Elementary Microeconomics (ECON 201-10)

Fall 2026 Syllabus

3:30 pm – 4:45 pm TR in WB 141

Professor: Paul Niekamp
E-Mail: pniekamp@bsu.edu
Office: WB 137
Office Phone: 765-285-5187
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday noon – 3:00 pm, and by appointment

GA: Brailee Millard
E-Mail: brailee.millard@bsu.edu
Office: WB 124
Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Please contact me by Canvas Inbox or traditional email. Emails should conform to proper email etiquette (see link here). I check my email on weekdays and try to respond within 24 hours. I make no guarantees about responding to emails sent late at night or on weekends.

Course Description from Course Catalog

Elementary Microeconomics focuses on how market interactions coordinate choices. The student will learn and apply microeconomic principles to understand personal, business, and market opportunities. Topics include supply and demand, consumer behavior, public policy, pricing, output determination, and employment in various market structures.

Course Rationale:

Elementary Microeconomics fit into both the information to knowledge and the knowledge to judgment processes of UCC-21. Throughout their coursework students are challenged to reflect on their own experiences and the experience of others within the marketplace. From these experiences, students are challenged to reflect on how their interactions are informed by economic principles and foundational concepts. Throughout this course students will be introduced to basic microeconomic principles, understanding how individuals operate within economic systems and structures. These general principles of microeconomics are further examined, refined, structured into theoretical frameworks that are the tools of economic analysis. Students use economic principles and tools in novel situations to identify the correct implication of social phenomena for resource allocation and price determination; analyze facts and events in an intellectual framework and make accurate predictions; integrate a number of economic principles to develop new and deeper knowledge and insights; and communicate knowledge in a number of forms, potentially including written, graphical, oral, numerical, and symbolical.

Course materials:

(1) The required textbook is *Principles of Microeconomics* by Greg Mankiw. Acquire an ebook or physical copy of the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, or 10th edition (whichever is cheapest or whichever you prefer). MindTap/Aplia access is **NOT** required**.** *If you already have Cengage Unlimited from another class, you should be able to access the ebook for no additional cost.*

(2) A Poll Everywhere account (free for Ball State University students).

(3) You will need a basic calculator to use for class and exams. You may use the calculator on your cell phone in class, but you will need a physical calculator for exams. No cell phone use will be allowed during exams.

Canvas:

I will use Canvas to post announcements, course materials, homework assignments, exams, and supplementary readings or videos.

Attendance Policy:
Students are expected to attend class. Lack of attendance reduces a student's grade via being unable to answer Poll Everywhere questions that count toward participation points. Persistent late arrival to class may negatively impact a student's participation grade. I will drop your lowest 6 Poll Everywhere participation scores.

Determination of Grade in Course
Your grade will be based on a weighted average of exams, homework, and participation (explained below).

A	94%-100%
A-	90%-93.9%
B+	87%-89.9%
B	84%-86.9%
B-	80%-83.9%
C+	77%-79.9%
C	74%-76.9%
C-	70%-73.9%
D+	67%-69.9%
D	64%-66.9%
D-	60%-63.9%
F	<60%

In-Class Simulations and Games: 20% total

Government Policies
Students will be assigned a government policy surrounding a key economic issue and take on the role of a stakeholder such as consumers, producers, policymakers, and bystanders. Through simulation, students will learn how stakeholders impact policy formation and whether policies, if enacted, effectively address market failures such as externalities or the tragedy of the commons. They will analyze changes in consumer surplus, producer surplus, and overall deadweight loss.

Economic Analysis of Firm Pricing Strategies
Students will select a company and analyze the pricing strategies used for its main products and/or services that are used to optimize profits. The analysis will investigate the role of elasticity of demand, income elasticity, and cross-price elasticity. Students will identify the market structure in which a company operates (e.g., perfect competition, monopolistic competition, oligopoly, monopoly). They will identify major firms and summarize key market characteristics, such as competition, concentration, and entry barriers. Students will also investigate the company's use of the following: price discrimination, strategic interaction and game theory, network effects, complementary goods and services, and switching costs. Students will then compare the company's pricing strategies to its competitors' strategies.

Analysis of M&A Activity: Market Power, Efficiencies, and Likelihood of Regulatory Challenge
Students will take on the role of various stakeholders and use the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission Merger Guidelines to analyze a real-world proposed merger or acquisition drawn from a case that is being discussed in current events. Students will assess the likelihood that a transaction will be challenged or blocked by either agency. The analysis will focus on how the transaction would affect market concentration (e.g., using HHI) and the potential for the merged entity to exercise increased pricing power, considering relevant market definitions and potential anti-competitive effects. Additionally, the students will evaluate economic justifications the merging parties might claim, such as the creation of economies of scale or scope. Students will compare these claims against potential anticompetitive effects according to the Merger Guidelines.

Homework: 15% total

- Homework assignments are completed through Canvas > Quizzes and must be completed by the deadline. Late submissions are not accepted. I will drop your lowest 2 homework assignments of the semester. Homework assignments will usually be due Monday nights at 11:59 pm Eastern Time.

Participation: 20% total

- In-class problems will be administered via Poll Everywhere to acquire live feedback. For questions, students will receive 75% for answering (partial credit for participating) and 100% if answered correctly. Absences from class on a day in which questions are assigned will receive a score of zero.
- Some participation assignments will be administered via Canvas > Discussions. I will post a question and your participation score will be determined by the quality of your discussion board response. These assignments stress critical thinking, data interpretation, research skills, and construction of logical arguments. Participation assignments are due Sunday nights at 11:59 pm Eastern Time.
- Violations of class rules or inappropriate behavior may reduce a student's participation grade.

Exams (3 total exams): 45% total

- There are two in-class exams and a *cumulative* final exam. Exams 1-2 are approximately 50 multiple choice questions and the final exam is approximately 70 multiple choice questions. Weights toward final grade: exam 1 comprises 12%, exam 2 comprises 13%, and the final exam comprises 20%.
- Students who are unable to make an exam date for a valid reason must notify me at least 5 days before the exam to schedule an alternative date (the alternative exam may have a different structure than the baseline exam). Any student who does not take an exam will receive a zero. You will only be able to make up an exam if you can verify extreme circumstances and the alternative exam must be taken within a week of the original exam date. The decision of whether you can make up an exam is at the discretion of the professor.
- If you would like to appeal an exam grade, your appeal must be made in writing (email) within one week of receiving the graded exam.

Class Rules

1. Arrive on time.
2. Be respectful.
3. No private/side conversations.
4. Silence phone, laptop, tablet.
5. Don't distract/annoy classmates.
6. Don't pack up early.

Keys to Success:

- Seek to understand, not memorize. Go through each problem slowly to think about the logic of each step. If it's a graphing problem, draw out the supply and demand curves. Microeconomics questions can be tricky, so practice!
- If you are struggling with course material, seek out help sooner rather than later! Visit my office hours, visit the class graduate assistant, or visit The Learning Center for free tutoring.

Methods of Communication

- I will primarily use Canvas Inbox and Canvas Announcements to communicate deadlines and other material with you.

Frequency of Communication

- I will send a weekly email/announcement with details pertaining to coursework and assignments for the week.

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Ball State First Day

This course is part of our course material delivery program, Ball State First Day. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical books and any digital materials will be integrated into Canvas for this course.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming materials provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you haven't done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials. Students who do not want to participate in the First Day program may choose to opt out.

To access your digital materials within Canvas:

Delivery Method	**Direction**
eBook	Select the "Course Materials" link
Courseware – SSO Partner Integration	Select the "Course Materials" link
Courseware – Access Code Reveal	Reveal the access code in the "Course Materials" link and redeem the code at the link provided on that page, or in the publisher's integration in Canvas
Courseware – Publisher Direct	Select the publisher's link in your course

Title IX

Ball State University is committed to maintaining an educational environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, and stalking. Students who experience or witness conduct that may violate University policy are encouraged to seek support and assistance. The Title IX Office can provide information about reporting options, supportive measures, and available resources. Contact the Title IX Office at 765-285-1545 or titleix@bsu.edu.
Please Note: As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter. If you disclose information to me about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, I am required to notify the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Office will reach out to discuss available resources, supportive measures, and

reporting options. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, you may contact the Counseling Center or the Center for Survivor Support.

Pregnancy and Related Conditions

Ball State University provides reasonable modifications for students affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Students seeking academic, housing, or other modifications are encouraged to contact the Title IX Office as early as possible to discuss available options and support. For assistance, contact the Title IX Office at 765-285-1545 or titleix@bsu.edu.

University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the University Grade Appeal Policy and Process.

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using a generative AI system or a person to complete academic assignments such as response papers, discussion posts, essays, or any other assignment when such use is not explicitly permitted by the assignment instructions or the instructor.
- Utilizing another person or a generative AI system to take a quiz, examination, or similar evaluation in place of oneself.
- Using a generative AI system for research, creative work, theses/dissertations, grant proposals, IRB-regulated work, or publication-bound work in violation of university AI policies, funder/publisher rules, IRB requirements, or discipline-specific standards.
- Presenting as one's own work the ideas, representations or words of another person or of a GenAI system without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources or of the AI tool(s) used.
- Using generative AI systems to analyze data, conduct research, or generate content that is included in an assignment (images, graphs, charts, tables, etc.) without proper documentation, citation, and attribution of this AI use.
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.

- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

Generative AI (GenAI) Statement

Conditional Use (Specific or limited GenAI use permitted)

At Ball State, we use GenAI to elevate human potential, not replace it. To succeed in an AI-infused world, students must balance technical skills with durable skills, lifelong abilities such as critical thinking, ethical judgment, communication, accountability, and responsible decision-making that define a Ball State graduate. Developing these durable skills requires you as students to think carefully about:

- when AI should and should not be used;
- how to use AI responsibly;
- how to verify AI-generated information; and
- and how to remain accountable for final work.

You may use generative AI applications for some work submitted in this course. You will be informed as to when, where, and how these tools are permitted to be used, along with guidance for attribution. Any use outside of this permission constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy. When in doubt, please ask me before using GenAI. You, the student, are always responsible for the content you submit, publish, share, or act upon, regardless of whether GenAI tools assisted in the process. For data security reasons, please use BSU-approved GenAI tools (e.g., BSU Gemini, NotebookLM), which support single sign-on (SSO) with BSU ID and password. Commonly used public GenAI tools carry a higher risk of data being shared externally. In contrast, when using BSU-approved GenAI tools, any data you input is protected within the BSU system. Instructors do not have access to BSU IT Center logs of AI tool usage, so student data shared through BSU-approved GenAI tools remain private.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to bsu.navigate.eab.com.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center. Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

The Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center to get additional feedback on your writing. The Writing Center can help you at any stage of the writing process, whether you're just getting started and need help brainstorming or when you're wrapping up a project and just want a second set of eyes. We work with writers from all disciplines and with all kinds of writing, including essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts.

You can choose from three appointment types: getting started on a new project (Planning appointment), discussing an existing draft (Feedback appointment), or scheduling time to work, with a tutor on hand to keep you motivated (Accountability appointment). To schedule a free appointment, go

to bsu.edu/writingcenter. We offer online appointments any time we're open, or you can meet a tutor face-to-face in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays and Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings. Make sure you plan ahead, because appointments book quickly!

The Basic Needs Hub

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Basic Needs Hub. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a Basic Needs Assistance Form.

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found here.

The Speaking Center

The Speaking Center is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message.

The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this direct link to sign up for a time. Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

Canvas Accessibility

Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages (i.e. text formatting is accomplished using styles). Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. The National Federation of the Blind granted Canvas the Gold Level Web Certification in 2010. Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

FERPA and Privacy

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will

not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE (*subject to change*)

Week	Class	Date	CHAPTER	TOPIC
1	1	8/25/2026	1	Welcome to Econ! | Syllabus | Example Careers
1	2	8/27/2026		Economics and Personal Finance for Life
2	3	9/1/2026	2	Economics Summary, Demand Curve
2	4	9/3/2026	4	Supply Curve
3	5	9/8/2026	4, 7	Market Equilibrium, Consumer and Producer Surplus
3	6	9/10/2026	4, 7	Market Equilibrium, Consumer and Producer Surplus
4	7	9/15/2026	5	Elasticity
4	8	9/17/2026	5	Elasticity
5	9	9/22/2026	6, 8	Government Policies: Price Controls and Taxes
5	10	9/24/2026	6, 8	Government Policies: Price Controls and Taxes
6	11	9/29/2026		**EXAM I**
6	12	10/1/2026	10	Externalities
7	13	10/6/2026	11	Externalities, Public Goods, Common Resources
7	14	10/8/2026		In-Class Simulation: Government Policies
8	15	10/13/2026		*No Class; Fall Break*
8	16	10/15/2026	11	Public Goods, Common Resources
9	17	10/20/2026	21	Consumers
9	18	10/22/2026		**EXAM II**
10	19	10/27/2026		*No Class; Attend Dialogue Days*
10	20	10/29/2026	13	Theory of the firm
11	21	11/3/2026	13	Theory of the firm, Perfect competition
11	22	11/5/2026	13, 14	Perfect competition
12	23	11/10/2026	14	Monopoly
12	24	11/12/2026	14	Monopoly
13	25	11/17/2026	15	Oligopoly
13	26	11/19/2026		In-Class Simulation: Firm Pricing Strategies
14	27	11/24/2026	17	Oligopoly and Game Theory
14	28	11/26/2026		*No class; Thanksgiving Break*
15	29	12/1/2026		In-Class Simulation: Merger & Acquisition Activity
15	30	12/3/2026		Labor Market Discrimination, Final Exam Outline

Final Exam: Tuesday December 8, 2:15 – 4:15 pm in regular classroom.

Assurance of Learning

The Miller College of Business is committed to ensuring that every student graduating with a business degree is competent in five areas that are crucial to success in business. These learning goals can be easily remembered with the acronym **C-KITE** (Communication, Knowledge, Integration, Technology, and Ethics).

Communication: Miller College Graduates will be able to communicate appropriately in a professional context. Specifically, they will be

- **Effective oral communicators** who can: organize a presentation; use transitions; avoid verbal pauses; maintain audience interest; use eye contact, body language, and use visual aids effectively
- **Effective written communicators** who can: introduce the main idea; provide closure consistent to the main idea; use content to support the main idea; use transitions and emphases; maintain connections between ideas; use organizational structure effectively (paragraphs, flow); effectively use diction and conventions; and avoid spelling and grammatical errors

Knowledge: Miller College Graduates will demonstrate basic knowledge in

- Operations
- Marketing
- Finance
- Management
- Accounting
- Economics

Integration: Miller College Graduates will be able to integrate business knowledge in decision making. They will be able to

- Identify issues confronting the organization
- Synthesize and analyze available information
- Draw well-reasoned inferences and judgments for courses of action
- Design a plan for implementing the course of action

Technology: Miller College Graduates will be able to obtain, manage and communicate data effectively. They will be able to

- Analyze data for information to support decision-making using technology
- Identify common data security risks and safeguards
- Use common cloud technologies to collaborate on projects effectively

Ethics: Miller College Graduates will be able to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas. They will demonstrate an ability to

- Identify an ethical dilemma in a business situation
- Identify relevant stakeholders
- Assess potential consequences to the stakeholders
- Recognize the importance of making ethical decisions

In this class, you will demonstrate

- **Knowledge**, by mastering basic business and economic concepts.

UCC Cognitive Skills

Econ 201 requires students to transform experience to information and information to knowledge fulfilling the UCC-21 curricular goal for Tier 1 courses.

- Students accomplish the UCC-21 transformational goal of E to I by developing the cognitive skills:
    - Discerning how seemingly diverse phenomena (experience) can be organized into useful principles (information)
    - Identifying how a given phenomenon (experience) is related to an appropriate principle (information)

- Students accomplish the UCC-21 transformational goal of I to K by developing the cognitive skills of :
    - Using economic principles and economic tools (information) in novel situations to identify the correct implication of social phenomena for resource allocation and price determination. (knowledge)
    - Analyzing facts and events in an intellectual framework (information) and making accurate predictions (knowledge).
    - Integrate a number of economic principles *(information)* to develop new and deeper *knowledge* and insights
    - Communicate knowledge in a number of forms, potentially including written, graphically, orally, numerically, and symbolically