

University of Waterloo
Department of Economics
Econ 391
Equilibrium in Market Economies
Winter 2017
13:00-14:20TTh, DWE 1502

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Lutz-Alexander Busch
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Notes on contacting the instructor

When sending email, please use your official uwaterloo account and have ECON 391 in the subject line. It is generally a good idea to also have a signature line that includes your full name and student ID. Please treat email correspondence as a somewhat formal venue of communication. Email is not a SMS and therefore looks different.

Course Description

Central to the study of economics is the concept of an equilibrium in which the actions of individuals are not only individually optimal, but are also consistent with each other; such as when the total amount of a good that individuals wish to purchase equals the total amount available. This course introduces students to the notion of equilibrium for a market and market economy. The properties of such equilibria are explored, both in terms of model logic (existence, uniqueness) as well as in terms of the desirability of the equilibrium outcomes (efficiency, welfare). Partial equilibrium (in a single market) as well as general equilibrium (in all markets at once) are covered for models with endowments, production, uncertainty, and time.

Prereq: ECON 290

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

The main objective of the course is for students to gain an understanding and appreciation of what an equilibrium in economic models entails. Students will be able to derive equilibria for simple example economies in the standard settings.

Required Text

- No formal text is required.

Most books with “Microeconomic Theory” in the title will cover many if not all of the topics discussed. However, most undergraduate texts do not employ mathematical techniques consistent with Econ 290 in the treatment of these topics, and they usually do not cover all of the topics either – some being relegated to more advanced texts, others to texts in macro economics.

Readings Available on LEARN

- Assignments and assignment solutions will be posted.
- Lecture notes ARE NOT posted, and are not available from the instructor. Class attendance and note taking are therefore of higher importance than usual.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Assignments (6-8)	TBA	20
Midterm 1	February 2nd	20
Midterm 2	March 2nd	20
Final Exam	TBA	40
Total		100%

There will be no adjustments to the above grading scheme. Especially not for an individual student.

Assignments

Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments are not accepted. Assignments will be handed out 5-7 days in advance of the due date, while the material is covered in lectures. Due to the extended time for completion, medical notes will usually not be accepted.

Midterms

Midterms are in class, closed book, no aids of any kind. Due to the nature of the material in the course the second midterm will be “cumulative”, that is, material from the first midterm may be tested implicitly in the second, even though it will not be the focus of the test.

The weight of a midterm for which a VIF is accepted will be moved to the final exam. If you happen to be sick for both midterms you should consider dropping the course (WD deadline is March 17).

Final Exam

The final exam is cumulative and will test all of the material in the course. It is closed book, no aids. The final exam is scheduled by the Registrar’s office during the final examination period (April 7 to 25 inclusive.) Travel plans are not an acceptable reason to reschedule a final exam. Also note that the final will not be rescheduled under any circumstances if both midterms have been missed. You should by now be familiar with the deferred final exam policy of the department.

Course Outline

Part	Topic	Topic Title
I		From Individual demand/supply to Market demand/supply
	1.	Properties of consumer demand/supply
	1.a	Price Effects
	1.b	Income Effects
	1.c	The Slutsky equation

Part	Topic	Topic Title
	1.d	Welfare: Compensating and Equilibrating variation
	2.	Demand aggregation
	2.a	Market Demand
	2.b	Properties wrt price and income
	2.c	Welfare interpretation
	2.d	The representative consumer
	3	Firm Supply properties
	4	Firm Supply aggregation
II		Partial Equilibrium
	1	Definition
	2	Existence and Uniqueness
	3	Welfare – Pareto Optimality
III		General Equilibrium
	1.	Walrasian Equilibrium
	1.a	Definition; Implications of Walras' Law for solving
	1.b	Edgeworth Box
	1.c	2 states or 2 periods in an Edgeworth Box
	1.d	Robinson Crusoe economy
	1.e	Economies with many periods
	2.	Positive Properties
	2.a	Existence
	2.b	Uniqueness
	3.	Normative Properties - Welfare
	3.a	Pareto Optimality
	3.b	Fairness

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Assignments are meant as a learning opportunity. It is acceptable and sensible practice to work in study groups, and to discuss solution approaches. However, assignments must be individually written and submitted. Obvious cases of “copying” will result in a zero grade.

Electronic Device Policy

University policy prohibits a prohibition of laptop use in class. However: cell phones, tablets and other electronic paraphernalia are not welcome. The recording of lectures (audio or video) is prohibited by University policy unless explicit permission has been given. The use of photography is prohibited. Please ensure your cell phones are set to silent (ideally to airplane mode) and of your desk.

Attendance Policy

There is no attendance policy. However, missing a class does not excuse you from knowing what went on, nor does it imply that you might obtain a private catchup lesson. If you have to miss a class, please arrange access to the class notes with another student.

Institutional-required statements for undergraduate course outlines approved by Senate Undergraduate Council, April 14, 2009

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties).

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4 (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72\)](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities

The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Faculty of Arts-required statements for undergraduate course outlines

Cross-listed Course (if applicable)

N/A