Intermediate Microeconomics (Mathematical) – Syllabus

Overview: This course will cover the same topics as Econ 1110, but they will be presented through a more mathematical lens. Those without a strong math background will likely find the class difficult, though certainly not impossible. Those with a strong math background are likely to find the presentation of economic theory in this class more appealing than the more heuristic treatment in Econ 1110. Those considering going to graduate school in economics should probably take this class rather than Econ 1110.

Prerequisites: I will assume that you understand Econ 11 topics including basic supply/demand diagrams and intuition. In addition, this course assumes knowledge of single-variable calculus. If you have not taken any calculus or are not comfortable with math, you should take Econ 1110 instead. Multivariable calculus (material in Math 0180) will be used extensively throughout the course, but all of the tools used beyond single-variable calculus will be presented in class, though only briefly. I will assume that you are taking Math 0180 (or equivalent) concurrently or have been introduced to multivariable calculus in the past.

Grading: Grades will be assigned based on two midterms (25% each), a final (40%) and 10 problem sets (10%). There will be no makeup exams. Make sure to keep the date of the midterms (below) free. If you miss a midterm, you will receive a 0 unless you can provide a note from the dean or your doctor that your absence is justified. In this case only, the other two exams will be reweighted to calculate your grade. Productive class & section participation will work in your favor if you are on the margin between two grades.

Readings: Your primary source for material covered in the course will be the lectures. You should view the textbook as a resource for reviewing concepts and providing practice problems. The textbook is Microeconomic Theory: Basic Principles and Extensions, 11th Edition by Nicholson & Snyder. This is equivalent to the softcover “Custom Edition” which you may be able to find from past years. For some topics, lectures will present the material in more detail than is in the textbook.

TA & Conferences: The TA is Adrian Rubli (Adrian_Rubli@brown.edu). He will conduct the weekly conference which will take place as follows: Thursdays 12-12:50 in Solomon 202

Online Course Materials: Problem sets, solutions and various other materials will be posted on the course Canvas page at canvas.brown.edu.

Problem Sets are due by noon on Wednesdays in the class InBox in the basement of Robinson Hall (side room). All late problem sets will count as a 0. You are encouraged to work together on problem sets. Problem sets will be graded with a check, check-plus or check-minus. Check-minus problem sets will receive half credit while check and check-plus indicate full credit.

Office Hours:
Baum-Snow: Mondays 10:30-12:30AM or by appointment in Robinson 302C
Adrian: Tuesdays 2:00-4:00PM in the basement of Robinson Hall
Tentative Lecture Schedule
(Exam Dates Will Not Change)

Thu Sep 4: Chapter 1
Sep 9-11: Chapter 3
    Chapter 2 pp 21-33
Sep 16-18: Chapter 4
    Chapter 2 pp 33-58
Sep 23-25: Chapter 5
    Chapter 2 pp 58-63
Sep 30-Oct 2: Chapter 6 pp 187-195
Tu Oct 7: MIDTERM I
Thu Oct 9: Chapter 7
    Chapter 2 pp 67-77
Oct 14-16: Chapter 8 pp. 251-277 and Chapter 9
Oct 21-23: Chapter 10
Oct 28-30: Chapter 11
Nov. 4-6: Chapter 12 and Chapter 13
Tu Nov 11: Chapter 14
Thu Nov 13: MIDTERM II
Nov 18-20: Chapter 15 pp 531-540, 551-557
Nov 25: Chapter 17
Dec 2-4: (Chapter 18 pp 641-655, 663-672 and Chapter 19 pp 685-708 for background only)
Mon Dec. 15: FINAL EXAM, 2:00-5:00