

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
HKU Business School

ECON6011: Microeconomic Theory

I. INFORMATION ON INSTRUCTOR

Instructors: Jianrong Tian and Chen Zhao
Consultation hours: By appointment.
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II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Course description:

This course is an introduction to microeconomic theory at the Ph.D. level. Students are expected to be proficient in calculus, and have some basic knowledge in analysis and point-set topology. Potential coverage of the course includes, but not limited to, choice theory, classic demand and supply theory, general equilibrium theory, informational economics, and mechanism design.

Course objectives:

1. To understand what microeconomic theory is about, and build up a solid foundation of analyzing microeconomic problems;
2. To have an overview of a few basic core topics in microeconomics, and learn to appreciate the development of these topics;
3. To grasp the important modeling techniques and feel comfortable about doing mathematical proofs;
4. To get prepared for Ph.D. field courses by discovering interesting and unanswered research questions.

III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students should be able:

1. To understand models and major issues regarding individual decision making process
2. To reproduce proofs on standard results in covered topics on microeconomics
3. To explain intuitively the model perspectives and results
4. To comprehend the power and limitation of standard models
5. To proficiently apply mathematical tools to solve models

6. To understand the classic research papers on the covered topics

IV. ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM AND COURSE OUTCOMES

The following matrix indicates the alignment between the course learning outcomes and the program learning outcomes.

Program Learning Outcome (PLO)	Associated Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
PLO1. Understanding of fundamental theories and new development in economics	1-6
PLO2. Mastering of skills in analyzing economic data	1, 3, 4
PLO3. Demonstration of ability to apply economic knowledge and analytical skills to address policy and business problems	1, 3, 4, 6
PLO4. Awareness of ethical concerns in economic issues	1-4, 6
PLO5. Mastering of communication skills	1, 3-6

V. TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Course Teaching and Learning Activities	Expected contact hour	Study Load (% of study)
TLA1. Lecture with interactive presentation	36 hours	30%
TLA2. Discussions in office or classroom	36 hours	30%
TLA3. Self study	48 hours	40%
Total	120 hours	100%

Teaching and learning takes place through weekly lectures.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLA)

TLA1	Lecture	Instructor will give lectures on major concepts and issues.
TLA2	Consultation	Instructor holds weekly consultation hours to answer students' questions.

Reference Book:

"Microeconomic Theory", by Andreu Mas-Colell, Michael Whinston and Jerry Green. We will not follow the book exactly. Notes will be provided.

VI. ASSESSMENT

Your grade in this class is determined by the problem sets (10%), the midterm (45%), and the final (45%). The midterm will be held around mid-October. Both examinations are compulsory.

Alignment Among Course Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

Learning Outcome	Teaching and learning activity (TLA)	Assessment task
CLO1 to CLO6	TLA1, TLA2	Midterm and final exams

VII. STANDARDS FOR ASSESSMENT

Course Grade Descriptors	
A+, A, A-	Strong evidence of superb ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course.
B+, B, B-	Strong evidence of ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course.
C+, C, C-	Evidence of adequate ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at low levels of learning; such as describe and apply, but not at high levels of learning.
D+, D	Evidence of basic familiarity with the subject*
F	Little evidence of basic familiarity with the subject.

*For a “pass” mark (D+, D) students are expected to be able to understand and solve problems of a similar difficulty level as the A and B level exercises in the reference book.

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE

Discrete choice	Notes, Chapters 1, 2
Classic demand and supply theory	Notes, Chapters 3, 4, 5
Decision making under uncertainty	Notes, Chapters 6
Introduction to matching and social choice theory	Notes, Chapter 21
General equilibrium theory	Notes, Chapters 15,16
Asymmetric information	Notes, Chapters 13, 14
Mechanism design	Notes, Chapter 23