

ECON 100 - Introduction to Economic Problems and Policies (Online)

Winter 2026

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Class Website: <https://canvas.emich.edu/>
Office Hours: MTW 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.
(in person or on Zoom) and by appointment

“There is no such thing as a free lunch.”

-Milton Friedman (1912-2006)

Description

A nontechnical introduction to basic problems facing the U.S. economy and different opinions over economic policy choices. Analysis of the controversial role of government in a private market economy. Economics is one of the fundamental social sciences because it systematically investigates the economic relationships and interactions among people living in a society. Students in the course acquire a basic understanding of both the subject of economics and the tools used by economists in their study of economic questions. (1) macroeconomics looks at how people and societies make choices, while weighing the costs and benefits of those choices. The basic assumption is that normal economic behavior is guided by a process of always seeking to get the maximum benefit at minimum cost; (2) introduces students to concepts such as supply and demand, business cycles, inflation and unemployment, money and banking, and taxing and government spending. Here students learn how economics research develops and uses numbers and models (simplifications) to explain changes in these concepts; (3) introduces students to some of the different interpretations of the desirability of changes and their outcomes. One school of thought explored focuses on “what is”, with no value judgments implied. Another school of thought focuses on “what ought to be”, based on value judgments about the social desirability of outcomes.

Social Sciences [GEKS]

Economics is one of the fundamental social sciences because it systematically investigates social relationships, institutions, and interactions among people deciding how they and society should use scarce economic resources. Economics 100 satisfies the Social Sciences (GEKS) requirement of the General Education Program because students in the course acquire a basic knowledge of the subject of economics as a social science, and of the approaches and tools used by economists in their study of economic questions and institutions. The course analyzes the concepts of scarcity, the role of markets and governments as mechanisms for allocating national and international resources, and the role of government policy in achieving the goals of maximum employment, low inflation, and economic growth.

Prerequisites: None

Course Materials

Recommended Textbook: Mateer, Dirk, Coppock, Lee, and O’Roark, Brian. Essentials of Economics. W.W. Norton & Company; 2020. (ISBN 978-0-393-44196-3); currently in its third edition but any edition will work.

Supplemental Textbook: Principles of Economics from Openstax. This is a free textbook available on the web at <https://openstax.org/details/books/principles-economics-3e> that follows the course material somewhat closely.

Canvas

Canvas, EMU’s learning management system, is integral to the course and will be used extensively. You will use Canvas to access necessary course files, complete quizzes and exams, communicate with me, receive announcements, and keep track of your grades. You must be able to access the Canvas course page to complete this course. If you are having problems using Canvas, please refer to the following link for help: <https://www.emich.edu/elearning/support/index.php>

The Canvas page is organized into modules. Each module corresponds to a specific lecture. The modules contain various elements, including lecture slides in PDF format that correspond to a chapter(s) from the textbook, a video presentation of the lecture slides, applications (application slides and video presentation), practice quizzes (not graded), a lecture quiz (graded), and other option resources (i.e., news and articles, videos, podcasts, and additional resources). Not all modules contain all these elements.

I will communicate with the class via Canvas Announcements. For information on Canvas Announcements, see this link: <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-Announcements/ta-p/39>

Questions specific to your individual situation should be discussed with me in-person or via email.

All quiz and exam delivery will be done via Canvas Quizzes. For more information on Canvas Quizzes, see these links:

<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10706-67952725251>

Grading Policy

Your course percentage score will be based on the highest score of eleven of the thirteen quizzes (i.e. your two lowest scores will be dropped) and three exams. Your course percentage score will be calculated as a weighted-average of the percentage score you receive on each of the assignment groups. The quizzes are one assignment group, while each exam is an individual assignment group, making a total of four assignment groups. The weights used in the calculation are:

Quizzes (each of equal weight): 25%

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Exam 3: 25%

I will round your course percentage score to the nearest whole number using standard rounding-

techniques. That is, any number with a decimal of 0.50 and above will be rounded up, while a number with a decimal of 0.49 will be rounded down. The grading scale that will determine your course letter grade is:

A.....93-100%	B+.....86-89%	C+.....76-79%	D+.....66-69%	F.....0-59%
A-.....90-92%	B.....83-85%	C.....73-75%	D.....63-65%	
	B-.....80-82%	C-.....70-72%	D-.....60-62%	

For example, if you receive a 91% on the quizzes, a 95% on exam 1, an 85% on exam 2, and a 92% on exam 3, your course percentage score and associated course letter grade are calculated as

$$91\% \times (0.25) + 95\% \times (0.25) + 85\% \times (0.25) + 92\% \times (0.25) = 90.75\%$$

which is rounded up to a 91%, corresponding with a letter grade of A-.

I will use Canvas's online grade book to record grades so that you will be aware of your grades throughout the semester.

Extra credit will not be given.

Quizzes

Problem solving is essential to successful completion of this course. With this in mind, there is a quiz for each lecture/chapter covered in this online course for a total of thirteen quizzes. Each quiz is comprised of ten questions each worth one point, for a total of ten points. Your lowest three quiz scores will be dropped, thus your final grade will be based on the highest grade achieved on ten of the thirteen quizzes. The quizzes will be available before each exam. **Once the exam is available the quizzes will no longer be available.** Once you start the quiz you will have 30 minutes to complete it.

Exams

There are three exams in this online course. Each exam is comprised of 40 multiple choice questions worth two points each, for a total of 80 points. Each exam is worth 25% of your final grade. Each exam is scheduled during a three day time period (see below). Once you start the exam you will have 75 minutes to complete it. Once you take an exam, you will not be allowed to re-take it.

Grading curves for each exam may be implemented at my discretion.

Make-up exams will only be given in certain circumstances. I reserve the right to judge what types of reasons are legitimate. You must secure from me permission to miss an exam either before or after the fact. You will receive a grade of zero for any exam that you miss for which you do not have an excused absence.

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If you are caught cheating on an exam you will receive a grade of zero and the incident will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for investigation.

Grievance Policy

Anyone feeling that a dispute exists after the grading of an exam may submit a written grievance. The grievance should identify the item in dispute and provide arguments supporting your position. Grievances must be submitted via email to me within three days after the conclusion of the exam. If you do submit a grievance, then I reserve the right to re-grade your entire exam.

Online Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the standards and expectations detailed in the [EMU Student Handbook](#). Most communication in an online course comes through email and discussion threads, where students and instructors share thoughts and ideas. However, many normal interpersonal messages are easily lost when most communication happens in a written form. It is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected.

The instructor has primary responsibility for and control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity. If you are caught cheating I will give you a zero for that assignment/exam.

University Policies

In addition to the articulated course specific policies and expectations, students are responsible for understanding all applicable university guidelines, policies, and procedures. The [EMU Student Handbook](#) is the primary resource provided to students to ensure that they have access to all university policies, support resources, and student's rights and responsibilities. Changes may be made to the EMU Student Handbook, whenever necessary, and shall be effective immediately, or as of the date on which a policy is formally adopted, or the date specified in the amendment. Electing not to access the link provided below does not absolve a student of responsibility. For questions about any university policy, procedure, practice, or resources, please contact the [Office of the Ombuds](#). University Course Policies can be found [here](#).

Disability Concerns

I am dedicated to creating an accessible, inclusive, and inviting learning environment for all students, including those who may have disabilities that could impact their participation in this class. If you believe you may have trouble participating or effectively demonstrating learning in this course, please contact me (with or without an accommodation letter from the [Disability Resource Center](#)) to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Eastern Michigan University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all university programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Disability Resource Center (DRC), 250 Student Center, 734.487.2470, DRC@emich.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Letter of Accommodation (LOA). Please meet with me to discuss your LOA at the start of the academic semester or once it has been distributed to you by the DRC.

University Advising & Career Development Center (UACDC)

[UACDC](#) provides academic and career pathways to all students regardless of major, class level, or degree level. Students can meet one on one regarding major, minor, career options, internship and job search strategies, interview support, and grad school application support. FREE professional attire is

available in the UACDC Career Closet, 251 McKenny Hall.

Holman Success Center

The [Holman Success Center](#) provides academic support through a variety of virtual and in-person services.

University Writing Center (UWC)

The [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#) offers writing support to all undergraduate and graduate students. In doing so, we value the diversity of our campus and honor all students and the languages they bring with them to the university.

University Library

Library research support is available to all students. This includes getting started with research, identifying sources to search, developing search strategies, evaluating resources, and more. See this [link](#) for all of the ways in which you can get help with research, including both in-person and remotely through online chat and appointments with librarians.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response Office (formerly Title IX Office)

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex under any education program or activity receiving federal financial aid. Sexual assault and sexual harassment are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. [What you need to know about Title IX.](#)

Student and Exchange Visitor Statement (SEVIS)

The Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) requires F and J students to report numerous items to the [Office of International Students & Scholars \(OISS\)](#).

Mental Health and Wellness

- If you NEED HELP NOW: Call 988 or Text HOME to 741741
- EMU CAPS: 734.487.1118 (24/7) or email: counseling.services@emich.edu
- Trinity Health Ann Arbor: 734.712.5637 / UM Hospital: 734.996.4747
- Campus Police: 734.487.1222
- [EMU Mental Health and Wellness Resources & Guides](#)
- [Washtenaw County Support Resources](#)

Enlighten U

“Enlighten U” is an Eastern Michigan University-produced, award-winning [podcast](#) for college students as they experience unique stressors, including academic pressures, personal growth, social challenges, and more. Episodes are released monthly and can be found on [YouTube](#) and on all major podcast platforms.

Course Schedule

1. Section I. Introduction to Economics: January 12 - February 08

- Week of January 12: Lecture 01 - What is Economics and How Do Economists Study it? (Chapters 1 & 2)
- Week of January 19: Lecture 02 - Why Do We Trade? (Chapter 3)
- Week of January 26: Lecture 03 - The Market at Work: Supply and Demand (Chapter 4)
- Week of February 02: Lecture 04 - Market Efficiency (Chapter 5)

Exam 1: Available Thursday, February 05 at 12:00 a.m EST until Sunday, February 08 at 11:59 p.m. EST

2. Section II. Introduction to Microeconomics: February 09 - March 15

- Week of February 09: Lecture 05 - The Firm Revenues, Costs, and Profits (Chapter 6)
- Week of February 16: Lecture 06 - Understanding Competitive Markets and Imperfect Markets (Chapters 7 & 8)
- Week of February 23: Lecture 07 - Government and the Economy (Chapter 10)
- Week of March 02: Winter Break (March 1-7)
- Week of March 09: Lecture 08 - Behavioral Economics and Strategic Behavior (Chapter 11)

Exam 2: Available Thursday, March 12 at 12:00 a.m EST until Sunday, March 15 at 11:59 p.m. EST

3. Section III. Introduction to Macroeconomics: March 16 - April 28

- Week of March 16: Lecture 09 - Introduction to Macroeconomics and Gross Domestic Product (Chapter 12)
- Week of March 23: Lecture 10 - Unemployment and Inflation (Chapter 13)
- Week of March 30: Spring Recess (April 3-5)
- Week of April 06: Lecture 11 - Economic Growth and the Wealth of Nations (Chapter 14)
- Week of April 13: Lecture 12 - Savings, Interest Rates, and the Market for Loanable Funds (Chapter 16)
- Week of April 20: Lecture 13 - Money and the Federal Reserve (Chapter 17)

Exam 3: Available Thursday, April 23 at 12:00 a.m EST until Tuesday, April 28 at 11:59 p.m. EST