

ECON 2106 – Principles of Microeconomics  
Fall 2026

**Syllabus**

**Class time, location:**

GT5 Section: Tu, Th 9:30 – 10:45 am. Klaus 2443

GT4 Section: Tu, Th 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm. Boggs B5

**Instructional Staff**

**Instructor:** Bobby Harris (you can call me Professor Harris or Dr. Harris)

**Office hours:** Th 3-5 pm

**Office location:** School of Economics (Old Civil Engineering Building), Office 205

**Email:** [bobby.harris@gatech.edu](mailto:bobby.harris@gatech.edu)

**Teaching assistant:** TBD

**Office hours:** TBD

**Location:** School of Economics (Old Civil Engineering Building), Office 305

**Email:** TBD

**Course description and learning objectives**

*Microeconomics* is the study of individual, human decision-making. In this course, you will learn to think like an economist, using conceptual frameworks such as preferences, incentives, supply, demand, competition, markets, and prices to understand human behavior. The tools of economic analysis provide a powerful lens to evaluate government policies, understand business strategies, and make decisions in your own life.

Economists use the tools of microeconomics to study all aspects of life, ranging from business to the environment, and even to dating and marriage! How should a firm decide how much output to produce and what price to set? How can one evaluate the tradeoffs between economic outputs and environmental costs? We will discuss the applied economics of these and many other real-world examples throughout the course.

This course aims to equip students with the microeconomic tools and intuition necessary to (1) understand phenomena in public policy, business, and everyday life, (2) anticipate agent responses to incentives, (3) identify opportunity costs, tradeoffs, and comparative advantage, and (4) make choices based on marginal benefits and marginal costs (i.e., think on the margin). In essence, students will learn to *think like economists*.

## Required Materials

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### Textbook and Achieve Homework System

Cowen, Tyler and Alex Tabarrok. *Modern Principles: Microeconomics, 6<sup>th</sup> edition* (2024). Macmillan.

You must purchase the textbook from the publisher or from the bookstore ([here](#)) to get access to the online homework system Achieve. A physical copy of the textbook is not required. If you do not purchase a copy of the textbook and cannot complete the homework, you will not receive credit for the assignment, so please do not delay purchasing the textbook.

While you are waiting for the textbook access code to arrive, you can start a free trial or “grace” period. See the instructions on Canvas for more information.

You can access the Achieve homework system within the course’s Canvas site in the Macmillan Learning tab.

### Canvas

Communication about the course and other course materials is available on Georgia Tech’s Canvas system. I will upload additional course materials and post course announcements on the course page. You can access Canvas at <https://canvas.gatech.edu/>.

### Point Solutions

We will use a digital polling platform called PointSolutions to track lecture attendance and measure understanding of course material in real-time. Polls will be graded for accuracy and will be included in the participation component of your grade. Therefore, you are expected to bring an internet-enabled device to every lecture. Instructions for creating an account and linking it to Canvas are posted on Canvas. To avoid concerns about excused vs. unexcused absences, mobile/web devices not working, polls closing before you can submit, etc., I will drop the bottom 10% of poll scores. No other exceptions will be made.

## Grading Policies

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Graded assignments and tests serve three purposes (among others):

1. To serve as a mechanism to incentivize and facilitate student effort and learning.
2. To provide feedback to the instructor about instructor effectiveness and to provide feedback to the student about current performance in the course.
3. To certify student achievement to the Institute and to future employers.

Thus, I will assign problems that are graded as a pass/fail for completion (LearningCurve homework assignments) to incentivize you to read the course materials, short, graded homework assignments to engage you in learning and to provide feedback before exams, and

exams to evaluate your overall performance in the course. In addition, lecture attendance and participation will be measured via a digital polling platform.

Material	Possible points	Approx. weight
LearningCurve homework assignments (5 points/chapter)	80	8.7%
Graded homework assignments (10 points/chapter)	160	17.4%
Class attendance and participation (PointSolutions)	80	8.7%
Midterm exam 1	150	16.3%
Midterm exam 2	150	16.3%
Final exam (comprehensive)	300	32.6%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>100%</b>
Extra credit	~20	~2.2%

There are 920 possible points for graded assignments in the course, thus your final grade is the number of points you earn (plus extra credit) divided by 920. Your final grades transfer to the Georgia Tech grading system as follows:

Letter grade	GPA	Description	Grade range (using interval notation)
A	4.0	Excellent	[90%, 100%]
B	3.0	Good	[80%, 90%)
C	2.0	Satisfactory	[70%, 80%)
D	1.0	Passing	[60%, 70%)
F	0.0	Failure	[0%, 60%)

In reading interval notation, left square brackets indicate “greater than or equal to.” Right parentheses indicate “less than.” Thus, for instance, grades greater than or equal to 80% but less than 90% will earn a B.

Note that grades are not rounded up (e.g., 89.99% is still a B). I reserve the right to increase all final grades equally if the material is more difficult than expected, but this is unlikely. At the end of the semester, your final grade cannot be changed with extra credit or makeup opportunities; this is for fairness to all students.

**Grade revisions**

The instructional staff takes great care to ensure student assignments are diligently and fairly graded. However, we may make mistakes. A student who believes coursework was incorrectly graded may submit to the instructor a brief, typed memo detailing the potential error and requesting instructor review. This memo must be submitted within one week of the student's receipt of the relevant graded assignment. Assignments that are submitted for the instructor review will be examined in their entirety (such that the grade could be revised down). Students are not guaranteed to receive higher grades when their assignments are reviewed by the instructor.

**Pass/fail policy**

If you are taking the class pass/fail, you must achieve a C grade to earn a pass in the class. Please reach out to me at the beginning of the semester if you are taking the class pass/fail.

**Homework policy**

Both LearningCurve and graded homework assignments are completed via the online homework system Achieve associated with the textbook. LearningCurve assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. Each question you answer correctly earns points toward a target score. When your score meets or exceeds the target score, you will get full credit for the assignment. (If you want more practice, you can continue answering LearningCurve questions after you have achieved the target score.) Graded homework assignments are assessed by the accuracy of your answers. Each LearningCurve assignment is worth five (5) points and each graded homework assignment is worth ten (10) points.

There is one LearningCurve assignment and one graded homework assignment per chapter of the textbook. In some weeks we will cover two chapters; therefore, there will be two LearningCurve assignments and two graded homeworks in those weeks.

All homework assignments are due by 11:59 pm ET on their due date. This deadline is strict for LearningCurve assignments. I will accept a late graded homework assignment up to 24 hours after the due date for a 10% penalty. After 24 hours late, you may not earn credit for the assignment. There are no makeup opportunities.

Your two lowest LearningCurve grades do not count for the final course grade. Your two lowest graded homework grades do not count for the final course grade.

**Extra credit podcasts**

Podcasts are one of the most enjoyable ways to learn about economics. To incentivize you to explore economics podcasts without making them stressful or a time burden, I will offer several extra credit opportunities for listening to assigned economics podcasts and completing corresponding podcast quizzes.

You will be able to earn approximately 10 extra credit points throughout the semester for completing the podcast quizzes. A podcast (and corresponding quiz) will be assigned

approximately weekly (with some exceptions). The podcast and quiz will be available in the Modules section on Canvas.

Podcast quizzes will be due by 11:59 pm ET on the weekly due date (along with other course assignments). Late podcast quizzes do not count and there are no makeup opportunities.

### **CIOS extra credit**

Your feedback helps improve the course. At the end of the semester, Georgia Tech issues a CIOS Course Survey. To encourage you to fill out this anonymous survey and keep response rates high, I will give extra credit to the whole class based on the CIOS response rates in the class.

If we get a 60 percent response rate, I will give everybody 2 points of extra credit (based on the possible points outlined above; i.e., not a percentage point). If we get an 80 percent response rate, I will give everybody 3 points of extra credit. If we get a 90 percent response rate, I will give everybody 6 points of extra credit. If we get a 100 percent response rate, I will give everybody 10 points of extra credit. I will count the CIOS completion deadline for this offer as of the day after the Final Exam at 11:59 pm.

### **Exam policy**

The course has two exams during the middle of the semester and one cumulative final exam. Exams will be taken in person and cannot be rescheduled. If there is a verifiable emergency or approved athletic absence, we can work out an appropriate resolution. For illness, injury, or other emergency, provide appropriate documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/class-attendance>). False doctor's notes fall under the Academic Honor Code.

### **Collaboration**

In this course, group work and discussion are allowed on homework assignments. When turning in homework assignments, each student must turn in an individual submission via Achieve. The midterm and final exams are not to be discussed between students and must be completed individually. The table below summarizes these policies.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Group or Individual Work</b>	<b>Turn in</b>
Homework assignments	Group discussion and collaboration allowed	Each student makes their own online submission.
Podcast quizzes	Group discussion and collaboration allowed	Each student makes their own online submission.
Exams	Individual work only. No discussion and no collaboration allowed. Exams will be in-class.	Each student makes their own submission.

I trust you to complete exams individually. Cheating on exams is very serious and results in a zero grade and a report to the Office of Student Integrity and Dean of Students. See the section on Academic Integrity.

## **Course Policies**

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### **Email policy**

Please include “ECON 2106” at the beginning of the subject line of any emails to any members of the instructional staff (Professor Harris and your TA). This helps us to navigate our email inboxes and ensure that we do not miss your email.

Every effort will be made to respond within 24 hours to questions posed via email; however, substantive questions related to course material should be reserved for office hours or lecture. Questions related to assignments should be posed more than one day in advance of respective deadlines. Sometimes emails get overlooked—if you do not get a timely response, please resend your email or follow up with us during office hours.

### **Recording classroom activities**

The instructor will record real-time classes on Zoom and will make them available on the course Canvas site. These recordings are not permitted to be shared anywhere except the course Canvas site.

Students must receive the written consent of the instructor to distribute, sell, or otherwise commercialize class notes, lecture slides, lecture videos, and materials such as homework assignments and answers. Students may not store or distribute class notes and materials in homework repositories or test banks under any circumstances. Students may not share or distribute lecture videos or lecture notes outside of this class.

### **Freedom of expression**

As a faculty member at Georgia Tech, I respect your rights to the freedom of speech and expression. I am also committed to maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students and ensuring that all facilities are used in a way that facilitate teaching, learning, and research. Therefore, you should treat your peers and instructor respectfully in discussion. Disagreements are likely to happen. When they do, you are expected to disagree respectfully and to keep your discussion focused on evidence.

Discussions in this class are expected to take place solely within the course. Thus, statements made during class should not be quoted on social media unless the individual being quoted has provided their express permission. This applies to the instructor, students, and classroom guests. This policy is meant to protect student privacy and create a safe environment to learn.

## **Academic integrity**

*"I commit to uphold the ideals of honor and integrity by refusing to betray the trust bestowed upon me as a member of the Georgia Tech community."*

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Academic integrity is extremely important to me. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on an exam or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

## **Student-faculty expectations agreement**

It is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

## **Athletics absences**

If you are a student athlete, you must obtain statements of approved absence from the Office of the Registrar (<https://registrar.gatech.edu/>) one week in advance of your planned absence. I will accommodate your schedule if I have enough time, so please get in touch early.

## **Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible to set up a time to discuss your learning needs. Your accommodations cannot be put into place until you discuss them with me.

## **Required syllabus language about CORE Impacts courses**

**This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.**

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

**This syllabus is subject to change**

At any time for any reason, I may need to update this syllabus. I will inform you immediately if I make any changes.