

Syllabus
PUBP 720
Managerial Economics and Policy Analysis
Spring 2012

Prof. Mina Kim
Wednesdays 7:20 – 10:00 pm
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Syllabus

I. Course Description

This course provides an introduction to microeconomic theory. The focus of the course will be on consumer and firm behavior, within a variety of contexts including free markets, market failures, and strategic interactions between economic actors. I will expect that the student has a good command of algebra and graphical analysis.

Learning outcomes: The objective of the course is to gain a firm understanding of how markets work to determine what is produced and how it is distributed. Using the concepts and analytical tools learned in this class, students will be able to analyze the effects of public policy.

II. Text

The required text is Pindyck and Rubinfeld's *Microeconomics*, 7th ed (2009). Readings for each class meeting should be read before the relevant lecture.

Other class materials, as needed, will be posted on the course website.

III. Course Requirements and Grading

Pre-requisites for the course include the GMU SPP Math Camp (or waiver exam pass) and the GMU SPP math tutorials <http://policy.gmu.edu/economicstutorial>, which you should complete before the end of the first week of the semester.

You will be given weekly problem sets to help you prepare for the exam. However, only four of these problem sets will be collected at the beginning of class according to the schedule and graded. Each person must turn in their own assignment. You may work in groups, but copied answers will be treated as plagiarism.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Problem Sets 20%
Midterm 35%
Final Exam 40%
Participation 5%

Important information on grading:

I have high standards and in larger classes, it is unlikely (but by no means impossible) that more than 30 percent of the class will get an “A” or “A-” grade (i.e. sign of good performance in my class). Based on past history, the median grade is likely to be in the range of “B” or “B+”. Grades in this class have to be earned; they are not an entitlement and neither are they negotiable.

Any grading disputes must be submitted in writing no later than one week after an assignment has been returned to you.

Students should be aware that academic integrity is a serious issue for this class. Cheating or participating in cheating on any exam will result in an F for this class. By the same token, plagiarism will not be tolerated.

SPP Policy on Plagiarism:

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.

Special Needs:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Online student journal:

New Voices in Public Policy: I will consider nominating the very best papers in this course for publication in New Voices in Public Policy. New Voices is a student- and faculty-reviewed journal that shares SPP's finest student work with the rest of the world.

Final Exam:

If you need accommodations for religious reasons, then please notify me during the first week of the semester.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Jan 25	Introduction (Ch. 1)
Feb 1	Supply and Demand (Ch. 2)
Feb 8	Consumer Behavior (Ch. 3.1-3.5) - Problem set due
Feb 15	Individual and Market Demand (Ch. 4) - *ONLINE*
Feb 22	Production and Cost of Production (Ch. 6, 7.1-7.4) - Problem set due
Feb 29	Profit Maximization in Competitive Markets (Ch. 8)
Mar 7	Midterm
Mar 14	Spring Break
Mar 21	Competitive Markets (Ch. 9)
Mar 28	Monopolies and monopsonies (Ch. 10)
Apr 4	Price Discrimination, Oligopolies, Strategic Interactions (Ch. 11.1, 11.2, 12) - Problem set due
Apr 11	Externalities and Public Goods (Ch. 18)
Apr 18	Asymmetric Information (Ch. 17) - Problem set due
Apr 25	Game Theory (Ch. 13)
May 2	Wrap-up and Review
May 9	Final Exam