

Sonoma State University
Department of Economics

Econ 204, Introduction to Macroeconomics, Spring 2013

Instructor: Daniel Diaz Vidal
Office Location: Stevenson Hall Room 3006A
Email: Daniel.diazvidal@sonoma.edu (To be confirmed)
Office Hours: Friday 10am to 11am
Class Days/Time: W 6:00PM-09:40PM
Classroom: STEV2049

Course Description

This is an introductory level course in macroeconomics--the study of the economy as a whole. We will study the benefits from trade and specialization, how the macroeconomy functions and the role of government in policy making. Throughout the class, we will also discuss some core macroeconomic issues – growth, business cycles, unemployment, inflation, interest rates and the role of money – within any economic system.

Learning macroeconomics is valuable not only because macroeconomics is practically useful but also because the learning process helps you develop critical thinking ability. The concepts and tools that you will learn in this class will help you develop an objective opinion regarding important social issues and public policy matters.

At the end of this course, you should have a general understanding of macroeconomics and how to apply economic thinking to everyday decisions. You should be able to use models developed this semester to:

- (i) understand how key macroeconomic variables are measured,
- (ii) identify the sources of economic growth and explain differences in standards of living across countries.
- (iii) examine potential causes of short-run economic fluctuations, and
- (iv) analyze how policy affects the economy as a whole.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

N. Gregory Mankiw, Principles of Macroeconomics, 5th edition. South-Western Publishers.

Students are allowed to use other editions of the required text as its main contents do not vary much across editions. However, students should be aware of the inconvenience caused by different side materials provided in the book which might be discussed in the class and different page numberings.

We will be following Paul Krugman's blog. <http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/>
Other blogs will be mentioned and read in class.

Other Readings/media

In addition to readings from the textbook, I encourage the students to have a look at topical readings from publications such as The New York Times, The Economist or The Wall Street Journal. The course material becomes more interesting if you read articles in the press and try to apply what you have learned to real-world events.

In addition to this, we will be listening to specific shows from NPR radio and other media.

Classroom Protocol

In order for all of us to enjoy an optimal learning environment I will request we all observe certain basic ground rules. If you consistently violate these, I shall find out who you are and penalize your grade. Here are the basic ground rules:

- Please do not start whispering or gathering up your materials before the lecture is completely over. It is very distracting. I shall stare at you and that will delay the end of the lecture.
- If you are attending the lecture, plan on being there for the entire duration of the class. If you absolutely must leave early for a good reason, on any given day, please send me a prior email, sit near the door and leave quietly.
- Do not use laptops or other electronic devices for anything during class time except to take notes. I have ways of finding out, even if you are sitting at the back.
- Conversations between students will not be tolerated. If you have a question related to the course, ask me instead – you will get a better answer compared to what your neighbor will give you.
- Food or drink within reason is OK so long as you are not obviously distracting others.
- **Very Important:** It is always fine and even welcome to interrupt with questions related to the material being covered.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/registration/addclasses.shtml](http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/registration/addclasses.shtml). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Grading Policy

The final grade will be determined based on the following individual component weights. Grades will be curved. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions and you will be required to bring a green scantron to class.

Midterm 1: 20%

Midterm 2: 20%

Midterm 3: 20%

Final Exam 40%

Missed Exams

Only “**excused absences**” under University guidelines will be considered as valid excuse for missing an exam. To know about these, talk to an advisor. No other excuses will be accepted. The student must be prepared to substantiate his/her excuse for absence with documents (such as a physician’s letter, note from a family member or a University authority), if he/she is excused from an exam, the weights of the other exams will be appropriately increased to add up to 100 total % points. No make-up exams will be arranged. Unexcused absences will be graded zero. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s [Cheating and Plagiarism policy is available at http://www.sonoma.edu/UAffairs/policies/cheating_plagiarism.htm](http://www.sonoma.edu/UAffairs/policies/cheating_plagiarism.htm). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at Sonoma State University and the University’s policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified.

Campus Policy on Disability Access for Students

"If you are a student with a disability and you think you may require accommodations, please register with the campus office of Disability Services for Students (DSS), located in Salazar Hall - Room 1049, Phone: (707) 664-2677, TTY/TDD: (707) 664-2958. DSS will provide you with written confirmation of your verified disability and authorize recommended accommodations. This authorization

must be presented to the instructor before any accommodations can be made." [The policy can be found at: http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/disabilitypolicy.htm](http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/disabilitypolicy.htm)

Emergency Evacuation

If you are a student with a disability and you think you may require assistance evacuating a building in the event of a disaster, you should inform your instructor about the type of assistance you may require. You and your instructor should discuss your specific needs and the type of precautions that should be made in advance of such an event (i.e. assigning a buddy to guide you down the stairway). We encourage you to take advantage of these preventative measures as soon as possible and contact the Disability Services for Students office if other classroom accommodations are needed.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Exams
1	08/21/2013	Presentation of the course Syllabus by Prof Steven Cuellar
2	08/28/2013	Chapters 1-2 Ten principles of Econ, Thinking Like an Economist
3	09/04/2013	Chapters 3-5 Gains from trade, market forces and elasticity
4	09/11/2013	Chapters 6-7 Demand and Supply, Consumers and Producers
5	09/18/2013	MIDTERM 1
6	09/25/2013	Chapters 8-9 Taxation, International Trade
7	10/02/2013	Chapters 10-11 Measuring national Income and costs
8	10/09/2013	Chapters 12 Production and growth
9	10/16/2013	MIDTERM 2
10	10/23/2013	Chapters 13, 15 Saving and investment, Unemployment,
11	10/30/2013	Chapters 16-17 Monetary system, Money and inflation
12	11/06/2013	Chapters 18, 20 Open Economy, Aggregate demand and supply
13	11/13/2013	Chapter 21 Monetary and fiscal policy
14	11/20/2013	MIDTERM 3
15	11/27/2013	---No Class---Thanksgiving---
16	12/04/2013	Completing the
Final	12/11/2013	FINAL is on Wednesday 12/11/2013----8 p.m.-9:50 p.m.----