Course Syllabus

ECON 101 D1 – Survey of Economics

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Name:	Michael Kotrous
Email:	mkotrous@coastal.edu (Begin subject line with "ECON 101")
Office:	N/A
Office Hours:	Tuesday, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.; Thursday, 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. on Zoom
Appointments:	You may schedule a Zoom appointment by Calendly
Website:	https://www.michaelkotrous.com

Class Meeting Times

Location:	Moodle and Achieve
Time:	No regularly scheduled meeting times

Attendance Policy

This is an **online and asynchronous** distance learning course. There are no regularly scheduled class meetings. Nevertheless, attendance and active participation are critical to your success in this course. First, attendance and participation are graded directly. To be marked as having "attended" class while a module is open, you must complete the assigned participation assignment(s). Second, consistent attendance and active participation throughout the semester will improve your performance on homework assignments and exams.

Communications Policy

Communicate clearly and professionally with me when issues or questions arise. I am here to help you succeed. The best way to contact me is by my Coastal email: mkotrous@coastal.edu. To ensure that I prioritize responding to your email, begin the subject line with "ECON 101." Please allow up to 24 hours for me to respond to your email. **Warning:** I cannot guarantee that I will read or respond to an email sent within 24 hours of a deadline. Keep this in mind when allocating your time.

Course Description & Details

The "Survey of Economics" course is designed to familiarize non-business majors with basic models in microeconomics and macroeconomics and selected economic problems. The economic system of the United States will be specifically studied to gain an understanding of how our system functions and to develop student skills in applying economic principles to real-life situations. Relevant policy issues will be presented in class to acquaint students with the methods of economic analysis. **This course is not open to majors in Business Administration and Economics.**

Learning Outcomes

- **Interpret and apply supply and demand models** to predict how market outcomes (price and quantity) change in response to shocks such as input cost changes, government regulations, or shifts in consumer preferences, and evaluate elasticity to explain the sensitivity of these responses.
- **Analyze the effects of government policies**, including price floors, price ceilings, and taxes, by identifying the winners and losers created by each intervention.
- **Assess real-world market failures**, such as monopoly power and externalities, by identifying their underlying causes and evaluating potential corrective policies.
- **Calculate and interpret key macroeconomic statistics** (such as GDP, unemployment, and inflation), and evaluate their strengths and limitations as indicators of economic health and quality of life.
- **Apply economic theory to predict the short- and long-run effects of monetary and fiscal policy changes**, and analyze contrasting viewpoints on the appropriate role of government in the economy.
- **Synthesize current economic news and events**, applying course models to produce well-reasoned explanations of real-world market and policy outcomes.
- **Evaluate the ethical and social dimensions of economic outcomes**, including the tradeoff between efficiency and equality and the effects of today's economic choices on future generations, applying economic reasoning to real-life decision-making.

Course Details

Credit Hours:	3
Prerequisites:	None
Corequisites:	None

Course Materials

Textbook

Title:	*Modern Principles of Economics*
Authors:	Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrok
Publisher:	Macmillan Learning
Edition:	Sixth
Format:	Achieve (digital)
ISBN:	9781319482183

Macmillan Achieve

You must purchase the version of the textbook that includes a license to access the Macmillan Achieve platform. Students must register an account and enroll in the course on the Achieve platform in order to have access to the digital textbook, supplemental materials, homework assignments, and exams. I will provide instructions for setting up your Achieve access and connecting it to your Moodle account during the first week of class.

Purchasing Instructions

For students enrolled in the First Day Complete program, the access code that you must use to enroll in the Achieve course and access the course textbook will be delivered via the course's Moodle webpage.

For students who do not participate in First Day Complete, you may purchase the digital textbook and Achieve access from the university bookstore or the textbook publisher (Macmillan). You may refer to the document "Connecting your Moodle account with Achieve" on the course's Moodle webpage for more detailed purchasing instructions. **Verify that the textbook you purchase has the same ISBN as that stated on this syllabus.**

Grading

Your numerical score is a weighted average of scores on four exams, homework assignments, and attendance / participation activities. Your numerical score for the course will be calculated using the weights in the table below:

Category	**Weight**
Exams	70%
Exam #1 (Sept. 21–27)	–
Exam #2 (Oct. 19–25)	–
Exam #3 (Nov. 9–15)	–
Final (Dec. 7–8)	–
Homework (lowest 2 scores dropped)	20%
Attendance & Participation (first 2 incompletes forgiven)	10%

I will determine your course letter grade based on your numerical score using the following scale:

Numerical Score	Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Letter Grade
90–100	A	70–76	C
87–89	B-plus	67–69	D-plus
80–86	B	60–66	D
77–79	C-plus	0–59	F

Numerical scores **will always be rounded down** to the nearest integer when assigning letter grades. For example, a numerical score of 89.99 would be rounded down to a 89 and earn a letter grade of B-plus. I reserve the right to lower the point thresholds if warranted by the course grade distribution at the end of the course. I will not raise any threshold, so you are guaranteed an A if you achieve a rounded, final numerical score that is 90 or higher.

Exams

You will take 4 exams throughout the course. All exams open at 8:00 a.m. on their stated start date and remain open until 11:59 p.m. on their stated closing date. Exams will be administered through Achieve and are **closed book**. You may not distribute or discuss the content of the exam with other students during the exam window. You also may not use AI tools or receive assistance from any third party while you take the exam. To ensure compliance with the university's academic honesty policy, you must use the **Respondus LockDown Browser** during the exam. Instructions for downloading and installing the Respondus software will be provided on the Moodle course page ahead of the first exam.

Your performance on the exams will account for 70% of your final numerical score. By default, the scores on the four exams will be weighted equally (17.5%). The final exam is *not* cumulative, so it will not cover substantially more content than the previous three exams. **If you complete at least 13 of the 15 participation activities assigned in this course, I will drop your lowest exam score among Exam 1, Exam 2, and Exam 3.** The two remaining exams and the final exam will receive equal weight (23.33%) to determine 70% of your numerical score.

Make-Up Policy

You are allowed a full week to complete the first three exams. Thus, I will generally not allow you to make up any of the first three exams if you cannot complete it before its Sunday deadline. The only exception is an absence that *prevents you from completing the exam during the entire exam window* and the university requires to be excused under Policy STUD-332, including a *documented* incapacitating illness, participation in a university-sponsored event, the death of a close relative, and active military duty. Contact me as soon as you are able, with documentation. Because you have a full week, an emergency arising in the final days of the window will not normally justify a make-up, since the exam could have been completed earlier.

You may make up the final exam if you have a reason that justifies being unable to complete the exam either Monday, December 7 or Tuesday, December 8. University policy limits the window during which I can schedule the completion of the course's final exam to 48 hours. Thus, I have set this window to the first two days of the final exam period: Monday, Dec. 7 through Tuesday, Dec. 8. If you have a **valid excuse** under STUD-332 for not completing the exam during that time, please contact me, and we can arrange a time for you to complete the final exam on or before Friday, December 11 (the final day of the final exam period).

Homework

Each Achieve module will have a homework assignment that assesses your understanding of the readings and any other provided materials. In total, there are 15 modules, so you will complete 15 homework assignments during the semester.

The homework assignments are **open note**, so you may consult the textbook, your classmates, and me while you complete it. On homework assignments, you will have two attempts to answer each part. You receive full credit if you answer it correctly on the first attempt. You receive partial credit if you answer correctly on the second attempt, and you receive no credit for a problem if you answer it incorrectly twice.

Keep in mind that homework assignments are designed to assess your understanding of that week's content and prepare for the closed-note exams, so I strongly recommend that you not completely "outsource" the completion of homework assignments by looking up all answers in the textbook, using an AI tool or Google search.

Homework will account for 20% of your final numerical score. I will drop the two lowest scores among the 15 assignments. The remaining 13 homework scores will be weighted equally (1.54% of your total numerical score).

Late Submission Policy

You will have at least 10 days to complete all homework assignments. I will not accept any late homework submissions after a course module has closed.

Attendance & Participation

I will assign activities in each module that I will use to track attendance and active participation throughout the semester. To be marked as having "attended" class while a module is open, you must complete the assigned participation assignment(s). These are *low-stakes, formative* activities that are designed to help you retain that week's readings and videos. Each participation activity is graded either **complete** or **incomplete**. Most modules will require you to complete a Learning Curve Adaptive Quiz in Achieve for participation. These quizzes adjust the difficulty of questions according to your performance, and you complete questions until you reach a target score. There is no penalty for answering questions wrong on the adaptive quizzes. If you answer questions until you reach the target score, your attendance and participation are marked **complete** for that module. Otherwise, attendance is marked **incomplete**. I suggest that you complete the participation activity *prior to* the homework assignment, but that is not necessary.

Attendance and participation will account for 10% of your final numerical score. I will grade attendance and participation on a 10-point scale. Letting n equal the number of incomplete attendance and participation activities that you have during the semester, your attendance score equals:

$$\text{attendance score} = \begin{cases} 10 & \text{if } n \leq 2 \\ \max\{10 - (n-2),\, 0\} & \text{if } n > 2 \end{cases}$$

If you complete at least 13 of the 15 participation activities, you will score a perfect 10 on the attendance portion of your grade. I will also drop your lowest score among the first three exams. If you miss an exam or score poorly on Exam 1, Exam 2, or Exam 3, you would greatly improve your numerical score and letter grade by diligently completing participation activities throughout the semester.

Late Submission Policy

Like homework assignments, you will have at least 10 days to complete all participation activities. I will not accept any late submissions of participation activities after a course module has closed, and you will be marked “absent” for that course module.

Tentative Course Schedule

Course materials, assignments, and exams are delivered through Moodle and Achieve. **Every module opens at 8:00 a.m. on its opening Friday and closes at 11:59 p.m. on its closing Sunday.** Because each module stays open for ten days while a new one opens every seven, two modules are open at once for three days of each week; this is intentional, and gives you room to work ahead or catch up without falling behind.

All exams open at 8:00 a.m. on their stated start date and remain open until 11:59 p.m. on their stated closing date. The first three exams run at the same time as the next unit’s first module. Once you begin an exam you will have a fixed amount of time to complete it, so plan to start it when you can work without interruption and in a setting with a reliable Internet connection.

Chapter numbers refer to the course textbook: Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrok, *Modern Principles of Economics* (Sixth edition).

Module	Topic	Chapters	Opens	Closes
1	Course Introduction	—	Aug. 19	Aug. 23
2	Big Ideas in Economics; Gains from Trade and Comparative Advantage	1, 2	Aug. 21	Aug. 30
3	The Laws of Supply and Demand	3	Aug. 28	Sept. 6
4	Equilibrium and Welfare	4	Sept. 4	Sept. 13
5	Elasticity and Its Applications	5	Sept. 11	Sept. 20
	Exam 1		**Sept. 21**	**Sept. 27**
6	Taxes and Subsidies	6	Sept. 18	Sept. 27
7	The Price System; Price Ceilings and Floors	7, 8	Sept. 25	Oct. 4
8	Market Failure I: Externalities	10	Oct. 2	Oct. 11
9	Market Failure II: Monopoly	13	Oct. 9	Oct. 18
	Exam 2		**Oct. 19**	**Oct. 25**
10	GDP and the Measurement of the Macroeconomy	26	Oct. 16	Oct. 25
11	Unemployment and Labor Force Participation	30	Oct. 23	Nov. 1
12	Inflation and the Quantity Theory of Money	31	Oct. 30	Nov. 8
	Exam 3		**Nov. 9**	**Nov. 15**
13	Business Fluctuations: Aggregate Demand and Supply	32	Nov. 6	Nov. 15
14	The Federal Reserve and Monetary Policy	34, 35	Nov. 13	Nov. 22
Thanksgiving Break, Monday, Nov. 23 through Saturday, Nov. 28. No assignments are due.				
15	The Federal Budget and Fiscal Policy	36, 37	Nov. 20	Dec. 4
	Final Exam		**Dec. 7**	**Dec. 8**

Important Dates

Nothing is due on a university holiday. Registration deadlines are set by the university; confirm them with the Office of the Registrar.

- **Tuesday, Aug. 25:** Last day to drop without a grade of "W" appearing on your transcript
- **Monday, Sept. 7:** Labor Day
- **Friday, Oct. 9 and Saturday, Oct. 10:** Student holiday
- **Tuesday, Nov. 3:** Election Day
- **Wednesday, Nov. 18:** Last day to withdraw with a grade of "W"
- **Monday, Nov. 23 through Saturday, Nov. 28:** Thanksgiving Break

Course Statements & Policies

Academic Honesty

Students will be expected to understand and abide by the Coastal Carolina University Code of Student Conduct, which is published by the Office of Academic Integrity. The Code of Student Conduct gives examples of plagiarism and cheating. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, and may result in penalties up to and including failure of the course with a grade of FX.

In this course, students are allowed to use AI tools (e.g., Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude) on all work and assignments, **except exams**. No citation of AI use is required. Note: Students need to be aware of and follow the AI policies and guidelines for each course they take. See https://www.coastal.edu/AI/ for more information.

Any instances of AI use on an exam, plagiarism on any assignment, or other instances of academic dishonesty will result in a zero on the exam / assignment. The second instance will result in a grade of FX for the course.

Accessibility & Disability Accommodations

Coastal Carolina University is committed to equitable access and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Individuals seeking reasonable accommodations should contact Accessibility and Disability Services by email at `disability@coastal.edu` or phone at (843) 349-2503.

This class follows the standards of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. Should you come across an individual assignment or should you have a very specific need that is not otherwise addressed through the accessibility features, please inform the course instructor.

Student Success

Resources available through the Coastal Student Success Center include academic coaching, tutoring, and learning centers.

Technology assistance is available to students through Student Computing Services (219 Thompson Library) or through the Student Resources LibGuide.

Student Health & Well-Being

Resources are available through Counseling and Psychiatric Services (up to 8 sessions per semester), TimelyCare (up to 12 sessions per year), Conway Medical Center Student Health Services, Thriving Campus, LiveWell, Office of Protected Rights and Title IX, and Student Empowerment and Advocacy.

Disclaimer

This syllabus and schedule are tentative and subject to change by the instructor with notice to the student as the semester progresses.