



ECON215

Applied Microeconomics

S2 Day 2014

Economics

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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E4A409

By Appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

15cp including (BBA103 or ECON111)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit, as the name suggests, is about the application of microeconomic theory. We introduce students to the ways in which individuals, businesses and governments use the analytical tools of microeconomics to decipher contemporary global issues, with a particular focus on new and interesting applications as well as new ways of looking at traditional applications. The aim of the course is not to be mathematically rigorous or theoretically thorough. Instead, your main objective is an appreciation of how fundamental and evolving models can help us understand issues of our contemporary world, or in other words, how to view the world through an economic lens. Tools and concepts (such as supply and demand, choices and incentives, market failure, externalities, games and strategies, and behavioural economics) may be used to analyse issues of environmental damage and economic prosperity, money and happiness, cash versus gifts, art and the artist, market domination by the big brands, social networks, and more. The unit will be interesting to students with economic majors as well as students with non-economic majors; the topics add depth and texture to traditional introductory economics topics.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues

Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.

Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.

Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Tutorial Participation	5%	Weeks 3, 5, 7, 10 & 12
Online Task	20%	Weeks 4, 6, 9 & 11
Team Challenge	35%	Week 10 (Monday)
Class Test	40%	Week 13, Monday 10/11/14

Tutorial Participation

Due: **Weeks 3, 5, 7, 10 & 12**

Weighting: **5%**

Marks will be awarded for attending and participating in tutorial discussions. Non-attendance incurs a zero participation mark for each missed classroom tutorial, out of a total of five.

Tutorial Participation is worth 5% of the final mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.

Online Task

Due: **Weeks 4, 6, 9 & 11**

Weighting: **20%**

The Online Task consists of an individual online written submission (10%) and a feedback and peer review component (10%).

The written analysis of readings and discussions of the week's proposed topic is due by 10pm Monday, in weeks 4, 6, 9 & 11. This written contribution is posted on iLearn, and will be reviewed and commented by other students as part of the online tutorial Feedback and Peer Review

assessment.

Teams of 4 students will be created in each tutorial. One member of each team will submit their written analysis to their tutorial group on iLearn for feedback and review. You must then submit a final report for assessment by 6pm Friday of the following week, after considering all feedback and comments. This written task is worth 10% of the final mark.

Each student is required to review and make comments on other students' written submission at each online session. Feedback and comments will be closed at 10pm Friday of that week. Feedback and comments will be monitored by the UC. You are also required to grade other students' written submission according to a set of criteria. (More information will be provided on iLearn).

This Online Task is worth 20% of the final mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.
- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Team Challenge

Due: **Week 10 (Monday)**

Weighting: **35%**

The Team Challenge consists of a written collaboration and group presentation, based on tutorial teams. The formal presentation of each team's collaborative project will take place in Week 10 in the lecture/tutorial. The written component of the team project is due in Week 10, by 5pm Wednesday (22/10/14). (More information will be available on iLearn).

The Team Challenge is worth 35% of the final mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues
- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Class Test

Due: **Week 13, Monday 10/11/14**

Weighting: **40%**

There is a final Class Test held in the lecture in Week 13. The topics examinable will include the main applications of economic theory covered in lectures and tutorials.

The Class Test is worth 40% of the final mark.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.
- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.

Delivery and Resources

Learning and teaching strategy

The learning and teaching strategy in ECON215 recognises that students learn from contact with academic staff and other students. It also recognizes that students must take responsibility for their learning process, which includes independent study. Moreover, it acknowledges the importance and acts to promote the academic and personal integrity of students and academic staff.

Lectures – Large Group Learning

Lectures are intended to provide an overview of basic microeconomic theory and application. Students are required to attend every lecture.

Tutorials – Small Group Learning

Tutorials constitute an important learning experience in this unit and students are required to attend both class sessions and online sessions. The tutor will facilitate a student-centred discussion of answers based around specific problems. A tutorial is also an active forum to discuss with the tutor and the other students difficulties you encountered in the unit.

Independent Learning – (≈ 7-8 hours per week)

ECON215 relies heavily on independent learning where students read the set readings, revise the lecture notes and tutorial notes, and prepare answers/arguments for discussion topics.

Classes

Understanding of course content requires that you attend lectures and tutorials and engage in independent study. The lectures provide a general overview of the topics highlighting the pertinent concepts and techniques. Tutorials complement lectures by providing opportunities to further explore material presented in lectures.

The timetable for classes for ECON215 is on the University web site at:
<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/>.

Required and Recommended Texts and/or Materials

Weekly readings will be posted on iLearn under Lecture/Tutorial Material.

There is no set textbook for the course, though you will need access to an introductory or intermediate textbook on microeconomics. This will assist you to revise some of the basic concepts in microeconomics.

USEFUL REFERENCES

Jeff Borland, CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATIONS: MICROECONOMICS:, 2nd Edition, Cengage Learning, 2013. (This provides an easy and interesting read. It also gives a decent summary of key microeconomic theories, However, the success of the book is in the presentation of case studies).

Walter Nicholson & Christopher Snyder, INTERMEDIATE MICROECONOMICS AND ITS APPLICATION, 11th Edition, South-Western Cengage Learning, 2010. (This is a good reference book for both theories and applications, at a higher level than Borland *et. al.*).

Joshua Gans, Stephen King and N. Gregory Mankiw, PRINCIPLES OF MICROECONOMICS, 5th Edition, Cengage Learning, 2012. (Use this book as a reference book for theories you should already be familiar with).

Jeffrey M. Perloff, MICROECONOMICS, 5th Edition, Pearson International, 2009. (Good reference in terms of theory and application but a heavy-weight. Also doubles up as a paperweight).

Unit Web Page

iLearn is an online program available at <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au> through which students will be able to access resources to assist them throughout the session as well as engage in online discussion sessions.

The discussion forum on iLearn can (and should) be utilised to discuss ideas, explore topics, and ask academic and administrative questions (of a non-personal nature). You need to use the website as part of your learning tools.

The following information will be available on iLearn:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">List of Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Announcements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lecture & Tutorial Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Grades
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updates & information on assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff consultation times and contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none">General Discussion forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Online Tutorial Discussion Forum

Unit Schedule

Lecture & Tutorial Topics

Week 1.

- Introduction - expectations (yours and mine)
- Seeing life through an economic lens?

Week 2 & 3.

- Demand, supply and elasticity (...the real stuff)
- Consumers, producers and incentives

Week 4 & 5.

- Rationality and behaviour

Week 6, 7 & 9.

- Fun interaction, game play and social network

[Week 8 - Public holiday on Monday (no lecture/tutorial)]

Week 10.

- The green side of economics

Week 11.

- The arty side of economics

Week 12.

- The many faces of microeconomics

(Above is an approximate guide of weekly topics. Topics/weeks may vary. You must check on iLearn for weekly postings of lecture and tutorial material.)

Learning and Teaching Activities

Lectures

The lecture presents case studies and interesting applications relevant to that week's topic. Students are shown how microeconomic theory can be used to make sense of intricate real world situations. For certain topics, classroom demonstrations are utilised to show the relevance of some models and theories and to increase understanding of complex theories.

Tutorials

Tutorials consists of alternating classroom discovery sessions and online discussion sessions. Both types of sessions are structured around journal articles and/or other online resources and

specific problem sets.

Online Discussion

Read materials required for discussion topics. Provide comments, feedback and evaluation of other students' online posts.

Team Participation

Work as part of a team on tutorial tasks and the major project and presentation.

Research

Search and discover relevant real world applications.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.
- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Online Task
- Team Challenge
- Class Test

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of incentives and rationality in the study of decision making.
- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Online Task
- Team Challenge
- Class Test

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Recognise, identify and apply microeconomic theory to different issues

Assessment tasks

- Team Challenge
- Class Test

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop the ability to present structured arguments on various issues from an economic perspective.
- Acquire an appreciation of the importance of a structured team environment and social network.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Online Task
- Team Challenge
- Class Test

Requirements for successful completion

In order to successfully complete ECON215 you must:

- demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes to an extent sufficient to warrant a passing grade as per the Grading Policy;
- Attend lectures, tutorials and online tutorial discussion sessions
- Complete all six within-session assessment tasks;
- Satisfactorily complete the Mid-Term Test, and the Team Project and the Team Challenge.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
14/01/2014	The Prerequisites was updated.

