

# Microeconomics 201 (5110)

Online

Instructor: BJ Unti

Email: [bj.unti@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:bj.unti@bellevuecollege.edu)

Office: A 200C. Hours: Tu & Th 9:30 – 10:20; F 9:30 – 11:20

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to microeconomic theory, concepts and controversy. Topics covered will include the structure of markets, the theory of consumer choice, the theory of the firm and the role of government in the economy. We will consider these topics from multiple perspectives including both mainstream and heterodox approaches.

Economics is exciting because it is contentious. Controversy in economics stems from the discipline's moral/ethical foundations as well as its powerful political implications. A central theme of this course is exposing the ways in which economics is linked to issues of power, politics and social justice. In exploring this theme students are encouraged to critically examine both economic ideas and existing economic institutions.

## TEXTS/RESOURCES

- **Textbook:** Mankiw, Gregory N., 2009. *Principles of Microeconomics 6<sup>th</sup> (or newer) Edition*. Please find a cheap used copy online. Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.
- **Online Platform:** Students are required to purchase an account with the online learning platform Sapling. The cost is \$34. A link and sign-up instructions are provided in Canvas. You must use the link provided in canvas to create an account that is synched to the class.

## OUTCOMES

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Apply the theory of rational choice to explain individual behavior.
- Explain how markets allocate, produce, and distribute society's resources.
- Predict how government intervention impacts market outcomes.
- Critique market outcomes and government policies using concepts of efficiency and equity.
- Explain firm behavior under various degrees of competition.
- Extend the market framework to analyze market failure.
- Critically analyze the positive and negative impacts of markets as they relate to social justice and environmental issues.
- Represent and understand economic concepts and outcomes in numerical and graphical form.

# ONLINE LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

It is expected that you:

- Check-in online several times per week; (i.e., don't try to do all the week's assignments in a single sitting).
- Go through the modules/chapters in the order they are presented
- Contact the instructor immediately when:
  - You don't understand a concept or are having difficulty with an assignment.
  - There is a possibility that you may miss the deadline for an assignment.
- Interact positively with classmates. Debate is encouraged provided it remains civil. You are encouraged to challenge ideas. Limit criticisms to ideas and not people.
- Attempt all assignments, even if you are unsure of your results.
- Read and/or watch, and be prepared to discuss, class assignments as they are assigned.
- Post or submit all assignments on time.
- Ask questions and voice your opinion.
- Check your grades often and notify the instructor if you discover an error or discrepancy.

## GRADES

Grades will be determined based on a weighted average of exams, homework, quizzes and class participation. The weights are listed below

- Midterm Exam 30%
- Final Exam 30%
- Homework 30%
- Discussion 10%

100-93 ; 92-90 A-; 89-88 B+; 87-83 B; 82-80 B-; 79-78 C+; 77-73 C; 72-70 C-; 69-68 D+; 67-63 D; 62-60 D-, 60 > F

\*Note: Grades are not rounded up. You must attain or surpass the lower limit for each range to earn the corresponding grade. For example, an 82.8 is a **B-**.

- **EXAMS** will be administered online. They will involve short answers, essays, and multiple choice. The best way to prepare for the exams is to complete the assigned readings and work in each module. **Make-up exams will not be given.** If you know you will be missing an exam, make arrangements with me ahead of time to take it early.
- **HOMEWORK** will be administered online. Assignments related to readings from the textbook must be completed in Sapling. Assignments associated with supplemental readings must be completed in canvas. Links and instructions, including due dates for all assignments, will be provided in the weekly modules on Canvas. **Late homework will not be accepted.** You have multiple days to complete each assignment and it is expected that you provide yourself an appropriate buffer to address unexpected interruptions in your internet service. Your lowest homework grade for the quarter will be dropped.
- **DISCUSSION** prompts and questions will appear in each module. Discussions are intended for you to get to know, support, and exchange ideas with your peers. They will be graded based on your adherence to

the requirements, the depth of your contribution, and your ability to draw on and make use of relevant course themes and concepts. Many of the topics we touch on will be familiar to you from the news and or popular discourse. When it comes to discussions you are invited to present your opinions, but you will be graded on how well you integrate course content into your discussion.

## AFFIRMATION OF INCLUSION

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

*College Anti-Discrimination Statement (Title IX)*

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; color; creed; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; gender identity or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates.

For further information and contacts, please consult [College Anti-Discrimination Statements \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Success for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct at: [Student Code \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

## DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact us as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

If you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact [Autism Spectrum Navigators \(Links to an external site.\)](#) Email and phone number is on the web page. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125.

The DRC office is located in B132 or you can call our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by Skype: the address is **DRCatBC** (NOTE: There is no @ sign...it is actually **DRCatBC**). Please visit our website at [Disability Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for application information into our program and other helpful links.

### Accessibility

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Safety is located in the K building and can be reached at 425-564-2400 (easy to remember because it's the only office on campus open 24 hours a day—2400). Among other things, Public Safety serves as our Parking Permits, Lost and Found, and Emergency Notification center. Please ensure you are signed up to receive alerts through our campus alerting system by registering at [RAVE Alert Registration \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

## Course Outline:

The course outline is intended to provide a *rough* guide to the layout of the course. The outline is *subject to change* and will almost certainly be amended as the course proceeds. Refer to weekly modules in Canvas for updates.

| Week / Assignments                                                        | Reading                                  | Topics                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Jan 2 - 3<br>HW 1.1 Due Sun.                                           | Mitchell, Wray, and Watts Ch 1 and Ch 3  | What is economics?<br>Competing Perspectives      |
| 2. Jan 6 - 10<br>HW 2.1 Due Thur.<br>HW 2.2 Due Sun                       | Hunt<br>Wood<br>Mankiw Ch 2 and Appendix | History of thought<br>Capitalism<br>Graphing/Math |
| 3. Jan. 13 - 16<br>HW 3.1 Due Thur.<br>HW 3.2 Due Sun.                    | Johnson<br>Mankiw 4                      | Social Systems<br>Supply and demand               |
| 4. Jan. 20 - 24<br>HW 4.1 Due Thur.<br>HW 4.2 Due Sun.<br>* No Class Mon. | Mankiw 5<br>Mankiw 6                     | Elasticity<br>Govt. Controls                      |
| 5. Jan. 27 - 31<br>HW 5.1 Due Thur.<br>HW 5.2 Due Sun.                    | Mankiw 7<br>Mankiw 8                     | Neoclassical Efficiency<br>Taxes                  |
| 6. Feb 2 - 7                                                              | Mankiw 10                                | Externalities                                     |

|                                                                                   |                                |                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>HW 6.1 Due Thur.<br/>EXAM 1</b>                                                | <b>EXAM 1</b>                  | <b>EXAM 1</b>                            |
| 7. Feb. 10 - 14<br><b>HW 7.1 Due Sun.</b>                                         | Tucker<br>Mankiw 13            | Consumer Choice<br>Production costs      |
| 8. Feb. 17 – 21<br><b>HW 8.1 Due Thur.<br/>HW 8.2 Due Sun.<br/>*No Class Mon.</b> | Mankiw 14<br>Mankiw 15         | Perfect Competition<br>Monopoly          |
| 9. Feb. 24 – 28<br><b>HW 9.1 Due Thur.<br/>HW 9.2 Due Sun.</b>                    | Sandel<br>Lapon                | Commodification<br>Labor Theory of Value |
| 10. Mar. 2 - 6<br><b>HW 10.1 Due Thur.<br/>HW 10.2 Due Sun.</b>                   | Braverman<br>Guendelsberger    | Alienation<br>The Labor Process          |
| 11. Mar 9 – 13                                                                    | The Wobblies<br>Why Socialism? | Labor History<br>A critique              |
| Mar. 16 - 20                                                                      | <b>Final Exams</b>             | <b>Final Exams</b>                       |