Principles of Macroeconomics: Course Syllabus

This course is designed to introduce students to a range of models and issues concerning aggregate economic activity. The course will cover both short run economic fluctuations and long run economic growth. The formal prerequisite for the course is Economics 101 or Agricultural and Applied Economics 215. The informal prerequisite for the course is a willingness to engage in quantitative reasoning.

Office Hours

My office hours are Monday 1:30-2:30 in 7464 Social Science.

Email

In order to handle the email volume for a course of this size, it is necessary for me to set some rules on email contact. A course email has been set up for me; the address is econ102@ssc.wisc.edu. I will not respond to course-related emails at other addresses. Also, students should only contact me concerning personal or family emergencies, discussion section conflicts, exam conflicts, and other issues that cannot be handled by discussion section leaders.

Course Books

Course readings will be taken from:

T. Gylfason, Principles of Economics Growth, Oxford University Press. (Currently unavailable from the publisher, electronic copies will be posted)

N. G. Mankiw, Principles of Macroeconomics, third edition, Thomson South-Western Publishing (available at bookstore)

R. Solow. Growth Theory, Oxford University Press (available at bookstore) Note: This book is substantially more advanced than the others used in this course. I have assigned it in order to give students a sense of the nature of macroeconomic research. There is no expectation that students will be able to follow all of the technical parts.
Grading

Course grades will be determined by a combination of homework (15%), midterms (15%) and final exam (70%).

Homework

Late homework assignments will not be accepted. If a student has a valid excuse for missing an assignment, the homework percentage of the course grade will be calculated based on the other homework assignments. Homeworks are to be handed in at discussion sections.

Discussion Sections

Students are expected to attend discussion sections and are responsible for any material or course information presented in the section.

Exams

There will be 3 midterm exams and a final exam. There will not be makeup exams for midterms. If a student has a valid excuse for missing an exam, the midterm percentage of the course grade will be calculated based on the other exams.
Lecture and Exam Schedule

Note: While the exam dates are final, the timing of topics may change. Except for today’s lecture, all reading should be done prior to the scheduled class date.

September 3: Introduction to Course

September 8, 10: Economic Reasoning
Readings: Mankiw, chapters 1, 2, 4.

September 15: Measuring Aggregate Activity
Readings: Mankiw, chapters 10, 11.

September 17: Aggregate Demand and Supply: Overview

September 22, 24: Aggregate Demand and Consumption
Readings: Mankiw, chapter 20.

September 29: Exam

October 1, 6, 8, 13: Aggregate Demand: Financial Markets, Savings and Investment
Readings: Mankiw, chapters 13, 14, 16

October 15, 20: Aggregate Demand: Open Economy Issues
Readings: Mankiw, chapters 18, 19; Economic Report of the President, chapter 6.

October 22: Exam
October 27, 29: Aggregate Supply
Readings: Mankiw: chapter 15.

November 3, 5, 10: Unemployment and Inflation; Business Cycle Theory
Readings: Mankiw, chapters 22, 23; Economic Report of the President, chapter 3

November 12, 17, 19: Stabilization Policies
Readings: Mankiw, chapter 21.

November 24: Exam

November 26, December 1, 3, 8: Economic Growth
Readings: Mankiw, chapter 12; Gylfason, chapters 1-3; Solow, chapters 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 12.

December 10: Summing Up