ECU22011: Intermediate Economics A (Micro)

Michaelmas Term 2026

Trinity College Dublin

1 Course Information

Instructor: Weizheng Lai
Email: laiwe@tcd.ie
Office: 3016 Arts Building
Office Hours: Friday 1:30–2:30 PM **(starting from September 18)**

Lecture Time/Location:

- Monday 1–2 PM, 1008 Arts Building
- Friday 3–4 PM, Goldhall, Goldsmith Hall

Course Website: Blackboard

Teaching Assistants:

- Brendan Fleming (fleminbr@tcd.ie)
- Alexis Ladasic (ladasica@tcd.ie)
- Mercedes Gómez-Calcerrada Gómez-Lobo (gmezcalm@tcd.ie)

TA Office Hours/Location: TBA

Tutorials (Starting from Week of September 21): You are expected to attend your registered tutorial session. In a tutorial, a TA will discuss supplementary materials or problem sets. You are expected to complete the problem set before the tutorial. Tentatively, there will be 5 tutorials.

Group	Day	Time	Room
1	Monday	09:00–10:00	M21, Museum Building
4	Monday	15:00–16:00	2041B, Arts Building
5	Monday	17:00–18:00	*TBC*
10	Tuesday	12:00–13:00	1.20, Lloyd Institute (INS Building)
2	Wednesday	10:00–11:00	4050A, Arts Building
3	Wednesday	17:00–18:00	D0SR0.54, School of Nursing and Midwifery
6	Thursday	09:00–10:00	4050A, Arts Building
7	Friday	16:00–17:00	3074, Arts Building

Communication:

- For all emails to the instructor and TAs, please place **"ECU22011"** in the subject line; we will try our best to respond to emails within 3 business days.
- If you have a substantive question that requires a lengthy answer (e.g., how to solve a problem step by step), please attend office hours and do not expect a reply over email.
- For all questions on lectures and assessments, please contact the instructor. For all questions on tutorials, please contact your TA.
- If you plan to come to office hours, please email us to let us know you are coming.
- Lecture notes and announcements will be posted on the course website. It is your responsibility to check your email and Blackboard regularly for updates and announcements.

Course Description: This course is an intermediate-level study of contemporary microeconomic theory. It consists of three parts. First, we will cover the theory of rational choice and use it to analyze the choice problem that consumers face. In the second part, we will turn to the production decision faced by firms in a perfectly competitive market and study how markets can work to efficiently allocate resources through the price mechanism. The final part of the course will be devoted to understanding how markets can fail when the assumptions of the standard competitive model do not hold. We will also discuss how government interventions may deal with market failures.

2 Course Material

Lecture Notes: The core material is my lecture notes. I will post lecture notes before class.

(Optional) Textbook: The assigned textbook is *Intermediate Microeconomics with Calculus*, first edition by Hal R. Varian. It is *recommended but not required*. Older editions of *Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach* by Hal R. Varian can also be used and can be purchased online at a significant discount.

Problem Sets: They include questions to help you get familiar with the material. Solutions will be provided and discussed in tutorials. Solutions will not be posted.

Worksheets: For additional practice, I will post optional practice problem sets ("worksheets"). The solutions will also be posted. You are advised to first work on your own and then compare your answers.

3 Assessments

The final grade is based upon

- Midterm Assignment (30%): online, during the study week; due by November 1, 2026; details TBA.
- Final Exam (70%): in-person; TBA by the College.

Midterm Assignment: The midterm assignment is expected to take place online during the study week. You will complete and submit the assignment over Blackboard. You will be given the flexibility to choose a 2-hour time slot during the study week for completing the assignment. This assessment will determine 30% of your final grade in Intermediate Economics A. **There is a 100% late submission penalty.** As feedback, I will use one lecture to go over the midterm assignment.

A medical certificate, or equivalent, i.e., a supporting note/email to me from your College Tutor, will justify a limited extension to the submission deadline. The note from your College Tutor can, in extreme situations, justify non-submission (with the associated weight moving to the final exam). Neither a post-assignment medical certificate nor note/email from your College Tutor can be used to justify poor performance.

Final Exam: This final F2F exam is expected to last about 90 minutes. The final F2F exam will determine the remaining 70% of your final grade. The final F2F exam is a College Exam, i.e., I have no discretion over timing and/or location. The exam schedule is expected to be announced in mid-November. **Please do not book tickets now.**

4 Scholarship

Economics I: It is envisaged that students must answer one compulsory ("general") question and any two of the four remaining questions related to the first half of ECU22011 (i.e. Intermediate Economics A), Introductory Microeconomics/Macroeconomics and economics/economic policy more generally. Previous (draft) Schol exams are available via Blackboard.

5 Course Policies

Academic Honesty: The academic integrity policies will be strictly enforced in this module. See details at `https://www.tcd.ie/academic-affairs/academic-policies/academic-integrity/`.

Use of AI. You are NOT allowed to use ChatGPT or similar AI-powered tools to help with any assignment.

Getting your learning needs met. Trinity College Dublin provides various resources to support you. If you need any support or accommodations, please visit `https://www.tcd.ie/disability/support-and-resources/`.

Disclaimer. This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. I reserve the right to modify, supplement, and make changes as the course needs arise.

6 Schedule (Subject to Change)

Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignments/Notes
14/9	Introduction	1	
18/9	Preference (I)		PS1 posted
21/9	Preference (II)	3	**Tutorial 1 (Calculus Review)**
25/9	Utility	4	
28/9	Utility Maximization (I)	2, 5	PS2 posted
2/10	Utility Maximization (II)	2, 5	
5/10	Utility Maximization (III): Intertemporal Choice	10	PS1 due; **Tutorial 2**
9/10	Demand (I)	6	
12/10	Demand (II)	6	PS3 posted
16/10	Demand (III): Income and Substitution Effect	6, 8	
19/10	Technology (I)	19	PS2 due; **Tutorial 3**
23/10	Technology (II)	19	
	Study Week		
2/11	Discussion of Midterm		PS3 due; **Tutorial 4**
6/11	Profit Maximization (I)	20	PS4 posted
9/11	Profit Maximization (II)	20	
13/11	Cost Minimization (I)	21	
16/11	Cost Minimization (II)	22	PS4 due; **Tutorial 5**
20/11	Consumer/Producer Surplus	14, 16	PS5 posted
23/11	Market Supply/Demand	14, 16	
27/11	Monopoly	25, 26	
30/11	Game Theory: Introduction	29	PS5 due, **Tutorial 6**
4/12	Oligopoly	28	