

Darren Grant (I go by Mr. Grant)  
ECO 233, Micro Principles, Spring 2008  
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Sections: 10-11, 11-12 am M, W, F  
Office Hours: 9:30-10 am, M, W; 8-10 am F; 1-3 W;  
by appointment or whenever the door is open.  
<http://www.shsu.edu/~dpg006/>

Microeconomics is the study of economics as it relates to small animals such as plankton.© This is not a “survey” class; but a course that teaches business foundations—the economic theory of firm behavior. You may have to change the way you study if you are used to survey classes. Memorization techniques do not work well with a class that is so conceptual. In this class, we learn by doing—working homework, taking online quizzes, and doing in-class exercises, along with reading and studying the notes.

Sticking Around: There are no prerequisites for this class. Still, sometimes it’s advisable to postpone it until later. My experience indicates having taken some or all of the following “preliminary” classes increases students’ chances of success in micro principles: College Algebra or its equivalent, Accounting, Business Law, Principles of Macroeconomics. Being a sophomore also increases your chances of success relative to being a freshman, especially if your GPA is below 2.5. So, if you met two of the following criteria, I recommend talking to me about whether to stay in the class: GPA < 2.5; freshman status; not having any of the “preliminary” classes listed above.

Course Objectives: After completing this course, the student will have learned the following:

1. The role of prices, and of competition, in determining what goods are produced, how those goods are allocated, and how the benefits of trade are distributed to consumers, workers, and firm owners.
2. The workings and institutional features of the competitive market.
3. The firm’s decision to supply goods to the market, in the context of profit maximization, and the role of opportunity costs in that decision.
4. How market characteristics influence firms’ supply, pricing, and investment behavior.

Getting Help: My office hours are listed above. However, you are welcome to stop by my office anytime the door is open, or to call my office. I recognize that my office hours may conflict with class times, and you are welcome to set up an appointment with me for some other time if that is the case.

Cheat on Me: We at Sam Houston expect you to conduct your studies with integrity. Please see SHSU’s “Academic Policy Statement 810213,” available on Sam Houston’s Web Site, for a discussion of what constitutes academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, and for a discussion of the procedures utilized in adjudicating such cases. If I catch you cheating I will, in all but the most minor circumstances, turn you in to academic authorities. In these circumstances, my minimum penalty for cheating is a grade of 0 on that assignment.

By the Book: Hubbard and O'Brien, *Economics*. Shop around for on-line booksellers to save money. I do not teach right out of the book, though I generally present material in a similar order—we hop around just a little. In my experience, reading the text helps provide context, additional detail, and examples that can be of substantial benefit to the student—so *please get the book*. Readings for each unit are listed on the calendar, and I periodically connect the lectures to the assigned chapters in class.

Attendance: Attendance is required, and good attendance will help the professionalism grade that constitutes 15% of your final average. I have multiple sections, and you are welcome to attend any section—look up the class location on the SHSU Web Site.

Lateness by even a few students every day can be quite disruptive. Please make every attempt to be here on time. I take attendance at the beginning of class, so late students will be counted absent. I reserve the right to lock the door at the beginning of class, and open it once after about ten minutes for latecomers. I don't like to do this, but I cannot let lateness disrupt class for everyone else who is on time.

Professionalism: In an effort to prepare you for the business world, 15% of your grade will be professionalism points. Professionalism is about exhibiting a courteous, conscientious, generally businesslike manner in the workplace. These points are based on my discretion, and are based on the following: *coming to class regularly; being to class on time; being prepared for class every day; having a single, well organized notebook for taking class notes; participating in class; maintaining proper classroom decorum; and doing all assignments, Blackboard exercises, and homeworks conscientiously.*

Professionalism is an “AND” not an “OR”. It is not enough to do some of these things; you have to do all of them. I will take attendance every day, review your homeworks on homework days and your notebooks on test days, keep track of your completion of Blackboard quizzes, and learn each of your names and observe your attentiveness during class. If you don't plan to do everything listed above, your professionalism grade will reflect that.

You may miss one class meeting and one Blackboard quiz or homework during each of our three units without penalty. No dress code is implied, no style of dress required.

Begraded: You have three tests, which will consist of a melange of graphing, quantitative, short answer, and multiple choice questions, similar in style to the homework problems you will be given in class. I make no apologies for assigning a significant amount of written homework, and expecting you to do it. Your tests are graded in accordance with these expectations. Your final average is calculated as follows:

Your Best Test:	30%
Your Second Best Test:	35%
Your Worst Test:	20%
Professionalism:	15%

So, for example, if your three test grades are 85, 60, and 100, then your first test will count for 35%, your second test 20%, and your third test 30% of your grade. *The average computed using this method is always at least as high as a simple average of your three test grades.* Your final exam is not cumulative. I don't curve.

Your professionalism grade is determined as listed above. You will receive a grade between 0 and 5, inclusive, for each of the three units, for a total of 15 points.

The grading scale is:

- A = 90.00-100
- B = 80.00-89.99
- C = 70-79.99
- D = 60-69.99
- F = 0-59.99

Making Up: Simply put, you shouldn't miss the tests, except in extreme circumstances. If you know now you can't make one of the tests, you should probably transfer to another section. Valid excuses like serious illness or death in the family will require written documentation. For illness the documentation must be from a physician (not a nurse at the Health Center). If you are excused from Test 1 or Test 2 its grade will be replaced with the simple (unweighted) average of your two remaining tests.

Cell Phones: All beepers, pagers and cell phones must either be turned off prior to class starting or placed in silent mode. Violators must move to Elbonia.

ADA Compliance: It is my obligation and my pleasure to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing me at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Disabled students may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, department/division chairs, or by contacting the chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students by visiting the Director of the Counseling Center in the Lee Drain Building or by calling (936) 294-1720.

Student Absences on Religious Holidays: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student who is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. Refer to the Academic Calendar for the deadline date for notification by students to the faculty members of the student's intent to be absent on religious holy days.

E-Mail Policy: E-Mail is an acceptable form of communication for all class matters. I will send out course e-mails via the Blackboard system. You can have your Blackboard e-mails forwarded to the destination of your choice. Please do so if you wish, because if I send a course e-mail I assume you will get it.

Class Format: The class uses the following format. There are three units, each of five weeks duration. Each unit begins with a set of four or five lectures, capped with a homework. There then follows more lectures and some in-class exercises, capped with another homework. Then we take the test. To prepare for the lectures, read the assigned pages in the book. To prepare for the homeworks, work the problems in advance as best you can. By preparing in advance you are much better equipped to identify and understand the main ideas I am attempting to communicate. With the exception of the costs of driving exercise, which you should turn in, advance preparation is not required for the in-class exercises (happy bread, pricing games, etc.), beyond bringing the appropriate materials to class.

The day-by-day class schedule is listed on the attached calendar. All test dates are firm, and other dates are not likely to change.

Blackboard: I have placed a set of automated quizzes on the course Blackboard site. These quizzes are generally multiple choice, and while my tests are not multiple choice, they still give you an opportunity to become more familiar with the material and test your knowledge.

Each quiz is to be completed by the date and time listed on your course calendar. Each quiz can be taken multiple times; you can see the answers after you complete the quiz. Furthermore, you only need to get 50% of the questions correct to receive credit for taking the quiz. Therefore, these quizzes are an *opportunity* to learn some microeconomics, but they don't *force* you to learn anything. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity, as the tests are not easy.

My tests tend to be in the style of the homeworks that we discuss in class. The Blackboard quiz on the same material typically comes before the homework. It should familiarize you with the main ideas and help prepare you to tackle the homework, which is where the rubber really meets the road.

There is a 48 hour grace period on every quiz, and you can miss a few quizzes without penalty. Because of this, and a relatively low standard to receive full credit for taking the quiz, I cannot give adjustments for late or missed quizzes, computer problems, etc. Also, as this is the maiden voyage of my Blackboard site, please be advised that there may be some glitches. Please bring them to my attention if you find them, but because of the grace period, low standard for full credit, etc., again, I will not give grade adjustments for glitches or mistakes on the Blackboard site.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>UNIT 1</b>	Black = talking Brown = doing Red = grading	Jan 16 The Basi(c)s of Exchange	<b>Take Practice Quiz Now!</b>	18 Supply/Demand Analysis (Ch. 3)
21 MLK Day Holiday	Quiz 1, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	23 Shortages, Surpluses, and Equilibrium (in		25 Homework 1—Do not fail to complete prior to
28 Ham and Eggs Exercise	Supply/Demand Quiz, on Blackboard, due	30 Consumer and Producer Surplus; Efficiency (Ch. 4)		Feb I Taxes, Tax Incidence, and Economic
4 Homework 2		6 Elasticity in Supply/Demand Analysis		8 Measuring Elasticity
11 Homework 3	Quiz 2, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	13 <b>Test I</b>		15 Go Over Test I

All Blackboard quizzes have a 48 hour grace period. You must get 50% of the questions correct to receive full credit for the quiz; no credit otherwise. You may re-take the quiz as many times as you want prior to the end of the grace period.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<h1>UNIT 2</h1>				
Feb. 18 Economic Costs and Economic Profit		20 D.G.'s Model o' the Firm		22 Fixed and Variable Costs; Marginal Cost
Feb. 25 Short Run and Long Run Costs; Average Costs	Quiz 1, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	27 The Cost Curves		29 Homework 4
Mar. 3 The Output Decision (Ch. 11)	Costs Quiz, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	5 The Entry / Exit / Shutdown Decision		9 Steelmakers Articles
17 Long Run Equilibrium I	Quiz 2, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	19 Long Run Equilibrium II		21 Homework 5
24 Costs of Driving (turn in a copy of your work)		26 <b>Test 2</b>		28 Go Over Test 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<h1>UNIT 3</h1>				
Mar. 31 Market Structure		Apr. 2 Marginal Revenue (Ch. 12)		4 Price Setting
7 Four Ways to Increase Profits (Ch. 15)	Quiz 1, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	9 Discussion of the Restaurant Market		11 Homework 6
14 Monopolistic Competition (Ch. 12)	Chapter 12 Quiz, link on Blackboard, is available but voluntary	16 Discussion of the Textbook Market		18 Oligopoly and Market Concentration (Ch. 13)
21 Strategy in Oligopoly: The Oligopoly Pricing Game	Market Structure Quiz, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	23 Discussion of the Airline Industry		25 Monopoly (Ch. 14)
28 Monopoly, Efficiency, Antitrust, and Regulation	Quiz 2, on Blackboard, due at 9:00 pm	30 Graphing Problem Set (done in groups in class)		May 2 Homework 7
5 Happy Bread Simulation		7 Happy Bread Analysis		No Class

TEST 3 ADMINISTERED IN THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Mon., May 12, 11-1 (10:00 section); Wed., May 14, 11-1 am (11:00 section)

# HOW TO TAKE GOOD NOTES IN MICRO PRINCIPLES

## BEFORE CLASS

Title and date the lecture.  
Lecture topics are listed on the course calendar.  
Draw a vertical dashed line about two-thirds of the way across the paper.

## DURING CLASS

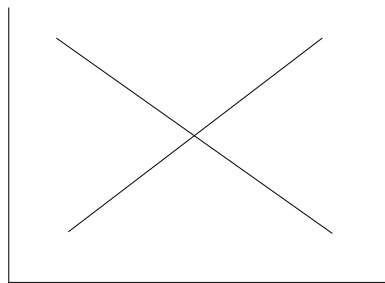
Copy the visuals off the board, along with details from my lecture. Using my exact words is fine. After finishing one idea, I often pause and invite questions before moving on to the next idea. That is your cue to headline the next idea.

Title and date each lecture at the top.

### A. First idea

Draw the figures, lists, etc. from the board here, and explanatory notes.

### B. Second idea



Over here, give an overview of what is happening.

Explain what each diagram means, what it is trying to show.

**ALWAYS** summarize each idea before moving on to the next.

**ALWAYS** use your own words.

## DURING OR SOON AFTER CLASS

On the right side of the page, in your own words, identify the main ideas with short summaries.

## WHY?

Most of your test questions come from ideas developed in class lectures. Many of these ideas will also appear on homeworks, but some will not. Also, these ideas are not easily memorized but must be studied to be understood. For all these reasons, good notetaking skills can really help you succeed.

**STRUCTURE**

**DETAILS**

**MAIN IDEAS**