UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
Principles of Macroeconomics
Fall 1997

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Web course address: http://spot.colorado.edu/~kaplan/econ2020.html

Office Hours: Monday 10:00-11:00, Wednesday 4:00-5:00, or by appointment.

Course Description

This course is designed to give the student a familiarity of macroeconomic concepts and related issues. First, let us discuss what is macroeconomics. Most people are familiar with the idea of economics. It covers information such as jobs, inflation, economic growth, interest rates, some guy named Alan Greenspan that always seems upset by good news, as well as politicians taking credit for all of that good news and blaming the others for the bad events. For many students, economics is a required course that seems sort of interesting and even useful if they are going to have dinner with their Uncle Mort, the banker. But you won’t find too many students discussing economic news at the ball game or at a party with friends.

But the economy affects our lives constantly. From our employment opportunities, longevity and potential for advancement, to the price we pay for food at the grocery. Economic conditions can determine if we can afford that great new car or the 1978 Ford Pinto that your seventeen year old cousin has outgrown.

Aside from teaching you the basics, the primary emphasis of this course is to help you understand that latest economic news that you may read in the newspaper, and hear on the radio or television. By comprehending the materials presented in this course, you will have the background needed to interpret this information on your own some day in the future. For example, let us move ahead a few years when you are thinking about saving some of your substantial salary in the stock market. You pick up the newspaper and spot economic news that leads you to conclude that inflation rates are marching upward. As a result, you reconsider your savings decision since you expect interest rates to rise as well.

A good strategy for the course is to be sure to understand the basic concepts and how they relate to each other, since this knowledge will be the primary determinant of your class grade. Go through each section carefully and ask questions in class and recitation. Visit your instructors during office hours or e-mail separately. Use the practice questions provided throughout the course to test your knowledge of the materials. To get the most out of this course, pick up the newspaper, listen to NPR on the radio, look around on the Web for economic news at Web sites such as CNN and MSNBC. Try to relate actual economic events to what you are learning.
As often as possible, class discussion will expand on theoretical topics by relating actual events to the theories presented in class. It is hoped that the students will make a better linkage between actual events and a hypothetical approach. Students are encouraged to contribute their ideas and opinions on these subjects.

Course Materials

All required course materials are available at the World Wide Web address given above.

A textbook is optional.

In addition, students are urged to keep up with current economic events by reading sources such as newspapers, periodicals and by watching the news on television.

Grading

85% of the final grade will be determined by exams and extra credit assignments.

15% of the final grade will be determined by the recitation.

Students must attend recitation or they will not pass the class.

Exam Schedule

Exam 1: Friday, Sept 26
Exam 2: Wednesday, Oct. 29
Exam 3: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 11:30am
Optional final: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 11:30am (after Exam 3)

Students can only take exams during the scheduled time. No makeup or alternative times can be scheduled. If, for any reason, a student misses either of the first two exams, they must take the optional final.

Important Dates

Sept. 1: Labor Day holiday
Oct. 8: Deadline to drop a course
Nov. 27-28: Thanksgiving holiday
Dec. 10: Last day of classes