <http://latte.brandeis.edu>. Login using your UNET ID and password.

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.

Course Plan

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u> (from textbook)	<u>Assignments</u>
1	June 1 th , 2020	Macroeconomics: thought, models and data	Chapters 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups: Select 2 news articles for the student podcast and upload them to Latte. - PS 1 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
<i>Skills: First approach to schools of macroeconomic thought, interpreting and looking for data.</i>				
2	June 8 th , 2020	National Income	Chapter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 2 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity

		Student presentations		- Groups: economic podcast
<i>Skills: Interpretation and critical reading of macroeconomic data. Presentation skills, teamwork. Record audio.</i>				
3	June 15 th , 2020	Money and Inflation	Chapter 4 & 5	- PS 3 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
<i>Skills: Explain the relationship between money and inflation.</i>				
4	June 22 th , 2020	The Open Economy	Chapter 6	- PS 4 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
		Unemployment and the labor market	Chapter 7	
<i>Skills: First approach to the international economy and key determinants of unemployment.</i>				
5	June 29 th , 2020	Economic Growth: Capital and Labor	Chapter 8	- PS 5 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
		Economic Growth: Technology and Policy	Chapter 9	
<i>Skills: Manage models that allow you to assess how capital, labor and technology affect a country's standard of living.</i>				
6	July 6 th , 2020	Review session		- Peer support
		Midterm exam		
<i>Skills: Apply theoretical and mathematical models.</i>				
7	July 13 th , 2020	Aggregate Demand: The IS-LM Model	Chapter 11 & 12	- PS 6 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
<i>Skills: Identify long run and short run models.</i>				
8	July 20 th , 2020	The Open Economy Revisited: The Mundell-Fleming Model	Chapter 13	- PS 7 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
		Student presentations		
<i>Skills: Develop tools to understand the functioning of the international economy.</i>				



<i>Presentation skills, teamwork.</i>				
9	July 27 th , 2020	Aggregate Supply & Short-Run Tradeoffs	Chapter 14	- PS 8 + peer support - Weekly reflection activity
		Monetary and Fiscal Policy	Chapters 16 & 17	
<i>Skills: Assess the key determinants of unemployment. Familiarize with government policies.</i>				
10	August 3 th , 2020	Review session		- Peer support
		Final exam: paper and mock referee report		
<i>Skills: Application of tools, critical assessment of models and theory.</i>				