ECO 100: Introduction to Economics

Hunter College
Spring 2025
Mon & Thu, 1 – 2:15 pm
Room 714, Hunter West Building

Professor: Karna Basu
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Physical office: Hunter West 1502
Virtual office: https://us02web.zoom.us/my/karnabasu
Office hours: Thursdays, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (in person or over zoom)

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Tutoring Center: Details TBA

Course Description

This course is an introduction to economic reasoning. First and foremost, it will introduce you to *economics as a social science*—the study of how people make decisions, how people interact with each other, and how we might evaluate social outcomes. You will find that economics provides you with powerful tools to think about not just the economy but also other aspects of the world around you. Starting with the individual, we will work our way up to the economy as a whole. I will teach you to appreciate the simplicity and rigor of economics as well as to critique the subject in an informed manner.

There are no prerequisites apart from high-school math. If you need help brushing up on background skills (e.g. basic math), make sure to take advantage of the tutoring center.

Learning Objectives

- You will learn to how use simple economic models to analyze individual choices and their societal effects.
- You will learn to use economic models to predict the effects of changes in policies and the economic environment.
- You will learn how to simplify our analysis of the real world using graphs.
- You will learn to think about when economic simplification is useful, and when it is not.

Course Materials

Everything apart from lectures, - course content, reading, and homework - will be run through a content site called Top Hat. The course package costs $55.36.

Our Top Hat course will be found at the following link:

https://app.tophat.com/e/457874/

You should already have a Top Hat account through Hunter. Click on the above link and follow the steps to pay for access. Make sure you enter your phone number since we will sometimes use Top Hat's text messaging service for in-class interaction. (If you are ever prompted for a 6-digit join code, it is 457874.)

Also, read this guide carefully:

https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide

If you need technical support while signing up, visit https://success.tophat.com/contact.

Note that textbook material will be made available in our course throughout the semester, so do not panic if you do not see much in the course at the start.

I will communicate with you via Brightspace.

Course Structure & Grading

The course will be split into several *topics*. For each topic, I will assign a combination of textbook chapters, additional readings, and multimedia resources. I require you to go through everything that is assigned. My lectures will not regurgitate the readings—I will often emphasize or introduce new topics. I will post my slides on Top Hat intermittently after the lectures.

Since my goal is to deepen your understanding (rather than speed through topics), the number of topics to be covered remains undecided. I will assign new topics in advance on Top Hat throughout the semester.

Your class grade will be curved based on the following components:

- (30%) Topic-specific assignments (I will drop the topic with the lowest score). For each topic, you will be assigned:
    - Questions integrated into readings
    - End-of-topic homework assignments
    - Occasional live questions to be answered during lecture
- (20%) Midterm exam 1
- (20%) Midterm exam 2
- (30%) Cumulative final exam

The midterm dates will be announced well in advance (tentatively about 6 weeks in and 12 weeks in). The final exam date is set by the college (Thu, 5/22, 1:45 – 3:45 pm).

Since we are all adults (or nearly there), attendance is not mandatory. However, I can assure you that this course will be *far more enjoyable and rewarding* if you attend every class. Regular attendance will also make it much easier for you to perform well on exams, as well as answer "live" questions when they are asked.

The last day of this class is Thursday 5/15. Note the following changes to our regular course meetings based on the Hunter College academic calendar: No class 2/17, 3/6, 3/31, 4/14 and 4/17. Monday schedule on 2/18.

Please note that absence from an exam or assignment will only be excused with *documented* evidence of serious illness or emergency. Please make plans in advance to avoid missing any exam. In the rare case of an *excused* exam or assignment absence, performance on other exams and assignments will be reweighted for the final grade. There are no makeup exams.

CUNY Policies

Academic integrity
Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy of Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

ADA Policy
In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Policy on Sexual Misconduct
In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report incidents by calling 911, NYPD's Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272), their local police precinct, or the College's Public Safety Office. (212-772-4444). Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complementary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.