

Economics 203: Intermediate Microeconomics 1
Course Syllabus: Fall 2025 - Sections A01 & A02 (CRNs 11079 & 11080)

Note that this document contains an overview of all important information regarding Econ 203. Further details will be posted throughout the term on Brightspace. **As tedious as it might be, please read this document carefully.** After the end of the first week of classes I will assume that you are familiar with all the info below.

Instructor:	Dr. Emma Hutchinson (ehutchin@uvic.ca) Office: BEC 344
Sections/Lectures:	A01: TWF 8:30-9:20am ELL 062 A02: TWF 10:30-11:20am CLE A224
Office hours:	See Brightspace towards the end of week 1.
Course webpage:	Log in at bright.uvic.ca
Textbook:	Intermediate Microeconomics With Calculus. Hal R Varian, Marc Melitz. A hard copy or Ebook are available at the bookstore. Either option will also include access to Smartwork. Note that hard copies will likely not arrive until late in the week beginning September 2.

Land Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge - with respect - the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This is the first of two intermediate micro courses offered in Economics. Much of the material introduced of your Microeconomics Principles class (Econ 103 at UVic) will be revisited (in particular, consumer theory, producer theory, equilibrium, and comparative statics), but in more detail and using more math. The goal is to master the concepts and basic tools used by economists, and to be able to apply these to set up and solve economic

problems in a variety of contexts. You will encounter many applications of the “Econ 203 skill set” in upper-level Econ classes. Far better to get on top of them this term, rather than struggle in future terms.

A detailed list of topics covered, as well as a detailed timetable for the term will be posted under the **Course Information** tab on the **Content** section of the main Brightspace page. A table showing the approximate weekly timetable for the term appears at the end of this document.

Important note. Many students find this course hard. The best ways to maximize your chances of success are to work hard, keep up to date, and to ask for help (from me or the TAs) as soon as you encounter difficulties.

The typical student will likely need to do at least **3 hours of independent work outside the classroom for every hour of class time**, during non-exam weeks of the term. This means at least 12 hours each week. You will likely need to work more than this around exams. The upside is that if you do the work, it will pay off. And, I am here to help you: do not be afraid to ask for help.

It is imperative that you keep on top of the material, from the very first week of class. Unlike in many classes, there is no downtime at the beginning of term. For instance, there is a Quiz due on **Sep 6**, you have a Math Test on **Sep 9**, and your first Smartwork Assignment is due on **Sep 10**.

COURSE COMPONENTS

This is an in-person class. This means that you are expected to show up to all lectures, labs, and exams.

1. In-person lectures.

Lectures will not be recorded, but slides from lecture will be posted on Brightspace, typically after lecture. If you need to miss a lecture due to illness, try to get notes from a classmate. As well, make sure you have completed the relevant reading and that you look over the slides from the missed lecture. If - once you have done all that - you aren't confident that you are up to date, come to my office hours with specific questions about the missed course material.

During lecture I will assume that you have completed the relevant reading and have attempted the assigned Smartwork exercises.

Questions during lecture are welcome and encouraged, however there is set material that must be covered throughout the term. This might mean (depending on how many questions are asked in lecture) that - in order to keep on track - I will sometimes (likely at the end of the week) record and post on Brightspace lecture material that was not covered in class.

3. In-Person Labs. You must register for a lab. There are 2 lab sections/time slots (your lab appears in your course schedule as the B numbered section of Econ 203). There will be **eleven** labs held in-person throughout the term, led by Teaching Assistants (TAs). Only attend the lab for which you are registered.

Labs begin the week of **September 8th** (the first full week of classes).

In labs, you will work (mostly in groups) on problem sets that contain the types of questions you should expect on exams, aided by the TAs. Lab attendance is not mandatory, except for those labs in which Midterm Exams are held (see below), but is encouraged. Pedagogical studies show that working on problems in groups with peers helps reinforce understanding of course materials.

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

To succeed in Econ 203, you should engage fully with the material covered in lectures and labs. In addition, you should make full use of the following materials and resources.

1. Textbook. Intermediate Microeconomics With Calculus. Hal R Varian & Marc Melitz. A hard copy or Ebook are available at the bookstore. Either option will also include access to Smartwork.

2. Smartwork. See Assessment section below.

3. Brightspace Page. The Brightspace page is named “Fall 2025 ECON 203 A01 - A02 X”. On it, you will find all relevant course material.

You should check the Brightspace page at least a few times a week. I typically use the Announcements tool a lot. If I post an Announcement on Brightspace I will assume that everyone has read it.

4. My Office Hours (OHs). Each week I will hold some in-person OHs (in my office, BEC 344) and some Zoom office hours. My regular OHs schedule will be finalized and posted by the beginning of the second week of classes. I will hold irregular office hours during the first week of term to help you prep for the Math Test (see below for Math Test details, and see

Brightspace after the first day of classes for my OH schedule during the first week of classes). I will also hold extra OHs during the lead up to exams.

*****Important Zoom note:** when joining a Zoom session, you should do so using your UVic SSO. Instructions are here: <https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/TeachAnywhere/2020/09/09/how-to-join-a-zoom-session/>. If you find yourself in the waiting room for any Zoom session, it means you did not use your SSO. Leave the Zoom session, log into your SSO account at uvic.zoom.us, and then rejoin the Zoom session.

5. TA Office Hours (OHs). In addition to my OHs, the TAs will also be available to answer questions throughout the term. The TA OHs schedule will be finalized and posted by the beginning of the third week of classes. The TAs will also hold extra OHs in the lead up to exams.

6. Course Calendars. In the Course Details page under the Content tab of the main Brightspace page, I will posted detailed calendars with important dates, reading assignments, assessment due date etc. The detailed Calendar for September is posted already. Those for the rest of the term will be posted in mid-September.

ASSESSMENT

The weighting of each graded component of the course is outlined below.¹

Component	Weighting
Background Quiz	up to 2%
Math Test	3%
Best 2 out of 3 Midterms	at most 15% + 15%
Lowest scoring Midterm	5%
Final Exam	45%
Smartwork Assignments & 2 Brightspace Quizzes	15%

¹ If you submit the Background Quiz by the due date, and if it helps your mark, your score on the Background Quiz will replace 1% of the weight one or both of your top two midterm marks.

Important note: In addition to the weighting listed above, in order to pass the class you must:

- Achieve a mark of at least 50% in the Math Test (or, failing that, pass the re-take, or, failing that, do the extra math tasks assigned);
- Take the Final Exam; and
- Pass all exams, on average. Specifically, **to pass the course your exam marks must satisfy the following weighted average:**

$$[\text{Percent on highest scoring Midterm} \times 0.15] + [\text{Percent on second highest scoring Midterm} \times 0.15] + [\text{Percent on lowest scoring Midterm} \times 0.05] + [\text{Percent on Final Exam} \times 0.45] \geq 40.$$

Why must this weighted average be greater than 40? Because exams are worth 80% of your grade in total, and $40/80 = 50\%$. If the above weighted average of your exam marks is less than 40, your mark for the course (for the term) will be equal to weighted average above, expressed as a percent out of 80.

Provided you satisfy the requirements above, your percentage grade translates to a UVic letter grade as follows:

A+	90-100	B+	77-79	C+	65-69	F	0-49
A	85-89	B	73-76	C	60-64		
A-	80-84	B-	70-72	D	50-59		

Descriptive assessment summary:

Passing Grades	Description
A+ A A-	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	Very good, good and solid performance. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
Failing Grades	Description
F	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements.
N	Did not complete mandatory course requirements by the end of the term.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ECON MAJORS: In order for Econ 203 to count towards your major, you must attain a **minimum grade of 60%**. At the end of every term, some students who do not attain 60% approach me asking for their grade to be “bumped up”, or asking for extra credit work to allow them to receive extra marks. **The answer to this is always no**, as it contravenes Department policy.

Further information on each assessment component is provided below.

1. Background Quiz. The purpose of this quiz is to (i) provide me with information about course material you were exposed to in Principles of Microeconomics and (ii) provide me with information about the degree to which you are able to recall this information. See the Quiz description in Brightspace for more details. If you answer every question on this quiz, your minimum score will be 90%. **This quiz is due at 11:59pm on Saturday September 6.**

2. Math Test. You are expected to know the material from the Math prerequisite course(s) for Econ 203. We also use one math technique that may be new to some students. The first 2-3 classes will be a review of the math techniques you need in Econ 203. The **Math Test** will be held on the **first lab of the term (Tuesday September 9)**. You must pass this test (receive a grade of at least 50%) to pass the course. If you fail on the first attempt, you must take and pass a re-take of the exam held on Friday September 26th at 4:30pm. If you fail the re-take, you will be required to attend math tutoring sessions (times TBD) and submit a series of math assignments. If you do the work for the first ~8 days of term, you will almost surely pass the Math Test on your first take. If you are worried, come to my office hours!

3. Midterm Exams. Midterm 1 will be held during lecture and Midterms 2 and 3 will be held during your lab. This means that - realistically - you will have no more than 45 minutes to complete each midterm. In order to maximize the time available, make sure to arrive on time for those classes.

The scheduled midterm dates and times are as follows:

- Midterm 1: Wednesday September 26, in **LECTURE** time slot, rooms TBA
- Midterm 2: Tuesday October 14, in **LAB** time slot, rooms TBA
- Midterm 3: Tuesday November 17, in **LAB** time slot, rooms TBA

Midterms must be taken in person; no exams are offered online. For all midterms, some of you will **not** be taking your midterm exams in your regular classroom. You must turn up to your assigned room. Room info will be posted on Brightspace in the run up to each exam.

The following items (and only the following items) are permitted to be brought to Midterm exams:

- Writing implements (pens, pencils, etc.; as many, and in as many colours, as you like).
- An eraser, a pencil sharpener, correction fluid.
- A non-programmable calculator (preferably the standard UVic scientific calculator, the Sharp EL-510).
- A straight-edge/ruler.
- A drink and a snack.

You must bring **photo ID** to all midterms.

Midterm exams are not cumulative.

Missed midterm exams due to illness.

If you miss one midterm due to illness, the weight of that midterm will be moved to the Final Exam (meaning the Final Exam will be worth 60% of your course grade). If you miss two midterms due to illness, you must take a combined make-up exam at 4:30pm on Friday December 5 (the day before the Final Exam Period begins). This make-up midterm will be worth 15% of your course grade and your Final Exam will be worth 60% of your course grade. If you miss all three midterms due to illness you must apply for a [Withdrawal Under Extenuating Circumstances](#).

4. Final Exam. The final exam is three hours long and cumulative. Final exams are scheduled by the University, and I have zero control over the date of our final. The Draft Final Exam Schedule is usually released in February. Do not make end-of-term travel plans until you know when all your final exams are taking place.

The following items (and only the following items) are permitted to be brought to the Final Exam:

- Writing implements (pens, pencils, etc.; as many, and in as many colours, as you like).
- An eraser, a pencil sharpener, correction fluid.
- A non-programmable calculator (preferably the standard UVic scientific calculator, the Sharp EL-510).
- A straight-edge/ruler.
- A drink and a snack.

You must bring **photo ID** to the Final Exam.

Deferred final exams will be given only on the basis of documented illness or family affliction, and for no other reasons. The documentation must provide specific detail to be acceptable. Please review UVic's Final Exams policies at <https://www.uvic.ca/registrar/students/policies/exam-grade/index.php>.

You cannot receive a mark for Econ 203 unless you have taken the Final Exam, in-person.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT MISSING THE FINAL EXAM DUE TO ILLNESS:

If you miss the Final Exam due to illness, you must go through official channels and apply for permission to take a Deferred Final Exam (see link above). Deferred Final Exams are NOT given at a time of my choosing. For Spring Term, Deferred Final Exams are typically held during the Summer terms.

5. Smartwork Assignments and Brightspace Quizzes. Smartwork Assignments are accessible via <https://digital.wwnorton.com/intermicrocalc2>. Please use our course Student Set #964467 when you register to ensure that your grades are reported to my gradebook.

The purpose of the Smartwork Assignments is to provide you with a regular, frequent, and **low stakes** assessment option to encourage you to stay up to date with the course material. Some Smartwork Assignments are shorter than others, and they vary in terms of difficulty. There will be 15 Smartwork Quizzes throughout the term.

There are no extensions on due dates for Smartwork Assignments. Late assignments will be accepted for 5 days after the due date, with a 10% penalty assessed for each day the assignment is late. You can attempt each Smartwork Assignment up to 3 times. After you have submitted your first attempt, all you will see in future attempts are the questions that you answered incorrectly on the prior attempt. You will not be able to see the solutions until after the due date.

You are permitted (indeed encouraged!) to work on the Smartwork Assignments with others, but simply copying someone else's answers will not help you pass the class.

Note that the Smartwork Assignment questions are useful in learning the course material, but they won't "feel" like exam questions. This is because I write the exam questions but I do not write the Smartwork questions. Problem Set questions (that you will work on in labs) are more like the type of exam questions you are likely to see on exams. (I will also post sample and old exam questions.)

In addition to the Smartwork Quizzes, there are two Brightspace Quizzes on material in Topic 1. The reason for the inclusion of these quizzes is that the course material deviates from the text book in two subtopics (elasticity and comparative statics).

I calculate the Smartwork/Quiz component of your course grade in the following way. At the end of the term I will take the total number of points you receive across all the Smartwork Assignments and Brightspace Quizzes and divide that by the total number of points that it was possible to receive, and then turn that ratio into a score out of 15 (since the Smartwork assignments/Quizzes are worth 15% of your course grade).

I will adjust your overall score for Smartwork Assignments/Quizzes to account for the fact that most of you will miss and/or submit late one or two of the assignments. More info will be provided on this towards the end of the term.

OTHER POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND NOTEWORTHY ITEMS

1. Waitlist: I have no control over which students from the waitlist will be offered a place in the class. If you are on the waitlist you should complete all assessment by the posted due dates. I will not give retrospective extensions for past quizzes if you are offered a place in the class, so make sure to keep up to date.

2. Late Adds: If you add the course late, come to my office hours, or talk to me after lecture, to discuss missed assessment.

3. Email Policy: Please do not email me questions about course material (that is what lectures and office hours are for). I attempt to answer any emails within two business days, but during busy times of the term this is not always possible. If, you haven't heard back from me within three business days, feel free to send me a friendly and gentle reminder. Always include Econ 203 in the subject headers and try to also include in the subject header some info about why you are emailing me (examples: Econ 203, possible typo in the Lecture slides?; or Econ 203, broken link on Brightspace).

Finally, I do not respond to emails asking me questions that have already been answered in the Syllabus or on Brightspace.

4. What to Call Me: I am happy to be addressed by my first name (Emma). If you do not feel comfortable using my first name, you can call me Dr. Hutchinson. None of Miss, Ms., Mrs., Ma'am, or Hey You are appropriate alternatives. Any comments/emails/questions addressed to Mrs. Hutchinson will be forwarded to my mother (😬). Bear in mind that different instructors have different preferences about how they wish to be addressed by students. Unless told it is OK to use first names, you should address your instructor as "Dr. [Last name]" or "Professor [Last name]". For a useful flow chart on this issue, see tinyurl.com/4m57x5ms.

5. How I use AI in Course Development: I sometimes use AI to draft problem set and exam questions with tidy numbers (to avoid messy algebra). I review and edit everything; any errors are mine.

6. University Policy on Academic Integrity and Course Policy on AI use: The standards and the reputation of a University are the shared responsibility of its faculty and student body. Please read the UVic's Policy on Academic Integrity at: <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/>

[future/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V](#). If you cheat on exams in this course, I will bring the wrath of Zeus down upon you.

You are welcome to use AI tools to assist you in the course, but you should try and figure out how to use it to *help you learn*, rather than to just get the answers. Obviously, you won't have access to AI in exams! If you use AI, try to do so in a way that yields economic intuition and general solution methods (e.g., how to: set up optimization problems; derive FOCs; derive best responses; etc.), rather than as an engine to generate answers. Furthermore, never assume that AI gets everything right (it makes mistakes, all the time!), so double-check everything yourself.

7. Student Code of Conduct: Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct. See <https://www.uvic.ca/services/advising/advice-support/academic-units/student-code-of-conduct/index.php> for more details. Basically, let's all be decent human beings, and treat each other with respect.

8. University Policy on Human Rights, Equity and Fairness: The University is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. See [General University Policies](#).

9. Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response: UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. Students are encouraged to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting www.uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR) at svpcoordinator@uvic.ca.

10. Accessibility, Health & Wellness Resources: The following resources are available to all UVic students.

- **Centre for Accessible Learning** - <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, you are welcome to approach me; however, you must register with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) for formal arrangements to be made. The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let CAL know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.
- **Student Wellness Centre** - <https://www.uvic.ca/student-wellness/index.php>. The Wellness Centre offers counselling support, nurse appointments, physician appointments, and spiritual care supports.
- **Multifaith Centre** - <https://test.uvic.ca/student-wellness/our-services/spiritual-health/index.php>.

- Elders' Voices - <https://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/>. The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

11. University Policy on Final Examinations and Travel Arrangements: Students should **not** make travel plans until after the Final Examination timetable has been finalized. Students who wish to finalize their travel plans at an earlier date should book flights after the end of the examination period (see the University Calendar). There will be no special accommodation if travel plans conflict with the examination. If you book that trip to Mexico with an April 23 departure date, and our exam ends up being scheduled for April 25, you can either say adios to passing 203, or you can take what the financial hit is from cancelling/rescheduling.

12. University Policy on Repeating a Course: According to the University of Victoria Calendar: "A student may not attempt a course a third time without the prior approval of the Dean of the Faculty and the Chair of the Department in which the course is offered unless the calendar course entry states that the course may be repeated for additional credit. A student who has not received this approval may be deregistered from the course at any point and may be asked to withdraw from his or her declared or intended program." Students who wish to attempt a course for the third time must seek permission to do so from the Department of Economics. Failing to do this will result in de-registration from the course. To obtain permission, students must completely fill out a Request to Repeat Course Form and submit it to the Economics Department main office (BEC360) as soon as possible. The form can also be submitted electronically by emailing it to econdept@uvic.ca. The outcome of a request will be emailed within 5 business days. If you have questions about this process, please contact the Economics Undergraduate Advisor at ecadvice@uvic.ca.

WEEKLY CALENDAR*

Week	Start Date	Topic	Reading	Relevant Problem Sets	Labs will cover:	Lectures will cover:	Assessment**
1	01-Sep	Math Review	THE SYLLABUS & Ch 1	na	na	Admin Details & Math Review	Background Quiz, Smartwork 1
2	08-Sep	1. Consumer Theory	Ch 2 & 3	PS1, PS2	Lab 1: Math Test	T1.1-T1.2	MATH TEST (in lab), Smartwork 2
3	15-Sep	1. Consumer Theory	Chs 3 & 4	PS3	Lab 2: Group Work	T1.2-T1.3	Smartwork 3
4	22-Sep	1. Consumer Theory	Chs 4 & 5		Lab 3: Midterm 1 help	T1.3-T1.4	Smartwork 4, MIDTERM 1 (in lecture on 24/09)
5	29-Sep	1. Consumer Theory	Ch 6, Ch 8 Sec. 8.8 only & Handout 1.4.2.	PS4	No Labs (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)	T1.4	Smartwork 5
6	06-Oct	1. Consumer Theory	Chs 15 & 16 and Elasticity Handout	PS5	Lab 4: Group Work	T1.5-T1.6	Brightspace Quiz 1, Brightspace Quiz 2, Smartwork 6
7	13-Oct	2. Producer Theory	Chs 19 & 21	PS6	Lab 5: Midterm 2	T2.1-T2.2	MIDTERM 2 (in lab on 14/10), Smartwork 7
8	20-Oct	2. Producer Theory	Chs 20 & 21	PS7	Lab 6: Group Work	T2.2-T2.3	Smartwork 8, Smartwork 9
9	27-Oct	2. Producer Theory	Ch 22		Lab 7: Group Work	T2.3-T2.4	Smartwork 10
10	03-Nov	2. Producer Theory	Chs 23 & 24		Lab 8: Group Work	T3.1	Smartwork 11 and Smartwork 12
11	10-Nov	3. Imperfect Competition & Game Theory	Ch 25		No labs (Reading Week)	T3.1	None!
12	17-Nov	3. Imperfect Competition & Game Theory	Ch 26		Lab 9: Midterm 3	T3.2-T3.3	MIDTERM #3 (in lab on 18/11), Smartwork 13
13	24-Nov	3. Imperfect Competition & Game Theory	Chs 29 & 28		Lab 10: Group Work	T3.3	Smartwork 14
14 & Exam Period	01-Dec	3. Imperfect Competition & Game Theory			Lab 11: Group Work	T3.3	
Exam Period	08-Dec			FINAL EXAMS			
Exam Period	15-Dec			FINAL EXAMS END DEC 20			

* Approximate and subject to change

** See Daily Calendar and Brightspace Calendar for exact Smartwork and Quiz and Lab Quiz due dates and times.