

Introductory Mathematical Economics I

ECON 1530B (Section B)
Department of Economics
Fall Term 2026

Course Information

Course Instructor: Barry Smith
Office: 1078 VH
E-mail: jbsmith@yorku.ca
Phone: 647-454-2231

Office Hours: MW, 13:00-14:00
Class: MW, 11:30-12:50
Classroom: SLH A
Course website: eClass/Moodle

Course Description

This course presents and analyzes a sequence of basic ideas, topics and problems arising in Economics. For each idea/topic/problem relevant mathematical ideas and techniques are recalled and/or derived so as to provide a deeper understanding of the economic issue and how it can be resolved, if necessary. The notion of Quantity Demanded is first addressed by expressing quantity demanded as a linear function of price where both the slope and intercept embed important Economics ideas. This sequence leads naturally to the notion of Revenue (the product of quantity demanded and price) where nonlinear functions are analyzed using mathematical techniques that include derivatives. This sequence culminates with notions of prices that maximize revenue subject to a given demand function. Many such topic sequences involving univariate functions are examined.

Prerequisite: Grade 12U Advanced Functions or equivalent.

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: AP/ECON 1000 3.00 or AP/ECON 1010 3.00, or equivalent. Strongly recommended completion: high-school calculus or equivalent.

Course credit exclusions: SC/MATH 1000 3.00, SC/MATH 1013 3.00, SC/MATH 1300 3.00, SC/MATH 1505 6.00, SC/MATH 1513 6.00, SC/MATH 1530 3.00, SC/MATH 1550 6.00, GL/MATH/MODR 1930 3.00. Note: Acceptable course substitutes are available in the Calendar

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should have a solid knowledge of univariate calculus and be able to set up and solve unconstrained and some constrained optimization problems with particular emphasis on economic problems.

Technical Requirements

eClass/Moodle will be used for posting class materials and making announcements. We also may be using Zoom at some point in the term through which students will interact with the course materials, the course director, as well as with one another.

Course Communication Plan and Office Hours

My office is VH 1078. Office hours may be held sometimes on-line. I encourage students who wish to see me, but who cannot physically attend office hours, to arrange an in-person or on-line meeting with me. Regularly check the eClass page for announcements. Finally, and very importantly, contact me at my email address: jbsmith@yorku.ca. Do not sent any messages or notifications to me via eClass. My experience is that eClass messages from students can easily be missed or not even properly delivered.

Course Evaluation

The final mark will be based on three midterm tests (**Saturday, October 3, Saturday, October 31, Saturday, November 21, Saturday: all at 9:00, room TBA**). The best 2 of the 3 midterm grades will contribute 40% to your final grade. A final exam (date set by the Registrar) will also contribute 40% to your final grade and attendance/participation will contribute the final 20% (see below). In the unlikely event that the university substantially changes its current policies regarding public health measures, these proportions may be changed. 50% of the content of the first midterm will be based on pre-calculus review material, which will be your responsibility to review from the first 5 chapters of the text. Students who do not perform well on the review part of Midterm 1 should re-evaluate their participation in the course. Note that all 1520/30/40 sections have their midterms (and likely final exams) at the same time. Students cannot take these courses concurrently. Any time conflicts in this regard are not a valid reason for missing a test.

Background Material

The basic pre-requisite for this course is high school algebra and functions. Students are required to review chapters 1-5 of the textbook (see below) in this regard at the beginning of the term.

Missed Tests and Exams

There are no makeups for missed midterm tests. Note that the best 2 of the 3 midterm test grades will contribute to the final grade. Anyone missing a midterm test will receive a grade of zero for that test. There will be no deferments offered for missed final exams except under very unusual circumstances. Anyone wishing to write a deferred final exam generally will be required to formally petition for permission. Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grade distribution profiles.

Required Course Materials

Essential Mathematics for Economic Analysis, 7th edition, Knut Sydsaeter, Peter Hammond, Arne Strom, Andrés Carvajal, Pearson.

This textbook is available in the York Bookstore for \$159.99 + Tax. As of September 1, the textbook was available through Amazon for \$130.21. Students are welcome to use a second-hand copy of the textbook. Students may wish to use an older edition of the textbook. While most of the content of the seventh edition is in the earlier editions, the order of presentation and problems may differ. It is incumbent on any student choosing to use an earlier edition to reconcile any differences. There may be an electronic version available for the textbook. I will discuss this in the first class.

Assignments

Assignments will be given weekly. These will not all be graded. Students are strongly encouraged to work together on the assignments, attend PASS sessions and work through the textbook examples and unassigned questions from the textbook.

Class Attendance

Class attendance and participation is mandatory. As stated above, 20% of the final grade will be based on class attendance/participation. Attendance (or short assignments) will be taken (given) in every class. Students will receive one (1) mark for each class attended (or assignment with the correct answer), up to a maximum of 20. Students are required to close any electronic devices in class. This means no iPhones, iPads or laptops. You should bring pen and paper and your textbook to class. You may bring in printed copies of provided notes to mark up. (In this regard it may be cost-efficient to print these four pages per sheet, double-sided.) Some materials particularly germane to the midterms and final exam will often be covered exclusively in class. Finally, I will post surveys on eClass for you to complete if you so choose. Completed surveys will provide me with helpful information about the course and you can earn participation marks. The sum of attendance, assignment and survey marks will not exceed 20.

Artificial Intelligence

Most students are probably acquainted to some degree with AI and may have used it to help them solve problems. Students are advised not to use AI, or at least to use it only as a last resort to check their assignment results. There are (at least) three good reasons for this. First, AI frequently makes mistakes and can give you wrong answers to questions you ask. Second, you will not have AI to assist you on your tests and final exams so it is better to learn how to solve problems by yourself. Third, and most importantly, it is pedagogically unsound to use AI to solve problems. Part of the learning process involves working through problems, making mistakes and learning from those

mistakes. A much better option is to work with other students on your course work and in the case of assignments, when a problem is completed, verify the right answer at the back of the textbook.

Tutorials and Labs

The Department of Economics will be running Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS). Times and locations will be announced.

Students may also receive assistance at the Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele (SNACK).

Using Zoom

Students should note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the United States and Canada. Recordings done since May 1, 2022 are stored in Canada. For more information, please refer to the notes on [Zoom Privacy and Security](#) provided by Information Security at York.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

Here are some useful links for student computing information, resources, and help:

- [Student Guide to eClass](#)
- [Zoom@YorkU Best Practices](#)
- [Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide](#)
- [University Information Technology \(UIT\) Student Services](#)
- [Student Guide to eLearning at York University](#)

To determine Internet connection and speed, there are online tests, such as [Speedtest](#), that can be run. If you need technical assistance, please consult the [University Information Technology \(UIT\) Student Services](#) web page. For more specific assistance, please write to askit@yorku.ca.

Course Policies

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information:

- [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Please also review the following course policies:

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a fundamental and important value of York University. To maintain a fair and honest learning environment, students in this course are responsible for understanding and upholding academic integrity in all of their academic activities. To better understand expectations, familiarize yourself with the [Senate Policy on Academic Conduct](#). To learn more about how to demonstrate academic integrity in your courses and to access related resources and support, visit the [Academic Integrity website](#).

Accessibility

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to achieve excellence, the University recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to perform at their best. The University encourages students with disabilities to register with [Student Accessibility Services](#) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors through their Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Please let your instructor know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. Sufficient notice is needed so that reasonable steps for accommodation can be discussed. Accommodations for tests/exams normally require three (3) weeks (or 21 days) before the scheduled test/exam to arrange.

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate [accommodations to adherents for observances of special significance](#). Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for course examinations, tests, or deadlines conflict with a date of religious significance, please contact the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of class. If the date falls within the formal examination periods, you must complete and submit a [Religious Accommodation for Examination Form](#) at least three (3) weeks before the start of the exam period.

Intellectual Property

Course materials are designed for use as part of this particular course at York University and are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian copyright law. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's [Code of Student](#)

[Rights and Responsibilities](#), the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#), and/or legal consequences for copyright violations.

Student Conduct in the Learning Environment

York University is committed to fostering teaching and learning environments that are free of disruptive and/or harassing behaviour, are physically safe, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy, civility, and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Individuals who fail to adhere to such standards and who violate University or public law may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

For more information, see the policies on [Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations](#), the [Student Conduct and Responsibilities](#), and the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#).

Netiquette for eClass and Online Learning

Students and instructors have a joint responsibility to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Please review and familiarize yourself with behaviours that support “netiquette” in virtual classrooms by consulting the [Guide to Netiquette](#) and [Student Guide to eLearning](#).

Student Notice of Recording for Online Teaching and Learning

Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded may be used and/or made available by the University to students enrolled in the course and those supporting the course for the purpose of materials review, for assessment, etc. Recordings will be managed according to the University’s Common Record Schedule and will be securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with York University’s [Guidelines on Access of Information and Protection of Privacy](#) and the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). Access to online materials, including recordings or live meetings, is subject to York University’s [Senate Policy on Computing and Information Technology Facilities](#).

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information, but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University’s control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University’s knowledge or permission, or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software, or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. In the case of a live stream recording, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality. If you choose to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance to facilitate class participation.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, may not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator, and may not be published, posted, linked to, or otherwise made available online, including on social media feeds, even if those feeds are private.

Health and Safety

All York students and instructors share responsibility for the safety and well-being of the community while on York's campuses. Please continue to check [YUBetter Together](#) for the latest information on health and safety.

Student Support and Resources

To help you succeed academically, York University offers a wide range of resources and services. Everything from writing workshops and peer mentorship to wellness support and career guidance is available to fulfill our LA&PS students' needs. Explore the links below to access these on-campus resources:

- [Academic Advising](#) is available to provide students support and guidance in making academic decisions and goals.
- [Student Accessibility Services](#) are available for support and accessibility accommodation when required.
- [Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing](#) offers workshops, resources, and counselling to support your academic success.
- [Peer-Assisted Study Sessions \(PASS\) Program](#) provides student study sessions for students to collaborate and enhance their understanding of course content in certain courses.
- [Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele \(SNACK\)](#) supports students in courses involving math, stats, and Excel.
- [The Writing Centre](#) provides multiple avenues of writing-based support including drop-in sessions, one-to-one appointments, a Multilingual Studio, and an Accessibility Specialist.
- [ESL Open Learning Centre \(OLC\)](#) supports students with building proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking English.

- [Learning Skills Services](#) provides tips for time management, effective study and learning habits, keeping up with coursework, and other learning-related supports.
- [Learning Commons](#) provides links to supports for time management, writing, study skills, preparing for exams, and other learning-related resources.
- [Roadmap to Student Success](#) provides students with timely and targeted resources to help them achieve academic, personal, and professional success.
- [Office of Student Community Relations \(OSCR\)](#) is responsible for administering the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) and provides critical incident support.
- [goSAFE](#) is staffed by York students and can accompany York community members to and from any on-campus location, such as the Village Shuttle pick-up hub, parking lots, bus stops, or residences.

For a full list of academic, wellness, and campus resources visit [Student Support & Resources](#).