

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII - MĀNOA
Department of Economics
Spring 2009 Semester

Syllabus for ECON 130(4)

Principles of Microeconomics
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:30 – 11:20 AM
Room: BUSAD A101

<http://mankiw.swlearning.com>
<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~lacroix>
<http://www.aplia.com>

Instructor: Professor Sumner La Croix
Office Hours: Monday 1-2 pm
Wednesday 9-10 am
And by appointment
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Thursday 1:30 – 2:30 pm
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The syllabus, class announcements, handouts, powerpoint presentations, and other course material are posted at <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~lacroix> as they become available.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines how resources are allocated through market and non-market mechanisms. We provide students with economic concepts and models and show how to use them to analyze real-world questions. Topics include: supply and demand analysis; theory of consumer demand; theory of the firm including production and costs, perfect competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition and oligopoly; and public policy analysis of various issues including, but not limited to, excise taxation, externalities and market structure. The analytical skills required for successful completion of this course are high school mathematics.

Our goals for students in this course include, but are not limited to:

- Achieving **basic economic literacy**, i.e., each student is able to clearly explain core microeconomic terms, concepts and theories;
- Fostering **critical thinking** by demonstrating the ability to apply microeconomic reasoning to contemporary social issues and policy problems;
- Applying **quantitative reasoning** using appropriate equations and graphs to illustrate theoretical and policy problems;
- Developing the expertise needed to effectively **communicate your reasoning** to others in writing;
- And providing a critical understanding of **international trade and competition**.

PREREQUISITES: High school mathematics. No calculus required.

TEXTBOOK: JUST ONE BOOK!!

Gregory N. Mankiw, *Principles of Microeconomics*, 5th edition, South-Western Cengage Learning, 2008. The textbook is required. Four purchase options are presented below.

GRADE DETERMINATION

Letter grades are assigned using the University of Hawaii plus/minus grading system. I do not assign grades of D-, D+, or C-. Grades assigned may include: F, D, C, C+, B-, B, B+, A-, A, and A+.

Grades are determined on the basis of the following components.

Class Attendance	15%
Homework	20%
Midterm exam #1	15%
Midterm exam #2	15%
<u>Final exam</u>	<u>35%</u>
TOTAL	100%

INFORMATION ABOUT THE THREE EXAMINATIONS

All examinations will consist of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. Examinations are closed-note, closed-book. No caps, dictionaries, hats, cell phones, ipods, backpacks, or calculators. Come with #2 pencils and official UH picture ID.

The final examination is cumulative, with extra emphasis on topics covered since the second midterm. Midterm examinations are not cumulative but questions may require application of material learned earlier in the course.

Attendance at all examinations is mandatory. No make-up examinations will be offered except for University-sanctioned excuses. If you do miss an examination, be sure to e-mail the instructor and explain why you missed the examination. Students with an unexcused absence will receive zero (0) points and an "F" letter grade on that examination. Students who miss any of the above scheduled examinations are advised to withdraw from the course at their earliest opportunity. If a make-up examination is warranted, its format may differ from the examination administered in class and will be administered at the convenience of the instructor and teaching assistant.

Review Session for Midterm One: Friday, February 13, time and room TBA.

Midterm One: Wednesday, February 18 in class.

Review Session for Midterm Two: Wednesday, March 18, time and room TBA.

Midterm Two: Friday, March 20 in class.

Last Day of Instruction for Our Class: May 6

Review for Final Exam: Friday, May 8, time and place TBA.

Final Exam: Monday, May 11 from 9:45 am to 11:45 am in our usual classroom.

Check out <http://mankiw.swlearning.com> for materials that can help you study for examinations. Check out the tutorial quizzes, the flash cards, and the key term reviews!!

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is required. Students unable to attend **ALL** course lectures as scheduled should withdraw immediately. Attendance will be measured through a sign-in system. Students unable to attend the entire lecture should not sign-in. Students should not sign-in for other students. **Because attendance will count towards the course grade, abuse of the sign-in system will be treated as academic dishonesty. All violators will be reported to the UH administration for review.** Students can miss **FOUR** classes without penalty. Each subsequent class missed results in a 1% loss in the maximum 15% of the grade that can be earned from class attendance. Attendance will not be taken at the first three classes (January 12, 14, and 16)

HOMEWORK

There are two types of homework for this class: Aplia homework and non-Aplia Homework.

1. Non-Aplia Homework

Homework is distributed **occasionally** on Fridays via <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~lacroix> and in class. You can work together on the homework but you must write up your answers independently. Homework is due in class at 10:30 am on the following Friday. You can hand it in early by putting it in the teaching assistant's mailbox in Saunders 542 or handing it to the teaching assistant at the start of the Friday class. The teaching assistant will review the answers to the problems during class on Friday.

2. Aplia Homework: Registration and Use

You can begin working on your homework as soon as you register!

Usually, Aplia assignments are due on Thursday at 9 pm. There are a few exceptions to the Thursday due date. They will be announced on the Aplia website and in class. The teaching assistant will review some of the assigned Aplia problems during the Friday problem session class.

3. Purchase Options for Aplia and the Mankiw Textbook

- In this course, you will use the Mankiw textbook and the Aplia website.
- You have four purchase options for the Aplia problem sets and Mankiw textbook (see below).
- Don't buy anything until you understand your alternatives.

The Four Purchase Options

Option A: Buy Aplia Directly With an Electronic Book from Aplia

- From the Aplia website, purchase access to an online electronic copy of the Mankiw textbook (5th ed.) and the Aplia problem sets for \$70.00.

Option B: Buy Aplia and a Paperback Edition of the Book Directly from Aplia

- Purchase from the Aplia website access to an online electronic copy of the Mankiw textbook (5th ed.) and the Aplia problem sets for \$70.00. For an extra \$50.00 plus \$7.50 for shipping and handling, Aplia will mail you the Mankiw textbook (5th ed.). Total cost is \$127.50.

Option C: Buy Aplia Directly and Buy a Used Textbook On-Line

- From the Aplia website, purchase access to an online electronic copy of the Mankiw textbook (5th ed.) and the Aplia problem sets for \$70.00. Then buy a used copy of the Mankiw book (5th ed.) from an online book seller. Because the book was published in November 2008, it's unlikely that you will be able to find cheap used copies on line for less than \$50.00 (your cost in Option B).

Option D: Purchase a New Book Bundled with Aplia at UH-Manoa Bookstore

- The UH Bookstore has a new Mankiw book (5th ed.) and Aplia (bundled together) available for \$190.80. The bundle contains an Aplia Access Card with a Payment Code that you can enter on Aplia's website as payment for your Aplia course.

Summary: You have options for the textbook/Aplia package that range from \$70 to \$190.80. Choose carefully!!!

Aplia Registration Instructions

1. Connect to <http://www.aplia.com>.
2. Click the **System Configuration Test** link below the **Sign In** and **Register** sections to make sure you can access all of the features on Aplia's website. This takes just a few seconds and tells you how to update your browser settings if necessary.
3. Return to <http://www.aplia.com>.
 - If you have never used Aplia before, click the **New Student** button and enter your Course Key: MWXJ-LVAP-CBJ7. Continue following the instructions to complete your registration.
 - If you have used Aplia before, sign in with your usual e-mail address and password and enter your Course Key when prompted: MWXJ-LVAP-CBJ7. If you are not prompted for a new Course Key, click the **Enter Course Key** button to enroll in a new Aplia course. Enter your Course Key when you are prompted.

- 4. If you think that you might drop the class, you should choose the option to pay later. Your payment grace period ends at the end of the day on 02/1/2009.**

Aplia assignments: Aplia assignments must be done by the due date!! The software does not understand excuses. **Do your assignments early to keep last minute emergencies from getting in your way.** After the due date, Aplia displays the correct answers and explanations for graded problems. All Aplia assignments and due dates are displayed on the Aplia website.

Disclaimer: Professor La Croix does not receive (and never has received) ANY monetary or in-kind benefits from requiring Aplia assignments.

Having trouble getting started? Drop by the teaching assistant's office during her office hours and get a jump start—or at least a hint!!

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES COMPUTER LABS

Don't have a computer? (You will need a computer to download and—sometimes—complete homework and to complete assigned Aplia problem sets.) Use the College of Social Sciences computer labs! They are located in:

Saunders Hall 635
Saunders Hall 342

Lab users are required to log in with their UH email address (without the @hawaii.edu) as their username and their UH ID number as their password. See the example below of a student ID card. The numbers in the box are your UH ID number and your password.



Once you're entered into the system, the computer will ask you to change your password.

IN-CLASS EXERCISES

We will devote all or part of 4-5 classes to in-class exercises. The exercises are fun. They are not graded. You will learn economics by participating in them!! You must come to class and participate actively in the exercises to receive the daily attendance credit.

Topics include:

- Trade
- Voluntary provision of public goods
- Externalities
- Diminishing returns
- Prisoner's dilemma (game theory)

CLASS LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE (subject to change)

We will also distribute on-line short readings.

I. January 12 – February 18, 2009

Mankiw, Chapters 1-6.
First Midterm, Wednesday, February 18 in class.

II. February 20 – March 20, 2009

Mankiw, Chapters 7-11.
Second Midterm, Friday, March 20 in class.

III. March 30 – May 8, 2009

Mankiw, Chapters 13-18.
Final Exam on Monday, May 11, 2009 from 9:45 am to 11:45 am in our usual classroom. **You must take the final exam on the assigned date. No exceptions.**

There are classes every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from January 12 through May 7, 2009 except on Monday, January 19 (Martin Luther King Day), Monday, February 16 (Presidents' Day), March 23-27 (Spring Break), and Friday, April 10 (Easter Weekend).

ENJOY THE COURSE!! OUR GOALS ARE TO LEARN ECONOMICS; TO APPLY ECONOMICS TO REAL-WORLD SITUATIONS; AND TO HAVE SOME FUN!!