

ECO 120: Global Macroeconomics
Instructor: James Murray, Ph.D.
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Instructor Information

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Course Goals

Develop familiarity with economic tools and theories and develop strategies for framing and solving problems that help us answer the following questions:

1. What promotes or limits economic growth in both highly-developed and lesser-developed countries? What explains differences between countries?
 2. What causes recessions and unemployment episodes? Can governments enact economic policies that can prevent or fix these problems? How?
 3. What influences the cost-of-living and inflation? Can governments enact economic policies that keeps inflation under control? How?
 4. Can common government policies adversely affect economic growth or the economic well-being of a country? How?
 5. How do international influences affect the economic well-being of a country?
 6. How do we or how should we measure the economic health of a country? Do our measures provide accurate descriptions employment, inflation, and production?
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Learning Objectives

For successful learning, it is important that you understand why we do the reading, lectures, assignments, etc, we do. Everything we do in this class is meant to achieve the learning objectives below. It would be useful for you to pay careful attention to what learning objectives the lectures and assignments are meant to achieve.

Foundational skills for macroeconomic analysis

1. Apply the model of the production possibilities curve to illustrate the concepts of scarcity, choice, opportunity cost, and economic growth.
2. Use the supply and demand model to predict price and quantity outcomes for markets for products and services.
3. Use the supply and demand model for currencies to predict changes in exchange rates.*
4. Define macroeconomic measures of production, prices, inflation, and employment. Students will be able to explain how each is measured and evaluate usefulness and limitations for each measure.
5. Compare and explain international differences in macroeconomic outcomes of production, prices, inflation, and employment.*

Short-run fluctuations in the business cycle

6. Apply the model of aggregate demand and aggregate supply to predict and demonstrate how changes in spending decisions and production costs affect real GDP and price level in the short run and long run.
7. Apply the model of aggregate demand and aggregate supply to predict and demonstrate how international influences affect real GDP and price level in the short run and long run.*

8. Apply the model of aggregate demand and aggregate supply to current international economic and political issues.*
9. Apply the model of aggregate demand and aggregate supply to evaluate the impact of fiscal and monetary policy on real GDP and price level in the short run and long run.

Factors affecting long-run economic well-being

10. Predict how savings, investment decisions, and policies influence capital stock and long-run production possibilities.
11. Describe factors that may influence economic growth and use these to explain international difference in growth and development.*

* Learning outcomes #3, #5, #7, #8, and #11 address the interaction of the domestic economy in a global economic setting.

General Education Student Learning Outcome

Students will demonstrate knowledge and abilities relating to critical and creative thinking.

College of Business Administration Curriculum Outcomes

The following are learning goals for the entire College of Business Administration (CBA) Curriculum. In addition to being a General Education course, ECO 120 is an important introductory level course in the CBA curriculum. If you choose a business major, I recommend you regularly read the following learning outcomes and reflect upon how various courses help you grow in these areas. Learning outcomes that are starred are ones that we will address in ECO 120.

1. Communication - Developing the ability to convey information and ideas effectively.
 - (a) Students will convey information and ideas in professional business reports
 - (b) Students will convey information and ideas in oral presentations.
2. Decision Making and Critical Thinking: Students will evaluate alternatives and understand the ramifications of those alternatives within a given business context.*
3. Global Context of Business: Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate global perspectives in business decisions.*
4. Major Competency: Students will apply functional area concepts and decision-making techniques and tools appropriately while incorporating concepts from other functional business area into the primary area.
5. Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate the ability to consider the effects of business decisions on the entire social system.*

Time Requirement for a Summer/Winter Session Online Course

Be advised that a three-credit online course in only three weeks is very time consuming. As a short-session course, we have to push through material that is usually covered in 14 weeks over a regular semester in only 3 weeks. In a normal face-to-face three-credit class taken over a regular semester, we would normally meet 3 hours per week and you would have about 3-6 hours of reading/homework per week. This is a workload you are probably used to. In a face-to-face class taken over a winter or summer session we would meet for *4 hours per day*, 5 days per week, and you would get about *3-4 hours of reading/homework each day*. This comes to about *8 hours of work per day* for a normal face-to-face winter or summer session course. This takes a significant amount of time for three weeks, but it is made easier by the enforcement mechanism of actually having to show up to class everyday.

For an *online* three-week course, a similar workload is required and possibly more because it takes more time to discuss issues and ask questions by typing in discussion boards than it does to simply talk. Moreover, you *must have the discipline to dedicate enough time from your schedule every day for this class*. There will be no one looking over your shoulder everyday to make sure you are putting an adequate amount of time and effort into this class. *Expect to spend about 40 hours per week for this class*. It is a lot of work, but completing a whole semester course in only 3 weeks without the face-to-face interaction with your teacher is a full time job.

Contact Methods

In face-to-face classes, typical ways you contact your instructor include talking face-to-face during class, talking face-to-face during office hours, and sending messages over e-mail. In an online class, not only are some of these methods not possible, different methods may be appropriate depending on what you need to discuss. Try your best to follow these guidelines:

- Contact me through the discussion forums in D2L.
 - This is my preferred mode of correspondence when it comes to questions about the material in the course.
 - If you have a question about course material and/or clarifications on assignments it is likely others do too, and the discussions between us might also be useful to others in the class.
 - Rule of thumb: If your question is something you would feel comfortable asking during class in a face-to-face class, you should ask the question through the D2L discussion forums in this online class.
 - See the information below that provides more details about the online discussion forums.
- Contact me by e-mail at jmurray@uwlax.edu.
 - I prefer this mode of contact over telephone.
 - I respond to e-mails at the latest by the following day (Monday through Friday) at 4:00pm.
 - Questions over e-mail should concern personal matters such as concerns or questions about your grade.
 - Questions via e-mail would include questions you would be uncomfortable discussing in front of other people during a face-to-face class, but you would instead prefer to talk to me one-on-one outside of class.
 - I prefer questions concerning course content be handled in the discussion forums, but if you prefer our correspondence not be public information, you are welcome to contact me via e-mail.
- Contact me by phone at (608)406-4068
 - This is my least preferred option.
 - You should contact me this way only if you have an emergency that I can address right away.

Course Resources

As with most online courses, this course is designed using a learner-centered approach. You may be more familiar with the opposite, an instructor-centered approach, in which the job of the instructor is to transmit his or her expertise through lectures and readings and provide you with the correct answers when you have a question or you do something incorrectly. A learner-centered approach still uses lectures (many short videos are provided), readings, and the instructor's expertise, but instead the instructor plays the role of a *facilitator*. The facilitator carefully chooses and creates course material (includes textbook chapters, short videos, and outside readings that can be viewed online) and provides some guidance for you, the student, on how to use these materials to build knowledge through *self-discovery*, or discovering with your classmates. I definitely encourage you to ask questions whenever you have them and my job is to be here to help, but do not expect to be handed correct answers (remember, self-discovery is the key!). Rather, I might point you in the right direction, answer your question with a question that might aid self-discovery, tell you what content to re-examine or where to give extra attention, or give you additional content if we think that is most helpful.

For every topic in the course, you will be provided content from a number of different sources and using different delivery methods. For every week and for every topic you can expect the following at a minimum:

1. Modules of reading in your textbook (a module is like a chapter, only shorter): Krugman, Paul and Robin Wells. 2012. *Macroeconomics*. Second Edition. Worth Publishers.
2. Pencasts: These are short videos of me writing on notebook paper and explaining some of the most difficult concepts from the reading. Pencasts are actually more interactive than traditional videos, because you can click anywhere on the notebook page to advance to that spot in the video.
3. External reading: a link to an article elsewhere online. Readings will include articles published online whose target audience are economics students like yourselves. Readings will also include news stories when current events are related to the course material.

Assessment

Learning will be assessed through weekly quizzes, homework, and exams. The grading breakdown will be:

Quizzes: 15%

Homework assignments: 15%

Discussion forums: 10%

Exam 1: 30%

Exam 2: 30%

Grade Breakdown

94-100	A	77-81	BC
89-93	AB	70-76	C
82-88	B	0-69	F

I reserve the right to scale every person's grade up by the same amount on any graded item in the event that much of the class falls short of the scale above. However, even if the grades are significantly low, there is no guarantee that I will ever do this.

Homework Assignments

For nearly every topic, there will be a homework assignment that will involve short-answer and problem-solving-type questions. Often, these questions will require you to draw graphs to illustrate your answer. I recommend you write your answers and draw your graphs by hand, take a picture or scan them, and turn in an electronic copy. Alternatively, you can create graphs using graphing software and then type your answers. I think making electronic graphs makes very nice looking homework assignments, but it is extremely time

consuming, and I would rather have your time spent with this class be spent thinking about economics.

Drawing these graphs takes literally 5-10 seconds to do by hand, but can take more than 10 minutes to make with a computer. It could therefore be literally over 100 times more time consuming to create a graph with a computer than to do by hand. I suggest you do your homework and exams by hand with a paper and pencil and take a picture or scan them to a PDF and turn them in via the D2L dropbox.

There will be two or three homework assignments due each week that will be much easier if you can scan them. There will also be 2 exams, where half of the exam are short answer / problem solving questions which should also be done by hand and scanned.

Group Screencast Demonstrations

The class will be divided into several groups of two students each. Once during the session, your group will be asked to solve a short-answer / problem solving question. The question will be similar to questions that you see on your homework assignments and exams. You and your partner will create a screencast video to show to the class, that (1) introduces the question, (2) demonstrates how to solve the question using graphical techniques, and (3) describes the conclusion or answer to the question.

A screencast is a video of what is happening on your screen. Create your screencast using the online software at <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com>. There will be no software to download or install, but your browser needs to have a Java plugin to run. Your computer will need to have a microphone to record you talking, while you are demonstrating on your computer screen how to solve the problem. Most laptop computers have a microphone in them.

You can create graphs easily using a Google Drive template called GraphEcon. Here is a demonstration of how to create a graph using GraphEcon:

<http://www.murraylax.org/graphecon/Getting%20Started.mp4>

Here is an example video that I created for a Supply and Demand problem:

<http://www.murraylax.org/graphecon/Shift%20in%20Supply%20-%20Drought.mp4>

Note: In the video above, I explain along the way how you use GraphEcon. I hope you find this useful, but you do not have to do this yourself. When you make your own video, you don't need little explanations for how to do things in GraphEcon. You should describe, though, the economics behind what you are doing and why. That is, you do not have to describe that you are copying and pasting an upward-sloping line and dragging it to the graph. You should describe though that you are making an upward-sloping supply curve.

The screencast demonstrations will be assigned on Monday and they are due on Thursday by 5:00pm to the appropriate D2L dropbox folder. Using the Screencast-O-Matic online software, choose to download your video to an MP4 video, then upload this file to the D2L dropbox folder. The videos will be posted on Friday morning to the D2L content section for the entire class to view. Each group will only have to do this once during the semester. About a third of the class will be assigned a screencast demonstration during the first week of the semester, about one third will have one assigned during the second week, and the last third of the class will have one assigned during the third and final week.

The screencast assignment will be given a weight that is equal to twice the weight of a single homework assignment.

Start working with your partner on your screencast assignment early! It is up to you how you want to work together with your partner. You can contact your partner by email, phone, Skype, Facebook chat, meet them face-to-face, or whatever. Make sure you both figure out how to solve the problem, and outline what you want to put in your screencast video. You will likely need to make some practice videos before you are ready to make one to share with the whole class.

Quizzes

For every topic there will be a quiz that you will be allowed to do within a specified 2-3 day time period (to allow flexibility in your schedule). You will be allowed two attempts at each quiz, and the higher of the two attempts will be scored as your grade. Once you begin the quiz you must finish within the next 60 minutes. You are allowed to use your textbook during the quiz and any of the resources posted on D2L. However, you must work independently on the quizzes, not consulting with any other persons whether part of this class or not. Moreover, you must not consult any Internet resources that are not included in the course. To be able to finish the quiz on time, it is wise to read the content given to you for the week, spend some time studying it, and ask questions about difficult concepts before you take the quiz.

Exams

There will be two exams on the dates below. The exams will be made available in the morning of the dates below at 12:01AM, and will be due in the evening by 11:59PM on that same date. You may begin the exam at any time of the day, but once you begin you must **finish within the next 180 minutes**.

- **Exam 1:** Friday, January 15
- **Exam 2:** Friday, January 22

Each exam will have two components:

1. A series of multiple choice questions (about 30 questions). Unlike the quizzes, you will only have one attempt on these questions.
2. Short-answer problem-solving questions. These questions will involve computational and graphical problem solving questions, similar to your homework assignments. For these questions, you will have to do both of the following: (1) Legibly write your answers with a pencil and paper, including any appropriate graphs or computations you need to answer the question, and (2) Type a description of your answer in a textbox following the question. Your descriptions must be in complete sentences, they should describe what graphical model you used or what computations you made, then describe the conclusion. You must also upload your hand-written work to the appropriate D2L dropbox. Unless otherwise stated, credit will only be given for questions that have both typed descriptions and hand-written analysis, and that are consistent with each other. **The hand-written descriptions must be scanned and submitted to the appropriate D2L dropbox within one hour of submitting your multiple choice and typed-answer questions.**

You are allowed to use your textbook during the exams and any of the resources posted on D2L, but it is **very strongly recommended to thoroughly read all resources and spend a significant amount of time studying for the exam. If you spend too much time during the exam looking up material you are not likely to finish within the allotted time which can result in a very low grade.** You must work independently on the exams, not consulting with any other persons whether part of this class or not. Moreover, you must not consult any Internet resources that are not included in the course.

Discussion Forums

There will be four types of discussion forums:

1. *Virtual cafe*: This is an informal discussion forum where you can casually get to know each other and discuss things not related to the class. In the first week you will be required to introduce yourself in this forum. This forum will be available throughout the semester, but further use is optional.
2. *General questions forum*: This forum is for general questions about course structure, course content, expectations about the syllabus or assignments, or any other clarifying questions for the course. Questions about course content (i.e. details about what you are learning) should *not* be in this forum. Posting to this forum is not required unless you have a question.
3. *Class content questions forum*: One or more new discussion forums will be set up every week for the one or more topics of that week. If you have trouble understanding any of the material you can ask questions (or read answers from other people's questions) here.
4. *Assigned discussion forum*: Every week I will post one or more discussion topics that will ask you specific questions about the week's material. You will be required to post original comments on this forum and responses to your classmates posts. This is where most of our discussion will occur. Your participation in this forum is evaluated according to the guidelines that follow.

Every week you will be asked to participate in one or more discussions on the *Assigned discussion forum*. For each discussion, you must provide at least three posts. One of these posts must be an original post answering the question(s) provided and the other two must be responses to others posts. All posts should be between 40-100 words. Furthermore, *each post must be placed on a different day of the week*. Requiring all of us to participate on multiple days allows for a natural discussion to take place, but still allows flexibility in your schedule. Each discussion assignment will have further, more specific instructions. The discussions will be graded according to the rubric on the last page of the syllabus.

The class is broken up into three groups of 6-10 students each for the assigned discussion forum. On this forum, you will only be able to see the discussion topics and responses for those people in your discussion group. You will be participating in the assigned discussion forum with these same students for the entire term. By limiting the assigned discussion forum to this small group, rather than the entire class, allows us a manageable number of people to get to know on the discussion board and have a meaningful discussion with.

Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, or hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and the Disability Resource Services office (165 Murphy Library, 785-6900) at the beginning of the semester. Students who are currently using the Disability Resource Services office will have a copy of a contract that verifies they are qualified students with disabilities who have documentation on file in the Disability Resource Services office. It is the student's responsibility to communicate their needs with the instructor in a timely manner.

Academic Dishonesty

I follow the policy stated University Academic Handbook with regard to cheating and academic dishonesty. The student handbook can be found online at http://www.uwlax.edu/studentlife/eagle_eye.htm. In the event a student is caught cheating I will pursue the harshest penalty that the University will allow, regardless of how small the offense may appear.

Topics Schedule

Below is a detailed list of topics and textbook readings for this class. As we approach each week there will be further details posted on D2L concerning Pencasts, additional readings, discussions, homework assignments, and quizzes.

- Unit 1: Introduction to class / introduction to each other.
- Unit 2: Economics, Scarcity, and Production Possibilities (Modules 1 and 3).
- Unit 3: Supply and Demand (Modules 5, 6, and 7).
- Unit 4: Application of Supply and Demand Market for foreign currency exchange (Module 42)
- Unit 5: Measuring output (Modules 10 and 11), employment (Modules 12 and 13), and inflation (Modules 14 and 15).
- Unit 6: Loanable Funds Market (Module 29, pages 277-282).
- Unit 7: Economic Growth (Modules 37, 38, and 29).
- Unit 8: Keynesian multiplier model (Module 16, ignore pages 161-164) and Aggregate Demand and Aggregate Supply (Module 18, 19, and 20)
- Unit 9: Monetary system and monetary policy (Modules 23, 27, and 28)

Discussion Forum Grading Rubric

Each discussion (i.e. the set of three or more posts for a single discussion assignment) will be graded on a two-point scale according to the rubric below. Failure to follow the directions above concerning number, length and type of posts will result in zero points.

Your grade for the entire discussion will equal the lowest points earned from any part of the discussion. For example, suppose all posts except one earns 2 points each for content, professionalism, and active listening, but one of your posts earns a 1 for any category such as professionalism. Your grade for the entire discussion thread is equal to 1.

Category	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Content	Discussion posts include two or more concepts from the class readings and resources from the week <i>and</i> the concepts are correctly applied and explained.	Discussion posts include less than two concepts from the class readings and resources from the week <i>or</i> the concepts are incorrectly applied or explained.	Discussion posts do not include any concepts from the class readings.
Professionalism/Etiquette	Discussion posts clearly and unambiguously respect the others' opinions and values. All posts have complete sentences, have correct spelling and grammar with very few errors, and do not make use of common Internet abbreviations.	The wording of one or more discussion posts may be taken as disrespectful, even if that is not your intent <i>or</i> there are multiple spelling and grammar errors or unnecessary use of common Internet abbreviations.	One or more discussion posts are clearly not respectful of others in the class <i>or</i> there are many spelling and grammar errors.
Active Listening	Responses to posts clearly one or more incorporate classmates' ideas evidenced in other posts <i>and</i> responses maintain discussion continuity (no abrupt changes in topic, etc).	Content in responses to posts are related to previous posts, but do not clearly and directly incorporate the ideas of other classmates.	Responses are not related to other classmates' discussion posts and abruptly change the subject.