ECO304K Introduction to Microeconomics
Spring 2015 Online Class Information & FAQ

- Unique # 33480
- Instructor: Stephanie Houghton
- Class meets: MW 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
- Technical requirements: http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/ttech.html

About the Online Streaming ECO304K – Introduction to Microeconomics

Professor Stephanie Houghton teaches this section of ECO304K using a new method of online delivery that enables students to view classes on the Internet by logging into Canvas. The course meets at a set time (1:00 pm), just like a traditional class – but students participate by logging in anywhere with a good Internet connection and viewing LIVE lectures online via streaming video.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What does it mean that the course is online/web-based?**

Participation in the course takes place completely online. The main course page is accessed through Canvas, the online course management system at UT. Unlike some online classes which are self-paced, this course takes place at scheduled times: this means that students are expected to “attend” class by logging into the course site, watching the streaming video, and participating in class activities. The lectures are broadcast live from a studio-classroom in MEZ.

**What are the major differences in the content and class structure between the in-person and online sections?**

The online class content will be similar to the content in an in-person class; students will be expected to read the same course materials, complete MyEconLab homework assignments and take the same quizzes and exams as students in traditional classes.

Quizzes in the online class will be conducted online during class and exams will be conducted in-person on campus.

The online class structure is also similar in terms of student participation in partner/group activities except the activities will all be conducted online, utilizing group chat functionality and partner discussions via chat for in-class activities. There will be more expert guest interview segments in the online class than the in-person class.
The online class will have course TAs available to answer questions via chat during class, after class, and TAs will also conduct in-person office hours. Course-related announcements will be sent via Canvas to students.

**Will students need to log in at a specific time each week for lectures?**

Yes, students will need to log in to the Canvas course at the time class starts.

Attendance works just like a traditional class, with the convenient exception that the student doesn't have to be physically present in a particular location. Live lectures are broadcast during scheduled lecture times (accessed from the Canvas course page), during which students are required to complete a variety of live assignments. **Recordings are posted to the course website for the purpose of reviewing the material, not to take the place of watching and participating during the live broadcast.**

Student participation will be monitored via online chat groups, quiz completion and in-class activities. As in Professor Houghton’s traditional lecture course, there is no separate grade for class participation, but you do have to be logged in to take the quizzes, just as you would have to be present in class. (And of course, students who regularly attend class do better in the course overall.)

**Will students be able to use their own computer?**

Yes. The course has gone through rigorous testing to ensure that most modern desktop and laptop computers are supported. Students should test their device by using it to visit the test page at the following link: [https://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.html](https://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.html) (and you can test the video stream there too).

Students living on-campus and using UT-provided internet service (restricted.utexas.edu wireless network) should be aware of their bandwidth package. It is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate network bandwidth for this course. View bandwidth tiers here: [http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/network/403](http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/network/403)

**Are there any extra steps a student would need to take to do well in the online section vs. the in-person section?**

Students should verify their computers meet the course technical requirements. (See above).
**What types of students would be most successful or least successful in an online section of ECO304K?**

Students who have the motivation and discipline to attend online classes each week, do the homework assignments and readings will be the most successful. Students who think an online class means they can skip a class or the reading without being missed or accounted for have a lower chance of succeeding in the online class. Some students may think it is easier to cheat in an online class because no one is watching them – this course has sophisticated cheating analytics in place and severe penalties for cheating.

If the student is a freshman or new to the college environment, the structure placed on them by a regular meeting place may be better. At the same time, the structure of our online courses rely on frequent, low stakes testing that may foster a better transition into college level work, where maintaining involvement with the material is essential. For students who want to interact with other students face-to-face on a regular basis, this course is less likely to provide that experience when compared with a traditional course offering.

**Will there be a textbook?**

Yes, the textbook for this course is *Principles of Microeconomics*, by Case, Fair and Oster, published by Pearson. Professor Houghton will reference chapters and page numbers from the most recent (11th) edition, but not much has changed from earlier versions. Students are also required to have one semester of access to MyEconLab. The bookstore offers packages with both the textbook and a MyEconLab access card, but there are other options. Supplementary material will also be made available throughout the course on the course website.

**Can I go to the studio to watch the lectures being broadcast?**

Students may receive an invitation from the instructors to attend the live studio lecture in the studio-classroom in MEZ 2.206. Because of limited space, access to the studio is restricted and students should only attend if invited. Students requiring special in-room accommodations should contact their instructor, and if needed, Services for Students with Disabilities.

**Can I take this class if I have special accommodation needs?**

The courses comply with all University requirements for accommodation. All posted videos will be captioned; if requested, the live video video stream can be
captioned. Enrolled students needing accommodations should contact their instructors and Services for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.