

Note to prospective 4808 students

From Edward Morey, the teacher

The following are some comments and thoughts to help you decide whether to take the course.

Preview the course web page and syllabus at

<http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/morey/4808/4808home.html>

Pay particular attention to the prerequisites. Quoting from the syllabus

**Prerequisites:** Principles of Economics (Econ 2010 and Econ 2020, or Econ 1000) are prerequisites, so are Econ 1078 (Mathematical Tools for Economists 1) and Econ 1088 (Mathematical Tools for Economists 2), or the equivalent. One or more semesters of Calculus would more than suffice for Econ 1078 and 1088. This course and Intermediate Micro Theory are definite compliments. It is **very** important that you fulfill the prerequisites **before** you take this course, and that you still understand the materials in the prerequisites. To be successful in mathematical economics, you need to first be comfortable with algebra and derivatives. If you have any uncertainty as whether you are under or over qualified to take the course, please talk to me ASAP.

**Who needs to take this course?** This course is essential for anyone considering graduate work in economics. In general, mathematics is a much more integral part of economics than most undergraduate economics majors imagine.

In general, people who have taken and done well in intermediate microeconomics and Calculus (in the math department) do well in 4808, if they work hard.

Students who only have had 1078 and 1088 generally have a more difficult time; there are, of course, exceptions.

I would recommend that you **not** take this course if all or most the following applies to you:

1. You are planning to graduate at the end of the semester
2. You fulfilled the econ math requirements with 1078 and 1088 and you did “ok” but “not great” in those courses
3. You took the math you took a loooooong time ago.
4. You dislike math

The course will include approximately 10 quizzes, a midterm and a final. Your two worse quiz grades will be dropped. Given the large number of quizzes, I do not give make-up quizzes. The midterm will be announced approximately a week before it happens. Some of the quizzes will be with little advance notice. Many students do not take the quizzes seriously enough; in aggregate the quizzes will have a big impact on your final course grade.

The class lecture and the books are not substitutes.

Given the above, class attendance is imperative.

The course requires that you solve many problems that require that you understand economic theory, algebra and calculus, and can put it all together. (You can preview problem sets on the course web page.) The only way you will succeed at this is to do problems. Listening to me drone on in class is not a substitute for doing problems. We will do problems in class, but watching me do a problem will not automatically make you adept at solving that or some other problem.

If your typical study habits are to only study for a course before the exams (a habit of mine as an undergraduate), you will not prosper in the course.

Sadly, a number of my past students did not pass the course, and because of this some did not graduate. I do not want this to happen to you. Making both you and I worse off is not the intent of the course. I hate it when students earn failing grades.

I am debating giving a math skills exam within the first week or so of class. Doing it would hopefully fulfill two goals: getting everyone to review and bone up on their math, and give everyone a feel for where they are in terms of math skills.

I look forward to the start of class. I will do everything in my power to make the course interesting and worthwhile, but what you get out of it will largely be up to you.

Thanks.

If you have any questions feel free to email me at [Edward.Morey@colorado.edu](mailto:Edward.Morey@colorado.edu).

Edward