



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER
PRINCIPLES OF MACROECONOMICS
ECON 2020-581
FALL 2026: AUG 31 – DEC 6, 2026
Instructor: Dr Alpna Bhatia

Office Hours:	Tues, Wed, and Thurs: 10:30 am –11:30 am and via appointment on Zoom	Midterm: Oct. 16 th – Oct. 18 th (Friday - Sunday) Final: Dec. 4 th – Dec. 6 th (Friday - Sunday)
Zoom:	https://cuboulder.zoom.us/my/alpnabhatia	Holidays: Labor Day, Sept. 7 th , Monday
Email:	alpna.bhatia@colorado.edu	Reading Day: Oct. 8 th , Thursday
Office	6A in basement of Econ Building	Fall Break: Nov. 23 rd - Nov. 27 th
Appt	Make an appointment	We follow the CE Calendar, 13 Weeks

COURSE DESCRIPTION

General Catalog: Provides an overview of the economy, examining the flows of resources and outputs and the factors determining the levels of income and prices. Explores policy problems of inflation, unemployment, and economic growth.

So, **what is this class about?** This course will introduce you to the basics of the economy. You'll learn about important topics like inflation, unemployment, national output, jobs, and government finances. You will analyze aggregate demand/supply models and explore different economic ideas and theories and apply them to current events in the US economy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through this course, you'll develop the following skills:

- Interpret key macroeconomic data and identify the tools economists use to analyze the economy.
- Analyze the costs and benefits of inflation, unemployment, and government debt.
- Explain how fiscal, monetary, and supply-side policies affect the economy.
- Recognize the institutional surroundings that impact macroeconomic phenomena.
- Use economic reasoning, evidence, research, and writing to analyze macroeconomic questions.

COURSE PREREQUISITE: None

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Alpna Bhatia (Dr. B)—that's me! I have a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Colorado at Boulder (Go Buffs!) and I've been teaching for over 20 years. I'm very interested in exploring sustainable development, current macroeconomics, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. My research focuses on creative and exploratory approaches to economics education, now including the use of LLMs and AI. I care deeply about building a supportive learning community, and I currently serve as faculty sponsor for Women in Economics and the CU Boulder Economics Club.

COURSE WEBSITE

Our course is on [Canvas](#). You will access your textbook, notes, any further additional readings and most importantly your grades via Canvas. To access Canvas

- Login using your CU-Boulder identikey and password at <https://canvas.colorado.edu>

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook (required): Schiller and Gebhardt: The Macro Economy Today, 17th edition with access to Connect. Connect is where you will read your textbook and complete some graded assignments. You will access Connect through our course website on Canvas.

- Get up and running in Connect by following the registration instructions on [this page](#), by clicking on any connect based assignment in the course, or on the McGraw Hill Connect button on the Left-hand side menu of our course.
- You may purchase or rent a used paper text if you prefer but you **must have** access to Connect.

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS AND DATA EXERCISES

Supplemental readings and other materials will be provided in the Canvas system. Unless marked as optional these are REQUIRED readings. I will test you on these. You should activate University provided subscription to [Wall Street Journal](#) , [Financial Times](#), and [New York Times](#).

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY AND DELIVERY

This class is completely **asynchronous, entirely online** – with no in-person meetings. In this setting, engagement means three things: staying active with the material, connecting with your peers, and staying connected with me. You will submit assignments in accordance with the course outline using Canvas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course content is broken into modules. We will cover **one module** per week. We will follow the course due dates and content as laid out in the course schedule, available under the "Syllabus" link on Canvas. If any changes are necessary, I will notify you through **Announcements on Canvas**.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Your final grade is based on a total of **1000 points**. Course grades will be determined as shown below:

Due date/frequency	Assessment	Times offered	Number counted towards grade	Points per Assignment	Grade Points	Grade Percentage
Tuesday every week	Connections	13	12	15	180	18
Thursday every week	Prep Work	13	12	20	240	24
Sunday every week	Problem Set	10	9	20	180	18
Oct 16 th – Oct 18 th	Midterm	1	1	200	200	20
Dec 4 th – Dec 6 th	Final	1	1	200	200	20
	Grade	Total			1000	100

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

I use the following scale to assign final letter grades, and I typically do not round grades. You can always see your running total in Canvas as the semester progresses. If you have concerns about where you stand, I encourage you to reach out early so we can talk through your options together.

Grade	Percentage Grade	Equivalent Points	Indicates
A	94-100	940 – 1000	<i>Excellent</i>
A-	90-93.99	900 – 939	
B+	87-89.99	870 – 899	
B	83-86.99	830 – 869	<i>Above Average</i>
B-	80-83.99	800 – 829	
C+	77-79.99	770 – 799	

Grade	Percentage Grade	Equivalent Points	Indicates
C	73-77.99	730 – 769	<i>Average</i>
C-	70-72.99	700 – 739	
D+	67-69.99	670 – 699	
D	63-67.99	630 – 669	<i>Below Average</i>
D-	60-62.99	600 – 639	
F	0-59	599 or lower	<i>Fail</i>

TYPE OF ASSESSMENTS

I use a mix of assignment types to help you show how well you understand and can apply what you're learning. Exams assess mastery at key points, while weekly activities build understanding through repeated practice. This pacing is intentional. Short, low-stakes tasks spaced across the week support learning through retrieval practice and reduce cognitive load.

You have flexibility in how you complete the weekly work. You may work a few days ahead, complete several assignments in one sitting, or reserve one or two focused work blocks each week. The goal is steady progress and deeper understanding—not fragmented work. To support flexibility, drops are built into several categories, and most assignments may be submitted up to three days late with a daily penalty.

Connections and Check-ins help you engage with the week's ideas, reflect on your learning, and stay connected with me and your classmates. These activities may include short written responses, discussion posts, peer replies, or quick check-ins about course concepts and study strategies.

- **Due:** Tuesday by 11:59 pm; peer replies Thursday by 11:59 pm when required
- **Number/points:** 13 offered / 12 counted; 15 points each
- **Estimated time for completion:** about 30–60 minutes
- **Policy:** lowest score is dropped; no makeups or late work

Prep helps you work through key concepts, before the end-of-week assignment.

- **Due:** Thursday by 11:59 pm
- **Number/points:** 13 offered / 12 counted; 20 points each
- **Estimated time for completion:** about 30–60 minutes
- **Policy:** lowest score is dropped; late window applies

Problem Sets give you practice applying the week's material on multiple-choice, calculation, and short-answer questions, or in data exercises.

- **Due:** Sunday by 11:59 pm
- **Number/points:** 10 offered / 9 counted; 20 points each
- **Estimated time for completion:** about 1–3 hours
- **Policy:** lowest score is dropped; late window applies

Grading rubrics and more detailed information are available with each assessment on Canvas. I encourage you to keep a copy of all work created for the course, including work submitted through Canvas.

EXAMS - There are two (2) exams in the course. The exams will be multiple choice, calculations, and short answer questions and are closed book. Exams are meant to challenge you, so consistent engagement with the course material matters.

Exam	Covers	Scheduled window
Midterm	Modules 1-7	Oct 16-Oct 18 (Friday-Sunday)
Final	Modules 8-13	Dec 4 – Dec 6 (Friday-Sunday)

- **PRACTICE EXAMS** – There are two (2) practice exams, one before each exam that you can take 2 times as part of the **prep** for that module.

Rules for all exams:

- Exams are proctored and must be completed within the allotted time.
- **There are no make-up exams.** If you miss the midterm because of an excused illness or documented obligation, your final exam score will be used to determine the score recorded for the missed midterm.
- Exams are closed book, which means you may not use the textbook, past assignments, quizzes, discussions, outside websites, AI tools, or help from another person.
- Before your exam begins, please make sure you have access to a working computer with a camera and microphone, a stable internet connection, and a quiet space for testing.
- Devices, such as calculators, phones, headphones, tablets, or notes, should be turned off and put away unless I have specifically said they are allowed.
- Technology problems on your end, including interruptions with Proctorio or your internet connection, do not qualify you for a retake. Test your setup early and contact the appropriate help desk right away if problems arise.

Proctoring Options: *Detailed proctoring information is available in Canvas.*

Location	Available options
BOULDER OR NEARBY	1. With an online-class instructor at the Department of Economics (no cost; selected times during the exam period). 2. University Testing Center on campus in Boulder 3. Proctorio or a comparable online proctoring service as determined by the Online Economics Department (no cost for Proctorio).
OUTSIDE BOULDER	1. An accredited college or university testing center in your town or nearby (there may be a cost).

	2. Proctorio or a comparable online proctoring service as determined by the Online Economics Department (no cost for Proctorio).
<i>RURAL AREA OR MILITARY BASE</i>	You may need approval to use a person as a proctor. See Canvas for the approval process and additional information.

SMARTBOOK: Each chapter has an associated SmartBook activity in Connect. SmartBook is **not for course credit** but it is a good practice tool to help you review the chapter, check your understanding, and focus on topics that need more attention. Some students find SmartBook helpful, while others prefer different study methods, so use it in the way that best supports your learning. I encourage you to try SmartBook for topics you are struggling with, even if you do not complete every activity.

Extra Credit: I will offer up to 30 -50 points of extra credit (= maximum 5% of the course grade) during the semester for completing certain activities. These extra credit opportunities will be available to all and announced on Canvas. Extra class activity points will also roll over for extra credit.

COMMUNICATION WITH DR B: Staying connected is key to your success in this course!

- I make **announcements** on the course home page on Canvas or via your official Colorado.edu email. I send a course announcement at the start of every module and more as required. Check the course “Announcements” section and your official Colorado.edu email account regularly. I recommend setting your Canvas “notifications” to alert you for announcements.
- **STUDENT DROP IN HOURS (AKA OFFICE HOURS):** I hold online Office hours each week on Zoom. These times are set aside just for you. I encourage you to drop in with questions about course material, assignments, or even just to chat about economics. If these times don't work, contact me to arrange another Zoom meeting.
- **EMAIL:** For most questions and non-emergencies, email is the best way to reach me at **alpna.bhatia@colorado.edu**. I aim to reply promptly, usually within **24-48 hours** (excluding weekends). Use your official colorado.edu email address, include the course number in the subject line, or message me through Canvas. If you have not heard back after two days, a gentle follow-up is welcome.

I care about your learning and will provide individual feedback on your work and return it as promptly as possible. I typically grade assignments within a week; if grading takes longer, I will keep you informed of my progress and make every effort to return your work with feedback as soon as I can.

I also believe in protecting Student privacy (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act). I do not publicly post grades and do NOT give out grades on email. You will have to check your grades in the grade book area of Canvas. Often, I will leave comments in the comment box or rubric of the assignment. You should check the comments and rubrics section of your grades to check why your work was assessed a certain way. For more detailed feedback, if you wish to rework your assignment, or a grade review, we will need to meet in office hours or via appointment.

COURSE POLICIES (THINGS THAT AFFECT YOU)

LATE WORK AND DROP POLICY: I trust you to manage your time and submit assignments on time. I also know that life can be unpredictable, so this course includes some late-work options and dropped scores.

No late work is accepted for Exams, Connections and Check-ins, and other time-bound assignments identified in Canvas. These must be completed on time.

- **Automatic late window:** Prep and Problem Sets may be submitted up to 3 days after the due date, with a 5% penalty per day.
- **Extension requests:** Requests must be submitted through the **Assignment Extension Request** space on Canvas. I created this dedicated space so requests are documented in one place and do not get lost in email.
- **Common issues:** Internet problems, travel, vacations, minor illnesses, and general time-management challenges do not waive the late penalty.
- **Drop policy:** I drop the lowest score in most graded categories: one Connection, one Prep Work, and one Problem Set, as detailed in the grading section.
- For major illness, university-excused functions, religious obligations, military service, significant health challenges, family emergencies, or other circumstances truly beyond your control, submit an extension request as soon as possible so we can discuss options.

AI USE IN THIS COURSE: GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

In this course, we'll use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools purposefully to enhance your engagement with economics, not to replace your critical thinking. My goal is to help you use AI wisely and ethically, preparing you for its role in professional settings. Assignments will fall into three clear categories regarding AI use, with specific instructions provided for each:

Assignment label	What it means
No AI Use	Complete the work using your own thinking and analysis; AI tools are not permitted.
Limited AI Use (Assistive)	AI may help with editing or ideas, but the final work must be your own. Cite any AI material you use.
AI-leaning Assignments	AI use is part of the assignment; experiment with and critically evaluate AI tools as directed.

It is your responsibility to always check assignment instructions for specific AI guidelines. Remember, you are solely responsible for any errors in your work, regardless of AI use. You may not use AI tools to cheat on assessments or submit work generated entirely by AI as your own. Any AI material used must be clearly marked and cited. Submitting work that is simply cut-and-pasted without your analysis will result in a zero.

Caution - Preps and Problem Sets are open book and open notes. While you may be tempted to use AI tools, or use an agentic browser to complete them, doing so will undermine your preparation for exams, which are closed book and proctored.

If you have *any* questions about appropriate AI use, please **ask me**. For full details on this comprehensive policy, including specific examples and FAQs, please refer to the 'AI Use in This Course: Guidelines and

Expectations' page on Canvas.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

Incomplete grades are not granted for low academic performance. An incomplete is considered only when a student has completed a substantial amount of the course (75% or more) satisfactorily but is unable to finish remaining requirements because of circumstances beyond their control. Students must initiate the request, and if approved, I will set the conditions and timeline for completing the remaining coursework. For more information, see CU Boulder's [undergraduate credits and grading policy](#).

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

Any student who wishes to withdraw from the course must submit a request directly to [Continuing Education](#). For complete information, please [visit their website](#)

TUTORING

A list of tutors available for hire is available at the [Dept](#) website.

CLASS BEHAVIOR

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Failure to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, political affiliation, or political philosophy.

Additional classroom behavior information can be found at

- [Student Classroom and Course-Related Behavior Policy](#).
- [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

I am required to inform OIEC when someone discloses misconduct regardless of when or where it occurred. This is to ensure that those impacted receive outreach from OIEC about resolution options and support resources. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit the [Don't Ignore It page](#).

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES, TEMPORARY MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND MEDICAL ISOLATION

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services](#) website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or DSinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website for resources available to you. I encourage you to reach out as soon as possible if you have an illness, injury or required medical isolation for which you require assignment extensions.

HONOR CODE

*"On my honor, as a University of Colorado Boulder student
I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance."*

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code may include but are not limited to: plagiarism, use of paper writing services or technology such as essay bots, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. Understanding the course's syllabus is a vital part of adhering to the Honor Code.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution: StudentConduct@colorado.edu. Students found responsible for violating the Honor Code will be assigned resolution outcomes from Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution and will be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Visit [Honor Code](#) for more information on the academic integrity policy.

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgment. Examples of plagiarism include failing to use quotation marks when directly quoting from a source; failing to document distinctive ideas from a source; fabricating or inventing sources; and copying information from the Internet. Having AI tools, chatbots, autonomous agents generate or LLMs complete work for you and then submitting that work as your own is also academic dishonesty.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

If you are struggling with personal stressors, mental health or substance use concerns that are impacting academic or daily life, please contact [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) located in C4C or call (303) 492-2277, 24/7.

PREFERRED STUDENT NAMES AND PRONOUNS

CU Boulder, and I recognize that your legal information may not always align with how you identify. You may update your preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are then updated on class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster will be your legal name. Your comfort and identity are important to me, so please feel free to make any necessary changes.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams or assignments. You may ask for assignment extensions with no late penalties for your religious observance before the assignment is due. Whenever possible, students must notify the instructional faculty member at least two weeks in advance of the expected exam, assignment deadline, or attendance conflict to request an accommodation for religious observance. If the start date of the course is less than two weeks before the date of requested accommodation, students must notify the instructional faculty member on the start date of the course. See the [Student Academic Accommodations for Religious Observances Policy](#) for more information.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of

Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#). Please know that faculty have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

TECHNICAL HELP

Students are responsible for maintaining or accessing a computer system capable of participating in all aspects of this course. This includes running the Canvas and proctorio software. If for any reason you are having technical difficulties **contact the appropriate Help desk immediately, and then notify me**. I will work with you to ensure that your online learning experience is not hampered by technical issues.

- [Check if your browser](#) and computer meets the requirements for Canvas LMS
- Canvas technical support: Click the “help” (?) icon on the left side of Canvas, once logged in.
- Connect: Help Click the “help” (?) icon on the right side of your webpage, once logged in.
- CU Boulder OIT - 303-735-4357 (5-HELP) or help@colorado.edu

NETIQUETTE

Online communication works best when we are respectful, clear, and mindful of one another.

1. Be respectful: Treat classmates with dignity and care, especially when people bring different perspectives or experiences.
2. Be clear and relevant: write in complete sentences, avoid unnecessary slang or all caps, and stay focused on the assigned discussion.
3. Respect time: stay on topic, allow others reasonable time to respond, and avoid last-minute posts when possible.

Website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE:

This course works best when you build a steady weekly routine. You do not need to master economics before you begin but you do need to stay engaged, and reach out before small problems become big ones.

- **Build the weekly habit:** Use the Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday deadlines to spread your work across the week. Check Canvas regularly, keep track of due dates in whatever system works for you, and try not to wait until the last minute. Small, steady effort will help you much more than cramming.
- **Prepare before you practice:** Do the readings, watch or review the course materials, and complete the prep work with enough time to notice what is still confusing. If something does not make sense right away, that is normal. Concepts often become clearer after you work with them more than once.
- **Practice before you are assessed:** Macroeconomics takes practice. Use SmartBook, prep work, problem sets, practice exams, office hours, and feedback to figure out what you understand and what still needs work. Getting something wrong during practice is useful information, not a reason to give up.
- **Connect economics to the world around you:** Pay attention to current events, course examples, and the economic choices people and governments make every day. Ask not only what happened, but why it happened, who is affected, and what tradeoffs are involved.

- **Protect your progress:** Because this is an online course, technology planning matters. Test your access to Canvas, Connect, Proctorio, and Zoom before you urgently need them. Give yourself a buffer before deadlines and exams whenever you can.
- **Take care of yourself as a learner:** Break larger tasks into smaller steps, take breaks when you need them, and pay attention to which study habits are actually helping you. If you are struggling with the material, the pacing, or the course expectations, reach out early. Asking for help is part of successful learning.

I'm excited you are in the course, and I hope it will be a great semester. I look forward to working with you – Dr. B