



ECON 231: Introductory Microeconomics & Social Issues
College of Business
Western Carolina University

Section 70 | Fall 2021 | Mondays & Wednesdays 4:00pm – 5:15pm | Forsyth 114

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays: 12pm—2:30pm
And by appointment (please email me)

Course Description

Through this course, you will gain the economic way of thinking as a tool to analyze the world around you. We will specifically discuss and analyze the study of economic and social systems, emphasizing choices made by individuals in society such as consumers, producers, employees, voters, policy-makers, and students. Theoretical reasoning, graphical analysis, discussions of events in economic history & present, and applications to plausible scenarios will be used to expand our knowledge and understanding of individual and business decision-making.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand and apply fundamental economic concepts such as scarcity, opportunity cost, incentives, and marginal analysis.
- Analyze markets in terms of the interaction of supply and demand.
- Understand and evaluate economic models of production and competition.
- Understand how government policies (taxation, regulation, provision of public goods, etc.) impact economic outcomes.

This course is part of the P1: Social Sciences Perspective requirement of the Liberal Studies program. As such, this course partly satisfies the *Social Science Perspective Requirement* of the *WCU Liberal Studies Program*.

Specifically, this course will emphasize the following Liberal Studies learning objectives and outcomes:

- **Inquiry:** Students will formulate focused questions and hypotheses that address appropriately the topic at hand, as well as identify and explain a method of inquiry.
- **Problem Solving:** Students will apply appropriate disciplinary methodologies to answer questions and propose solutions to problems within the human and natural worlds.
- **Awareness of Cultural Diversity:** Students will critically examine various cultures through historical and contemporary contexts at the local, national, and/or global levels.

Course Materials

Textbook

- Mateer & Coppock, *Principles of Microeconomics*, 2nd edition. Reading assignments from the textbook will be posted for each week on Canvas. You are expected to complete the reading assignments before class each week.

Multimedia

- Videos, podcasts, audio links, and/or documents will sometimes be assigned in addition to or in lieu of reading assignments from the Mateer & Coppock textbook. All of these forms of multimedia will be posted on Canvas either as a full file or as a website link. Multimedia assignments will be posted for each week. You are expected to complete the multimedia assignments before class each week.

Canvas

- Your weekly assignments are posted on Canvas each week. Weekly wrap-ups are also completed via Canvas and can be found under each week's module. Supplemental materials to help you prepare for learning celebrations will also be posted to Canvas. Therefore, access to Canvas is crucial for this class.

MobLab

- MobLab is an interactive, educational games website that we will be using throughout the semester. MobLab has designed high-quality, online games that we will play in-class in an effort to reinforce the concepts we cover throughout the semester. The "game-day participation score" portion of your course grade (see the next section) will come from these games. Each student must sign-up and purchase a MobLab account for this class. The MobLab semester fee is a one-time fee of \$25 per student.
- MobLab is accessible via smartphone app, tablet, and laptop. Therefore, students will be asked to bring their smartphone, laptop, or tablet to class on game days. Game days will be announced at least one class period in advanced so that you can come prepared. If you do not have access to one of these devices, please let me know at the beginning of the semester so that I can make the necessary accommodations so that you are able to participate.
- I will post sign-up directions in the Week 1 module on Canvas.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

- The university requires faculty to track attendance for the first two weeks of class for enrollment/census purposes. After the end of the 2nd week of classes, there is no attendance policy for this course. However, not attending class regularly may cause you to miss important material and subsequently could adversely impact your performance on weekly wrap-ups and learning celebrations. Furthermore, if you are not present on game-days, you will be unable to earn participation points.
- If you do miss class, ***it is solely your responsibility to find out what you missed in class from a fellow classmate.*** Emailing me to ask what you missed is **not** a suitable substitute for asking a classmate.
- Please make an effort to come to class on time and not leave early. Late arrivals and early departures are quite disruptive to the classroom learning environment.

Reading/Multimedia Assignments

- You will find the reading/multimedia assignments for each week posted on Canvas. The reading/multimedia assignments for each week can be found in the corresponding week's module on Canvas.
- As mentioned under the **Course Materials** section, assignments can come from the Mateer & Coppock textbook as well as from Canvas. Please read the week's module on Canvas thoroughly before each class to make sure that you complete all of the necessary assignments. If there is a change in the reading/multimedia assignment, you will be notified via a Canvas announcement or direct email.

Use of Electronics in Class

- **Please do not use your cell phones in class.** Yes... TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, etc. are all entertaining, but they will still be there after class is over. Texting and emailing during class are also not permitted.
- **Use of laptops and other electronic devices is not permitted.** There are studies that show that not only are the individuals using these devices are distracted, but students around them are also more focused on the screen than on the material in class. There is an exception to this policy: if you have documentation from the Office of Accessibility Resources permitting your use of such a device.
- If this becomes a problem, I will ask you to leave class.
- **THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THESE RULES ARE ON GAME-DAYS. Smartphones, tablets, and laptops are only permitted on game-days. Use of smartphones, tablets, and laptops is encouraged on game-days (but should be limited to the specific class games).**
- **Audio/visual recordings will NOT be permitted in this course (unless you have received written permission from the instructor for an accessibility accommodation).** In the event that such permission is granted, the student may not transfer, transmit, or otherwise disseminate the Recording to any third party, including classmates, without the permission of the instructor. Any violation of these restrictions, or any other restriction verbally communicated by the instructor, may subject the student to the provisions of the WCU Academic Code of Conduct, the WCU Code of Student Conduct or both. It is a FERPA violation to record other students in the classroom setting without their knowledge and signed consent.

Course Communication

- I will use email and Canvas to contact you. Emails will be sent to your WCU/Catamount email address, so please check your email regularly. If you email me using a personal email, I will respond. However, I will continue to contact you through the university email.
- *When you email me, please include your name and section number* so that I know who you are and so that I can provide you with the most accurate information possible.
- I will do my best to get back to you as quickly as I can, but please understand that emails sent after 10pm, over the weekend, or while I am out of town for professional conferences/lectures, I may not be able to get back to you immediately. As such, I will make it my policy to respond to all emails within 48 hours or less, unless otherwise specified.
- Your grades will be posted on through Canvas's Grade Center. Please do not ask me to discuss your grades via email. **I will not discuss specific grades via email** due to FERPA concerns. I am happy to discuss grades in-person, over a private Zoom meeting, or via the phone.

Grading

Your class grade will be calculated on a points scale. You begin the semester with zero (0) points, and you earn points on weekly wrap-ups, game-day participation scores, midterm learning celebrations, and the final learning celebration throughout the semester. Below is a breakdown of how your final end-of-the-semester grade will be calculated.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>	
Weekly Wrap-Ups	360	<i>(Best 10 wrap-ups; 36 points each)</i>
Game-Day Activities	240	<i>(Best 8 scores; 30 points each)</i>
Learning Celebrations 1, 2, 3 (lowest score dropped)	400 each	<i>(Wednesday, September 22nd in-person) (Wednesday, November 3rd in-person) (Wednesday, December 8th in-person)</i>
Final Learning Celebration	200	<i>(Friday, December 17th 8:30am – 12pm in-person)</i>
Total	= 1,600 points	

A total of 1,600 points are available on through the weekly wrap-ups, game-day participation scores, Learning Celebrations 1—3, and the Final Learning Celebration. Opportunities to earn extra credit may present themselves throughout the semester. These points will simply be added to your score. The table below shows how your total points will translate into a final letter grade.

<i>Class Points</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Quality Points per Semester Hour</i>
1552 -- 1600	A+	Excellent	4.0
1488 -- 1551	A	Excellent	4.0
1440 -- 1487	A-		3.67
1392 -- 1439	B+		3.33
1328 -- 1391	B	Good	3.0
1280 -- 1327	B-		2.67
1232 -- 1279	C+		2.33
1168 -- 1231	C	Satisfactory	2.0
1120 -- 1167	C-		1.67
1072 -- 1119	D+		1.33
1008 -- 1071	D	Poor	1.0
960 -- 1007	D-		0.67
0 -- 959	F	Failure	0

Weekly Wrap-Ups

- As an economist, I live by the expression “incentives matter.” In order to incentivize you to keep up with the reading/multimedia assignments each week, there will be weekly wrap-ups at the end of each week. These wrap-ups are designed to keep you on task with reading & multimedia assignments as well as the material covered in class for the week. They are also designed to point out areas and concepts of weakness so that you can spend extra time strengthening before the next learning celebration.
- **The weekly wrap-ups will be posted on Canvas each Thursday by 2pm and will be due by the following Monday by 2pm. The weekly-wrap up will be available in the corresponding week’s module.** For example: Weekly Wrap-Up 1 will be made available by Thursday, August 26th in the Week 1 module and will cover material from Week 1.
- You may use your class notes, your textbook, and the multimedia assignments from Canvas while you work on the weekly wrap-up. **You may *not* discuss the wrap-ups with other individuals or use the internet outside of the multimedia assignments.** Violation of this policy will be treated as cheating and an honor code violation.
- Each weekly wrap-up will be worth thirty-six (36) points.
- Because I am an economist, I also value the concept of opportunity cost. And, well, sometimes the opportunity cost of doing a weekly wrap-up is too high. As such, only the weekly wrap-ups with the ten (10) highest scores will count towards your final grade.
- **There will be no make-ups for the weekly wrap-ups.** Only your 10 highest weekly wrap-up scores count (your lowest 5 weekly wrap-ups are dropped), so missing a few will not impact your grade as long as you do well on the others.

Game-Day Participation

- In order to better emphasize how economic concepts shape decision-making and how economic concepts can be applied to real-world scenarios, we will use in-class activities, including MobLab games, to simulate these experiences.
- Economic experiments and games as in-class activities have been shown to really help the learning experience of students, especially in principles-level courses. Not to mention, it makes sometimes difficult or seemingly monotonous topics much more interesting and fun.

- We will play at least twelve (12) games throughout the semester. Actively participating in these games will be worth up to thirty (30) points. Only your 8 highest participation scores count.
- **Game-days will be announced at least one class meeting ahead of time so that you can come to game-day prepared. Because these games are in-class experiences that require class interaction and participation, there are no make-ups for game-day participation if you miss a game-day class.**
- As mentioned under the **Course Materials—MobLab** section of this syllabus, you will need to bring a charged smartphone, laptop, or tablet in order to participate in the game during class. If you come to class unprepared, you will be unable to participate.

Learning Celebrations 1, 2, and 3

- Throughout the semester, we will take a class day to celebrate how much you have learned thus far in the semester. (Some other professors call these “exams” or “midterms.” Thank you, Prof. Mulholland, for allowing me to borrow your up-lifting terminology.) The dates of these learning celebrations are: **Wednesday, September 22nd; Wednesday, November 3rd; and Wednesday, December 8th** at the regularly scheduled class time.
- These learning celebrations are closed-note, closed-book, and closed-electronic device. You may use a four-function calculator during the learning celebration (provided by the instructor). The calculator on your cell phone, smart watch, iPod, iPad, tablet, or any other electronic device with any additional non-calculator functions will **not** be permitted.
- Learning celebrations will be composed of multiple choice, short-answer, fill in the blank, matching, graphical, and/or essay questions. You will be notified the format of the learning celebration prior to the day of the learning celebration.
- Learning Celebrations 1, 2, and 3 are cumulative, but the emphasis will be on material covered since the previous learning celebration.
- Your lowest midterm Learning Celebration (1, 2, or 3) score will be dropped. Therefore, there are no make-up Learning Celebrations for non-university excused absences. If you miss a Learning Celebration, you will receive a 0. If that is your only missed Learning Celebration, it will be the lowest score dropped at the end of the semester.
- If you have to miss Learning Celebration 1, 2, or 3 for a university excused absence (as defined by the university here: https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/WordDocs/Class_Attendance_Policy.docx), you are permitted to make-up the Learning Celebration. In order to make-up the Learning Celebration, you must notify me prior to the start of the in-class Learning Celebration. You must also provide me with documentation that proves that your absence is consistent with the university policy in order to schedule a make-up. All make-ups must be taken no later than one week following the scheduled in-class Learning Celebration (unless other accommodations are made by the instructor).

Final Learning Celebration

- At the end of the semester, we will take time during Exam Week in December to celebrate all that you have learned throughout the entire semester in the form of a final learning celebration.
- **The Final Learning Celebration will be held on Friday, December 17th at 8:30am – 12pm.**
- The final learning celebration is closed-note, closed-book, and closed-electronic device. You may use a four-function calculator during the final learning celebration (provided by the instructor). The calculator on your cell phone, iPod, iPad, tablet, or any other electronic device with any additional non-calculator functions will **not** be permitted.
- Learning celebrations will be composed of multiple choice, short-answer, fill in the blank, matching, graphical, and/or essay questions. You will be notified the format of the learning celebration prior to the day of the learning celebration.
- The final learning celebration is cumulative.
- ***If you do not participate in the Final Learning Celebration, you will receive an ‘F’ as your final course grade.***

University Policies

Civil Discourse at Western Carolina:

- Consistent with WCU's core values and our campus creed, the WCU community accepts the freedoms and responsibilities of our shared community. WCU encourages all to clearly express their own views while at the same time seeking to understand the varieties of style, identity, and opinion that are held in any diverse community. In order for us to sustain a learning environment that promotes and values freedom of expression, we have a shared charge to accept personal responsibility for our actions, reactions, and speech, while seeking to learn from the actions, reactions, and speech of others.

Classroom Expectations:

- The shared learning space of the college classroom is built on respect for each other and each other's learning. Learning together means our actions can intentionally and unintentionally distract others from their learning goals. As responsible learners who respect the rights of others and vow to minimize avoidable distractions such as: non-academic technology use, coming in late, sleeping, off-topic discussions, doing other homework, eating, etc.

Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC):

- The Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC), located in BELK 207, provides free course tutoring, writing tutoring, supplemental instruction (SI) sessions, academic skills consultations, international student consultations, and online writing and learning resources for all students. To view schedules and make appointments for any of these services, visit <http://tutoring.wcu.edu/> or call 828-227-2274.
- **WaLC has tutoring specifically for ECON 231, so please utilize this resource if you need assistance throughout the semester.**

Math Tutoring Center:

- The Mathematics Tutoring Center (MTC) in Killian Annex 214 provides tutoring for math courses and math-related content across the curriculum, workshops on study skills specific to math courses, and graduate and professional exam preparation resources. **Until the COVID-19 Social Distancing order is rescinded, all MTC tutoring will be done online.** For more information, including directions on how to set up online appointments, please visit <http://mtc.wcu.edu/> or contact us at 828-227-3830.

Hunter Library:

- Hunter Library provides students with online access to books, scholarly articles, news articles, videos, and other sources. The print collection is available for home delivery in summer, 2020. Search the library's holdings and get personal assistance via chat at <http://www.wcu.edu/hunter-library> or find discipline-specific guides and assistance at <http://researchguides.wcu.edu/>

Canvas Support:

- The learning management system for this class is Canvas and can be found at <https://canvas.wcu.edu>
- Additional help with Canvas can be found at <http://help.wcu.edu>, (828) 227-7487 or by visiting the Technology Commons located on the ground floor of the Hunter Library.
- [Canvas Help](#) & [Canvas Student Guides](#) are additional helpful links.

Academic Toolbox:

- The Academic Toolbox is available in all WCU courses via the course Canvas site. It can be found in the left-hand side column. The Academic Toolbox contains information and contact information for nearly all of the resources needed by WCU students, including but not limited to: technology assistance, academic services, student support, co-curricular programs and university policies.

Academic Calendar

- This includes dates for all breaks, university closures, final exams, etc. The academic calendar can be found at <http://www.wcu.edu/learn/academic-calendar.aspx>

Final Exam Schedule

- The university final exam schedule can be found at <http://www.wcu.edu/learn/academic-services/registrar-office/>.

Mentoring and Persistence to Success (MAPS)

- Mentoring and Persistence to Success (MAPS) provides support to students who are first-generation (neither parent has a four-year degree), low-income, financially independent (emancipated youth, homeless or without consistent residence, or aged out of foster care), or those who have participated in the Academic Success Program (ASP) or Catamount Gap. For those who enroll, MAPS provides a variety of services, including academic advising, mentoring, and personal and social coaching. You may contact MAPS at (828) 227-7127 or email maps@wcu.edu for more information. MAPS is located in 205 Killian Annex.

Statement for Wearing Masks

- As the WCU Community Creed articulates, members of the WCU community are expected to live by high standards of academic and personal integrity and embrace their responsibility as members of the Catamount community. In recognition of this responsibility, and in response to the best available science and current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, all students, as well as faculty and staff, must wear a mask (or other acceptable cloth face-covering) that covers their nose and mouth while in classrooms or in public spaces on campus in Cullowhee, as well as at our instructional site at Biltmore Park, and locations in Cherokee and Highlands. Students who do not have a mask or appropriate face covering on will be asked to leave the classroom and will only be permitted to return when they follow this basic public health recommendation; see below for specific guidance.
- Students who do not have masks can obtain them at the locations, below:
 - Hinds University Center - Main Information Desk (2nd floor)
 - Hunter Library - Circulation Desk (main entrance)
 - Belk Building – College of Engineering and Technology Dean’s Office (Room 161)
 - Health and Human Sciences Building – College of Health and Human Sciences Dean’s Office (Room 201)
 - Biltmore Park Instructional Site – 3rd floor Information Desk
- The mask/face covering requirement for students is an expectation of our student code of conduct and violations are subject to code of conduct proceedings and disciplinary action. Faculty and staff will communicate with the Department of Student Community Ethics regarding students who do not honor the requirement.

Community Vision for Inclusive Excellence Statement:

- The diverse perspectives encountered at WCU are an important part of the preparation of students for roles as regional, national, and global leaders who contribute to the improvement of society. It is expected that members of the WCU community will not only coexist with those who are different from themselves, but also nurture respect and appreciation of those differences. We encourage civil discourse as a part of the learning enterprise, and as a campus we do not tolerate harassing or discriminating behavior that seeks to marginalize or demean members of our community.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources located in Killian Annex or call 828-227-2716. For additional information, visit go.wcu.edu/oar

Academic Integrity Policy and Reporting Process:

- This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students. Graduate students should read inside the parenthesis below to identify the appropriate entities in charge of that step of the process.

- Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. While academic in scope, any violation of this policy is by nature, a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (Code) and will be addressed as outlined in that document. If the charge occurs close to the end of an academic semester or term or in the event of the reasonable need of either party for additional time to gather information timelines may be extended at the discretion of the appropriate academic Dean.
- General:
 - This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of this policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community.
 - Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate academic sanctions for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy within their courses, up to and including a final grade of “F” in the course in which the violation occurs.
- Definitions:
 - Cheating – Using, or attempting to use, unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
 - Fabrication – Creating and/or falsifying information or citation in any academic exercise.
 - Plagiarism – Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.
 - Facilitation – Helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another person to copy information during an examination).
- Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Integrity Process:
 - Additional information is available on the Student Success website under Student Community Ethics: <http://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/academic-integrity.aspx>

***** This syllabus, along with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students will be notified of changes and are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications as distributed by the instructor or posted to Canvas.*****

Course Schedule

(this schedule is tentative and subject to change)

Date	Assigned Readings (complete before class)	Additional Assignments
Week 1		
Mon. Aug. 23	Syllabus & Chapter 1	Game Day #1 during class
Wed. Aug. 25	Chapter 1	
Week 2		
Mon. Aug. 30	Chapter 2	Weekly Wrap-Up 1 due by 2pm
Wed. Sept. 1	Chapter 2	Game Day #2 during class
Fri. Sept. 3	<i>(no class meeting)</i>	<i>Set up MobLab account by 11:59pm</i>
Week 3		
Mon. Sept. 6	No Class -- Labor Day	
Wed. Sept. 8	Chapter 3	Weekly Wrap-Up 2 due by 2pm; Game Day #3 during class
Week 4		
Mon. Sept. 13	Chapter 3	Weekly Wrap-Up 3 due by 2pm
Wed. Sept. 15	Chapter 3	
Week 5		
Mon. Sept. 20	Chapter 3A	Weekly Wrap-Up 4 due by 2pm; Game Day #4 during class
Wed. Sept. 22	Learning Celebration 1	
Week 6		
Mon. Sept. 27	Chapter 4	Weekly Wrap-Up 5 due by 2pm
Wed. Sept. 29	Chapter 4	Game Day #5 during class
Week 7		
Mon. Oct. 4	Chapter 5	Weekly Wrap-Up 6 due by 2pm
Wed. Oct. 6	Chapter 5	Game Day #6 during class
Week 8		
Mon. Oct. 11	Chapter 6	Weekly Wrap-Up 7 due by 2pm
Wed. Oct. 13	Chapter 6	Game Day #7 during class
Fall Break		
Week 9		
Mon. Oct. 25	Chapter 7	Weekly Wrap-Up 8 due by 2pm
Wed. Oct. 27	Chapter 7	Game Day #8 during class
Week 10		
Mon. Nov. 1	Chapter 7	Weekly Wrap-Up 9 due by 2pm; Game Day #9 during class
Wed. Nov. 3	Learning Celebration 2	
Week 11		
Mon. Nov. 8	Chapter 18: pp. 571-574 & Additional Reading	Weekly Wrap-Up 10 due by 2pm; Game Day #10 during class
Wed. Nov. 10	Chapter 8	Game Day #11 during class
Week 12		
Mon. Nov. 15	Chapter 8	Weekly Wrap-Up 11 due by 2pm
Wed. Nov. 17	Chapter 9	Game Day #12 during class
Week 13		
Mon. Nov. 22	No Class-- Chapter 10	Take-home Game Day #13 instead of class
Wed. Nov. 24	No Class -- Thanksgiving Break	
Week 14		
Mon. Nov. 29	Chapter 10	Weekly Wrap-Ups 12 & 13 due by 2pm; Take-home Game Day # 13 due at the start of class
Wed. Dec. 1	Chapter 11	Game Day #14 during class
Week 15		
Mon. Dec. 6	Chapter 19	Weekly Wrap-Up 14 due by 2pm; Game Day #15 during class
Wed. Dec. 8	Learning Celebration 3	
Final Exam Week		
Fri. Dec. 17	Final Learning Celebration (8:30am--11am)	Weekly Wrap-Up 15 due by 8am