

# ECON 211 – Principles of Macroeconomics

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Office Hours: T/Th 10:00am-12:00pm

Office:

Web: [ahoutz.github.io](http://ahoutz.github.io)

Class Hours: MWF 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50pm

Class Room:

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## Course Description

This course is an introduction to economic principles and concepts, designed to fulfill the objectives of the college social science requirement and to prepare students for additional work in economics, business, and accounting. The course deals with such topics as supply and demand, markets, money, the determination of national income, employment and the price level, and international trade. The government's role in the economy is examined throughout.

## Required Materials

- *Principles of Macroeconomics* 5th edition by Coppock and Mateer. You do NOT need to purchase the online homework. Any somewhat recent edition should be sufficient.
- Access to news articles from the WSJ, NYT, and The Economist. Subscriptions to these are provided through the Van Wylen library.
- Access to the course webpage on Moodle.

## Prerequisites/Corequisites

There are no prerequisites or corequisites for this course.

## Course Objectives

This course contributes to two learning outcomes laid out in the [Anchor Plan](#):

1. Examine fundamental or emerging questions about humanity, the natural world, or God by seeking answers through different modes of inquiry
2. Analyze evidence or data to solve problems, reach informed conclusions or make sound judgments

For this course, the above objectives can be expressed more specifically:

1. Obtain fluency in analyzing and interpreting economic data
2. Apply models to think about growth and business cycles
3. Critically think about current events, economic news, and government policy

## Course Structure

### Assessments

Final grades will be computed in the following manner:

- 10% - Homework
- 10% - Professionalism
- 20% - Current Event Presentation
- 15% - Midterm Exam 1
- 15% - Midterm Exam 2
- 30% - Final Exam

I expect to assign letter grades according to the table below. Please note that I will not round grades up at the end of the semester.

Grade	Minimum	Grade	Minimum
A	93	C	73
A-	90	C-	70
B+	87	D+	67
B	83	D	63
B-	80	D-	60
C+	77	F	< 60

### Homework

I will assign homework assignments via Moodle. These will be assignments that I have built and will often include data exercises. You will upload your answers to a dropbox in Moodle. Due dates will typically be on Fridays. I do not accept late homework unless you have a college-approved excuse, so make sure you submit your homework on time. Homework will be graded based on completion. I plan on going over questions that students found difficult at the beginning of class the following Monday.

## Professionalism

Professional engagement is crucial for the workplace. The Wall Street Journal recently ran an article titled “[A New Lost Generation: Why Gen Z is Unprepared for the Workplace](#)” arguing that “young employees are struggling to fit into [workplace] organizations.”

While education is primarily about developing you into a well-rounded thinker, we also want you to succeed in the workplace after college. As such, I will award points for your professional conduct in three areas:

1. **Preparation:** Review relevant material before class and complete assignments on time. If you are going to be gone for a class period, make sure you catch-up for the next period.
2. **Engagement:** Be a participating member in class. I understand that many of you may be introverted. Contributing to our classroom community goes beyond asking questions out loud. Instead, drive discussion while in small groups (when I ask you to discuss a problem or thought in tables) and help classmates with concepts you may be strong in.
3. **Initiative:** You take the first step. When you need help, ask. When you are going to be gone, let me know. In general, what you get out of this class is going to be heavily dependent on how much you choose to engage.

## Current Event Presentation

You will form groups of roughly four people. You will then choose a current event relating to macroeconomics written about in the Economist, NYT, WSJ, or any other leading newspaper. Each group will have 10 minutes to present on their topic, analyzing the topic with data and theory. Your presentation will address the claims of the article, demonstrate whether the claims are visible in the data, and argue from theory whether the article makes good economic sense.

## Midterm and Final

Midterm exams will be closed-note and closed-book. I will permit one note-sheet (standard printer paper size) on the final exam. Exams will consist of a mix of multiple-choice questions and free-response. You may bring a calculator. Your phone, tablet, or computer cannot be used as a calculator.

If you have a scheduling conflict with one of the exams, let me know as soon as possible so that we can find an alternative time. If no reasonable alternative time is possible, then I will move all the weight from your midterm exam into your final exam. Note: you must talk to me *before* the originally scheduled exam.

## Course Policies

### Academic Integrity and Honesty

This class follows the binding [Code for Academic Integrity at Hope College](#). The graded work you do in this class must be your own. In the case where you collaborate with other students, make sure to fairly attribute their contribution to your project.

## Generative AI

Generative AI (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.) has become a fact of life. It is impossible for me to prevent you from using AI on your homework assignments, and doing so would deprive you of opportunities to learn how to use cutting edge technology. For the most part, these tools are very good at principles of macroeconomics and you can learn a great deal from them. Feel free to use AI on your homework assignments or for studying.

However, AI can become an intellectual crutch rather than an assistant – a [recent study by MIT](#) shows that using AI may come at significant cognitive costs. To discourage using AI as a crutch, 70% of your grade is dependent on your professionalism and in-class performance on exams. A further 20% depends on your presentation in-class.

## Electronics

Please do not use electronics during class. The only exception is for those that take notes on a tablet (not a computer). Violations of this electronics policy will result in deductions from the professionalism grade.

## Grade Disputes

If you wish to dispute a grade on an exam or on the presentation, you must do so in writing within three days of the grade being posted. Please keep these requests short and to the point.

## Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change. Any updates will be communicated via email and/or Moodle.

## Hope College Policies and Resources

### Academic Assistance

The Academic Success Center (ASC) offers all students various free services (e.g. tutoring, testing strategies, time management resources). The [ASC](#) is located in Van Zoeren Hall—immediately adjacent to the Van Wylen Library second-floor entrance. To contact the ASC send an email to [asc@hope.edu](mailto:asc@hope.edu) or call 616-395-7830.

### Accommodations

If you are in need of accommodations for a disability, make sure you have connected with [Disability and Accessibility Resources](#) first. Then please let me know how I can help.

### Attendance Policy

Hope College has an [excessive absence policy](#). I am required to report excessive absences (more than 1/3 of the semester's classes) to the college's CARE team.

## Inclement Weather

Campus Safety sends emergency notification texts, including notices of weather-related closures, via the HOPE ALERT system. A decision to close campus offices and cancel classes is typically announced before 6:30am. More information regarding [inclement weather notifications](#) can be found on Campus Safety's webpage.

## Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Students should dial 911 from any phone if they or someone else experiences a medical or mental health emergency. Students can also contact Hope College's Campus Safety Office (616-395-7770) in any kind of emergency situation, and Campus Safety will contact the necessary emergency response service. You can learn more about [specific emergency instructions](#) on their webpage.

## Student Complaint

Hope College is committed to the appropriate resolution of complaints as efficiently and effectively as possible. Providing a mechanism to hear complaints allows us to improve our services. Students are encouraged to speak directly to other Hope community members to resolve conflict and/or seek an informal resolution of the dispute directly with the other community member(s) whenever possible. Please use this [complaint form](#) when such a resolution is impossible.

## Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Mon, Aug 31			
Wed, Sep 2	Foundations, Opportunity Cost	Chapters 1, 2	Homework 1
Fri, Sep 4			
Mon, Sep 7			
Wed, Sep 9	Supply and Demand	Chapters 3, 4	Homework 2
Fri, Sep 11			
Mon, Sep 14			
Wed, Sep 16			
Fri, Sep 18	GDP, CPI	Chapters 6, 8	Homework 3
Mon, Sep 21			
Wed, Sep 23			
Fri, Sep 25	Midterm 1 Review	In Class	
Mon, Sep 28			
Wed, Sep 30	Midterm 1 Exam	In Class	
Fri, Oct 2	Long-Run Growth	Chapter 11	
Mon, Oct 5			Fall Recess
Wed, Oct 7	Long-Run Growth	Chapter 12	Homework 4
Fri, Oct 9			

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Mon, Oct 12			
Wed, Oct 14	Labor Markets	Chapter 7	Homework 5
Fri, Oct 16			
Mon, Oct 19			
Wed, Oct 21	Capital and Finance	Chapter 9	Homework 6
Fri, Oct 23			
Mon, Oct 26			
Wed, Oct 28	International Trade, Aggregate Expenditure	Chapters 19, 14A	Homework 7
Fri, Oct 30			
Mon, Nov 2	Midterm 2 Review		
Wed, Nov 4	Midterm 2 Exam	In Class	
Fri, Nov 6			
Mon, Nov 9	AD-AS Model	Chapters 13, 14	Homework 8
Wed, Nov 11			
Fri, Nov 13			
Mon, Nov 16			
Wed, Nov 18	Fiscal Policy	Chapters 15, 16	Homework 9
Fri, Nov 20			
Mon, Nov 23			
Wed, Nov 25			Thanksgiving
Fri, Nov 27			Thanksgiving
Mon, Nov 30			
Wed, Dec 2	Monetary Policy		Homework 10
Fri, Dec 4			
Mon, Dec 7			
Wed, Dec 9	Current Event Presentations		Email slides by 9:00 am
Fri, Dec 11			
TBD	Final Exam Review	TBD pm	Location: TBD
Wed, Dec 16	Final Exam	12:30 - 2:30pm	1:00-1:50 section
Fri, Dec 18	Final Exam	12:30 - 2:30pm	2:00-2:50 section

*Shaded rows indicate days with no class.*