

Economics 203: Intermediate Microeconomics 1
Course Syllabus: Spring 2025 - Sections A01 & A02 (CRNs 20982 & 20983)

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 COR A129 A02: TWF 10:30-11:20am COR B129
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.

Land Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge - with respect - the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ 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 an approximate timetable for the term will be posted under the **Course Information** tab on the **Content** section of the main Brightspace page.

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 **Jan 11**, your first Smartwork Assignment is due on **Jan 12**, and you have a Math Test on **Jan 14**.

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 (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 **January 13th**.

In labs, you will work (sometimes 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 **strongly encouraged**. Each week the TAs will take attendance (in order to be marked present, you must attend the lab in full), and attendance in labs *may* be considered as a factor in cases where your course grade is close to a critical cut-off value.

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 Pages. Each of you will have THREE pages associated with Econ 203, once you log on to Brightspace.

One page - named “Spring 2025 ECON 203 A01 - A02 X” - is a page that all students registered in the class can see. On this page you will find all material that is common across both lecture sections. I will refer to this as the “main Brightspace page” and **the vast, vast majority of the material you need for the term will be posted there.**

You all should check the main 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.

A second page - named “Spring 2025 ECON 203 A01” or “Spring 2025 ECON 203 A02” (depending on which lecture section you are in) - will be used **very little** throughout the term. Pretty much the only thing that might appear on this page are announcements that are relevant to only one of the two sections (for instance, if I have to correct an error that I made in just one of the lectures).

Finally, there will be a page associated with your lab section, named either “Spring 2025 ECON 203 B01” or “Spring 2025 ECON 203 B02” (depending on which lab section you are in). I will refer to this as the “lab Brightspace page”. The TAs will use this page as a way to communicate with you, so make sure to check this page at least a couple of times a week.

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).

*****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.

6. Course Calendars. In the Course Details page under the Content tab of the main Brightspace page, I will post calendars with important dates.

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	15%

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.

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.

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.

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 in 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 January 11.**

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 January 14)**. You must pass this test 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 January 24th at 4:30pm. Note that this is also the day of your first midterm,

so you are much better off making the effort to pass the Math Test the first time around! 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: Friday January 24, in **LECTURE** time slot, rooms TBA
- Midterm 2: Tuesday February 11, in **LAB** time slot, rooms TBA
- Midterm 3: Tuesday March 11, 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.
- A teddy bear (or similar) and/or a (non-digital) picture of your mom and/or dad, or person/creature who reduces your stress.

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 April 4 (the last day of classes). 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.
- A teddy bear (or similar) and/or a (non-digital) picture of your mom and/or dad, or person/creature who reduces your stress.

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. Smartwork Assignments are accessible via <https://digital.wwnorton.com/intermicrocalc2>. Please use our course Student Set #876803 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 are no extensions on due dates for Smartwork Assignments. Late assignments will be accepted for 10 days after the due date, with a penalty assessed for each day the assignment is late (see each assignment for penalty details). 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 and not 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 adjust your overall score for the Smartwork Assignments 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 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 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., 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. University Policy on Academic Integrity: 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.

6. 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.

7. 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](#).

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.