

PUBPOL 516A: Economics for Policy Analysis and Management I

Austin Sell

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Austin Sell, Instructor

E-mail: arsell@uw.edu

Office Hours: W 10:00 - 1:00, and by appointment

Office: PAR 410

Class Hours: M/W 8:30 - 9:50

Class Room: PAR 108

Benjamin Glasner, TA

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Office Hours: F 9:30 - 11:30

Office: PAR 124B

Quiz Section A: Th 9:30 - 10:20

Quiz Section B: F 8:30 - 9:20

Course Description

The primary goal of this course is to give you a firm foundation in microeconomic theory in order to be able to apply that theory to public policy and management issues. You should walk away from this course with a solid grasp of the tools and language that economists use to describe policy issues. Part of that understanding will come from the application of the economic tools and ideas learned in this course in addition to discussions of contextual examples.

This course is part of a two course sequence. PUBPOL 516 is an introduction to how consumers and producers behave, and how that leads us to understand how markets develop. PUBPOL 517 continues this material with an exploration of how and when markets fail. Both classes deal with simplistic models of the real world that rely on specific assumptions to interpret them. As you go through these courses, you should pay close attention to what assumptions are being made and when it is acceptable to relax them.

Required Materials

- Jeffrey Perloff, *Microeconomics*, 7th edition
Other editions are acceptable, but all page number references will be to the 7th edition

- Access to Canvas website
The course Canvas page is where assignments will be posted and submitted

Prerequisites

This course relies extensively on coordinate geometry and basic algebra. If your skills are rusty, you will need to devote some time reviewing graphing linear equations, solving one equation with one unknown, and solving two equations with two unknowns.

Grading and Assessment

Grade Structure

The course requirements include weekly homework, three take-home quizzes, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

Homework Assignments	10% of final grade
Take-Home Quizzes	25% of final grade
Midterm Exam on TBA	25% of final grade
Final Exam on Tuesday, December 11 8:30 - 10:20	40% of final grade

Homework Assignments

Homework will be assigned every week unless there is a Take-Home Quiz or an exam. All homework assignments will be posted to Canvas by Wednesday and will be due on Canvas when lecture starts at 8:30 Monday morning. Homework assignments will be graded on a completion basis. As long as you make an attempt to answer the question, you will be awarded full credit for that question. Blank answers or responses along the lines of "I don't know" will not receive credit. Even if you are unsure of your answer, it is worth it to go with your best attempt. You are encouraged to work with your classmates on homework assignments, but your answers should be your own.

Take-Home Quizzes

There will be three Take-Home Quizzes assigned throughout the quarter. Like Homework assignments, they will be posted to Canvas by Wednesday and will be due on Canvas when lecture starts at 8:30 Monday morning. Take-Home Quizzes will be graded for accuracy. You are encouraged to work with your classmates on Take-Home Quizzes, but your answers should be your own.

Midterm Exam

There will be an in-class Midterm exam partway through the quarter. The exact date of the exam will be announced well in advance and updated here.

Final Exam

There will be a cumulative Final Exam on Tuesday, December 11 8:30 - 10:20 in PAR 108. Additional details about the format of the exam will be discussed as we approach the end of the quarter. If you have a conflict with this time, you must contact me as soon as possible. Accommodations will only be made for exceptional circumstances.

Late Policy

Both Homework assignments and Take-Home Quizzes will be due on Mondays at 8:30 am. Submissions turned in within the first 24 hours following the deadline will receive 90% of their original score. Submissions turned in within the second 24 hours following the deadline will receive 80% of their original score. No submissions will be accepted after 8:30 am on Wednesday, which is when answer keys will be distributed. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Final Grades

Grading throughout the course will be done on a percentile basis. Those individual assignments and exams will not be curved. The final grade distribution will be curved so that the average grade is around a 3.4. Thus, a score of 60% on an assignment does not necessarily translate to a D grade. Instead, you should focus on understanding the material to the best of your ability and work on improving the areas in which you have room to grow.

Communication

- If you need to get in contact with me outside of class or office hours, please send me an email that includes "516" in the subject line. Emails in this format will be responded to within 48 hours.
- I will use a combination of direct emails and Canvas Announcements to send messages to the class. Make sure that you check your UW email and customize your Canvas settings to get Announcement notifications.
- If you have a preferred name or pronoun, please feel free to let me know in person or by email.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Check the University Calendar for information regarding campus holidays. We will not meet on any holidays recognized by the university.

If you know that you are going to miss a lecture or quiz section in advance, try to make arrangements with a classmate to get a copy of notes of materials that you will miss. While I am always available to answer questions during office hours, it is not a substitute for actual lecture time.

While attendance does not make up an explicit component of your final grade, you are expected to attend classes. Students who consistently attend and participate in class tend to have higher success rates.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

UW and the Evans School expects students to strictly follow rules of academic integrity and honesty. By submitting an assignment to me, you are acknowledging that your work is your own. While there are many opportunities to work with your classmates in this course, every assignment should be a product of your individual work. See the Evans School Student Handbook for more details.

Accommodations for Disabilities

The university provides reasonable accommodations for academically qualified students with disabilities. Any students requesting academic accommodations is required to register with Disability Resources for Students. If you need accommodations, please inform me at your earliest convenience.

Schedule

The schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Week 1, 09/26 Introduction

Week 2, 10/01 & 10/03 Consumer Theory

Week 3, 10/08 & 10/10 Consumer Theory and Market Demand

Week 4, 10/15 & 10/17 Consumer Theory cont.; Start Firm Theory

Week 5, 10/22 & 10/24 Firm Theory

Week 6, 10/29 & 10/31 Firm Theory cont.

Week 7, 11/05 & 11/07 Market Equilibrium and Government Intervention

Week 8, 11/12 & 11/14 Market Equilibrium and Government Intervention cont.

- 11/12 Veteran's Day (Observed) **No Class**

Week 9, 11/19 & 11/21 Other Types of Markets

Week 10, 11/26 & 11/28 Other Markets cont.

Week 11, 12/03 & 12/05 Course Review

Final Exam, 12/11

- Final Exam on Tuesday, December 11 at 8:30 - 10:20 in PAR 108