UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
Principles of Macroeconomics : ECON2020-400
Spring 2009

Jay Kaplan
Office: Economics Room 4C
Office Telephone: 492-2651

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12:00-1:00,
Tuesday and Thursday 1:45-2:30, or by appointment.

e-mail: kaplan@colorado.edu

Web Link for Class Outline

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to give the student an understanding of macroeconomic concepts and related issues. First, lets 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 Ben Bernanke 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. 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

Textbook: Macroeconomics, by Krugman, Worth publishers, 2006.

Grading

The class grade is based on three exams and a recitation. The grade will be based on the following system:

The lowest score of either exam 1, exam 2 or the recitation will be dropped. Another way of stating this is that out of the first two exams and the recitation, the two highest scores will be counted and the lowest will be dropped. Each exam counts for one-third of the grade and the recitation also counts for one-third. As a result, two-thirds of the grade will be determined from the first two exams and the recitation.

Final recitation scores may be adjusted to reflect exam averages and to equate averages across different TAs.

Exam 3 will also count for one-third of the grade.

Exams 1 and 2 are given only on the scheduled time listed here, if you miss either exam 1 or exam 2, **no make up exam will be given**. Please do not ask, given the large class size, it is impossible to schedule special exam times. The recitation score then will count as one-third of the grade.

All students must take exam 3 at the scheduled time, unless you have two other exams scheduled on the same day of finals and this is the third exam scheduled on that day.

Exam Schedule

Exam 1: Thursday, Feb. 12

Exam 2: Tuesday, March 17

Exam 3: Tuesday, May 5: 4:30 - 7:00

Exams will be given in the classroom during the normal class time

Students can only take exams during the scheduled time. No makeup or alternative times can be scheduled.

Important Dates

- There are no recitations during the first week of classes. Recitations begin Tuesday January 20th or on Monday January 26th for Monday recitations.
- March 23 - March 29 – Spring Break
- May 1 - Last day of classes