

George Mason University
Fall Semester
Microeconomic Theory
Economics 103

Professor Dr. Thomas Carl Rustici
Office James Buchanan Hall Room 162
Hours MWF 9:00 am to 10:15 am; MW 11:30 am - 1:15 pm
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This class is primarily in-person but can be on-line as well, depending on potentially changing conditions concerning the safe return to campus. Every student should be familiar with **Blackboard**. In the event classes are not possible in-person, we can seamlessly transition to **Blackboard**.

If this disruption occurs, any missed class lectures will be Youtube videos uploaded to **Blackboard** for the student to view at their own schedule. These videos for each week will be uploaded on Monday and Wednesday. All class announcements are posted to **Blackboard**. Exam dates and times will be posted at least one week before the exam to give students preparation time for the exam.

Graduate Assistant Colin Sides can be reached at csides@gmu.edu Colin's hours for meeting with students for student questions about the course are Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00am to 1:00pm each week.

Objectives

The lectures and readings in this course are designed to familiarize students with the fundamentals of microeconomic theory. The central focus this course takes is an understanding of the process of price formation in a free exchange economy. Various market institutions such as: the firm, advertising, profit-loss mechanism, futures speculation, and property rights are explored for their role in the coordination of economic activity. Finally, these principles are applied to the larger issues of economic growth, environmental quality, and "political market dynamics" of representative democracy.

Grades There are four exams in this course, three 50 minute midterms and a comprehensive final. Make-up for exams is only permissible if the student notifies the instructor *before* the scheduled testing or because of extraordinary circumstances. All cases of unexcused absences for tests receive a zero. **THERE IS NO CURVE IN THIS CLASS.** There are NO homework assignments or other projects in this course.

Exams are taken through **Blackboard**. Exams are a mix of multiple choice, short answer questions and essay questions. **Grades are based on 90% and up = A; 80 to 89% = B; 70 to 79% = C; 60 to 69% = D; 59% and lower = F.** The course grade is weighted as follows:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	25%
Final	40%

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT EXAMS

You will need to download the Respondus Lockdown Browser before any exam can be taken in the course. The following link allows you to do this.

<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/how-to-install-and-use-the-respondus-lockdown-browser/>

Required Texts

Microeconomics by J.Gwartney & R.Stroup (GS)

Microeconomics: A Free Market Approach by Thomas Rustici, N. Snow & C. Milton (RSM)

Principles of Economics by Carl Menger (CM)

Economics In One Lesson by Henry Hazlitt (HH)

These books should be available to the student either through the GMU Bookstore, Amazon or directly from the publisher Cognella.

The GMU Bookstore website is gmu.bncollege.com.

Attendance If for any reason regular attendance becomes difficult, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. While in class, you are expected to be always on your best behavior. Disruptive students will not be tolerated and asked to leave the class as well as receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course.

As the class begins you will want to keep pace with the readings. Exam dates are "Rules of thumb" and not hard and fast dates. As we approach the exam dates I will announce the exact date in class and on Blackboard and the cut-off point of required material for each exam.

Honor This course demands the highest standard of conduct. Cheating or plagiarism is not tolerated in any way. **Exams DO NOT allow for any students sharing answers during the test to any test questions. This will be considered an Honor Code violation by the professor.** Violation of this code results in an immediate failing grade for the course and a report to the GMU Honor Committee.

Week 1 *Spontaneous Order: The Big Picture*

(GS) Chapters 1-2

(HH) Chapters 1-3

(RSM) Section 1

Week 2 *The History of Economic Thought:
Aristotle Through The Classical School*

(CM) Chapters 1-2

(RSM) Section 2

Week 3 *The Neoclassical Revolution:
Marginalism and Subjectivism*

(GS) Chapter 3
(CM) Chapters 3-4
(HH) Chapters 8-10

Week 4 *The Law of Supply and Demand*

(GS) Chapter 4
(CM) Chapters 5-6
(RSM) Section 3

Week 5 *The Role of the Price System*

(GS) Chapter 7
(HH) Chapters 15-19
(RSM) Section 4

Exam 1

Week 6 *Opportunity Costs and Comparative Advantage*

(GS) Chapter 8
(RSM) Section 5

Week 7 *International Trade, Foreign Investment & the Global Economy*

(GS) Chapter 16
(HH) Chapters 11-14

Week 8 *Production: The Economic Theory Of The Firm*

(GS) Chapter 9
(RSM) Section 6

Exam 2

Week 9 *Cost Curves and the Perfect Price Competition Model*

(GS) Chapter 10
(RSM) Section 7

Week 10 *Monopoly Theory and Antitrust Policy*

(GS) Chapter 11

Week 11 *The Economics Of Information*

(GS) Chapter 12

(RSM) Section 8

Week 12 *The Theory of Income Determination*

(GS) Chapters 13-15 & Special Topics 2-8

(HH) Chapters 20-22

(RSM) Section 9

Exam 3

Week 13 *Economics and the Environment*

(GS) Special Topics 9-10

(RSM) Section 10

Week 14 *Public Choice: The Economics of Politics*

(GS) Chapters 5-6 & Special Topics 1 & 3

(RSM) Sections 11-13

Final Exam December 7th, 1:30 pm to 4:15 pm