Course Description:

We will cover major theoretical and empirical issues arising in the study of macroeconomics. Macroeconomics builds upon the principles of microeconomics by studying the aggregation of decisions made in the micro-economy.

It is the study of the aggregate economy, and to understand it we must take into account the subtle interactions across the agents of the economy. We will describe the course as a study of 3 basic principles that build on each other and make up the overall “ups and downs of the economy”:

1) Individual Choice: the core principle that underlies all of economics (macro and micro) is essentially the study of how individuals (firms and households) make decisions. Examples: scarce resources; opportunity cost; marginal benefit versus cost; and incentives.

2) The Interaction of Individual Choices: Macroeconomics is about the aggregation of individual choices and the measurement of overall outcomes. Examples: Movement towards equilibrium; Efficiency; measuring production (GDP), unemployment, and inflation; Government intervention in market failures.

3) Economy-wide Interactions: The most subtle (and controversial) component of macroeconomics that usually applies to short-term economic fluctuations such as recessions and expansions. We will see that this leads to “feedback effects” and multipliers that complicate aggregation. The last third of the course will explore the government’s role in this area. Examples: Aggregate Spending versus Production Capacity, Policies that affect spending.

Course Objectives:

The aim is to give you the necessary tools to critically read and apply your knowledge to current issues in macroeconomics and be fluent in the standard data essential to the field.

You should be able to differentiate between what determines long-run growth and short-run growth, and how public policy affects each.

To do so we integrate two skills that are essential in the study of macroeconomics:

a) Using Economic Models: a model is a simplified representation of a real situation that is used to better understand real life. There is no “one model,” but for each set of assumptions we make it acts as a tool to understand how that certain world looks like. In this course, these will usually be analyzed with graphs but at times require algebra tools.

b) Read Economic Data: a large part of the class will define macro economic variables such as Gross Domestic Product and Unemployment.
Aside from the lectures/textbook which comprise the main material of the course, we will fulfill these class objectives with an introduction to Economics in the media. Some examples of resources to read:

- www.marginalrevolution.com
- www.economist.com/
- http://gregmankiw.blogspot.com/
- http://economistsview.typepad.com/economistsview/
- https://www.bloomberg.com/
- http://www.wsj.com/
- http://equitablegrowth.org/equitablog/

Also, if a couple interesting podcasts to keep in mind:

- http://www.npr.org/sections/money/
- http://www.slate.com/articles/podcasts/slate_money.html

Course Information:

LECTURE TIME: Tuesday, Thursday: 4:30pm – 5:45pm.
CLASSROOM: Dale Hall 0200.
Websites: Sapling Learning, SquareCap, and Canvas. However, you only need your Canvas log-in to access Sapling.

Instructor Information:

Ariel Weinberger
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays and Fridays 10am –11am.
OFFICE: CATE 332 CCD1

Teaching Assistant Information:

Christine Strong: Christine.O.Strong-1@ou.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 1-2pm.
OFFICE: CATE 226 CCD1

Hyeonjin Im: hyeonjin.im@ou.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am-Noon
Office CATE 334 CCD1

I ask that your first point of contact be the Teaching Assistants. Any questions about the homework, grading, and class schedule/administration should go to them first. If you believe
that your concerns are not being met by this correspondence then contact me or, preferably, come see me in person during office hours.

Textbook Information:


There will also be short article readings, but these additional readings will be available through the class website (under “Files”). I will announce when these are available.

Course Websites:

There are 2 sites you have to keep track of: Canvas and Squarecap.

1) Announcements, exam grades, and other information will be posted on Canvas. Although I intend to send out reminders when new materials are posted on Canvas, it is your responsibility to check the website regularly for updates.

You must register for the Sapling Learning course, which is integrated within Canvas (go to “Assignments” and click on the Sapling Learning assignment, then click on the link to that takes you to a new tab for Sapling). Access to Sapling must be paid for, but it gives you access to the online text which is the only required textbook for this class. There will be weekly homework assignments assigned and to be completed on this platform.

Sapling Learning offers a grace period on payment; this is 14 days from the first day of the term.

Use the following link for instructions:

http://bit.do/studentinstructionsLms

2) You must also sign up for Squarecap access of the course. I will use this platform to have short quizzes at the beginning of class and also throughout lecture based on the material I cover. This app also allows you to ask questions through the app during class. The cost is $10 per student and it is mandatory.

Expectations:

The most important aspect of the class is to put in time and energy that allows you to understand the material. I understand that new concepts take some time to digest, and for this reason I expect each student to devote at least a couple hours a week (when there is no exam) outside of lecture on this course. You should expect me to express the material clearly and rehash it as necessary, but in return I expect you to play an active part in the process by working to make the concepts click.
**Grading:**

There will be three exams, the online problem sets, and Squarecap quizzes (plus the bonus reports).

I will give 3 exams, each with 50 multiple choice questions. The midterm and final will be on the following dates:

- **Midterms:** Thursday February 16th and Tuesday April 4th.
- **Final:** Thursday May 11th: NOT Cumulative

Your final grades will be calculated using the following weights:

\[
\begin{align*}
20\% & \text{ online homework,} \\
10\% & \text{ SquareCap App,} \\
70\% & \text{ Exams.}
\end{align*}
\]

*Makeup exams will NOT be given.* If you have a reasonable excuse for missing a midterm with proof (e.g. a signed doctor’s note) then the weight will be transferred to the other 2 exams.

**Re-grading:** You can talk to me about simple mistakes such as points being added up incorrectly. If you want me to re-read an answer(s) on your exam to re-grade a particular answer(s), you must turn in your exam to me within a week of the distribution of the exams with a written note explaining specifically where the exam deserves more points. I keep the right to re-grade the whole exam.

**Homework Assignments:**

There will be weekly problem sets **to be completed online through the Sapling course**. You will receive the score automatically and can review the solutions after you have submitted the homework.

Due dates for the assignments will be listed on the Sapling site and I will announce them in class. In general, you should expect an assignment for each lesson in class, separated by chapters. Due to the technical limitations of having online homework, the deadline is fixed at a specific time. There is no such thing as “I was 2 minutes late“ because once the system turns off submissions then there is nothing that can be done. So you should plan on being able to submit with ample time to handle technical glitches. I will drop the **bottom 2 scores** in order to correct for bad luck that can be associated with technical difficulties.

**Reading Assignments:**

Throughout the course I will assign short readings relevant to our lectures. These will be either articles from newspaper publications or blog posts from prominent economists. I will announce when the reading is posted on Canvas, and when you are responsible to have read it. During that lecture, I will quiz you on that reading at the beginning of class using the Squarecap app.

**BONUS:** Additionally, I will allow you to do a ~400 word report on up to **2 READINGS** throughout the semester for extra credit. Notice that you get to choose when you do these. There will be about weekly readings (but not on Midterm weeks) and you choose which 2 you want to write the report on. For each reading, you must turn it TO THE TA on the lecture when the reading is discussed. That lecture is the ONLY time when you can hand in your report for that reading. It must be printed out: NO email submissions will be accepted. [For more instructions, see the instructions sheet posted on Canvas.]
The bonus points will be added to the Assignment Group “Squarecap App” in the Canvas gradebook. I will make this group out of 100 points total. Each report will get you up to 10 bonus points on this assignment group, for a possible 20 bonus points. That means if you get all bonus points it adds 20% to an assignment group that accounts for 10% of your final grade. On the overall final grade, that would account for 2% extra credit.

**University Policies:**

**Academic Integrity:**
All students are expected to conform to college-level standards of ethics, academic integrity, and academic honesty. By enrolling in this course, you agree to be bound by the Academic Misconduct Code published in The University of Oklahoma Student Code ([www.ou.edu/studentcode/OUStudentCode.pdf](http://www.ou.edu/studentcode/OUStudentCode.pdf)). For further clarification please see: [www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights/](http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights/).

All members of the community recognize the necessity of being honest with themselves and with others. Cheating in class, plagiarizing, lying and employing other modes of deceit diminish the integrity of the educational experience. None of these should be used as a strategy to obtain a false sense of success. The need for honest relations among all members of the community is essential.

**Religious Observance:**
It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to reschedule examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays, without penalty.

**Reasonable Accommodation Policy:**
Students requiring academic accommodation should contact the Disability Resource Center for assistance at (405) 325-3852 or TDD: (405) 325-4173. For more information please see the Disability Resource Center website [http://www.ou.edu/drc/home.html](http://www.ou.edu/drc/home.html). Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

**Class Schedule (preliminary and subject to change):**

**Week 1:**  
Tuesday Jan 17th: Introduction (Ch. 1)  
Thursday Jan 19th: Intro to Models (Ch.2)

**Week 2:**  
Tuesday Jan 24th: Intro to Models: Tradeoffs and Comparative Advantage (Ch.2)  
Thursday Jan 26th: Supply and Demand (Ch. 3)

**Week 3:**  
Tuesday Jan 31st: Supply and Demand (Ch. 3)
Thursday Feb 2nd: S & D: Distortions and Trade (Ch.4)

Week 4:  
Tuesday Feb 7th: International Trade Part I (Ch. 5)
Thursday Feb 9th: S & D: International Trade part II (Ch. 5)

Week 5:  
Tuesday Feb 14th: Review
Thursday Feb 16th: Midterm 1

Week 6:  
Tuesday Feb 21st: Tracking the Macroeconomy (Chs. 6).
Thursday Feb 23rd: Tracking the Macroeconomy (Ch. 7).

Week 7:  
Tuesday Feb 28th: Tracking the Macroeconomy (Ch. 7).
Thursday Mar 2nd: Tracking the Macroeconomy (Ch. 8).

Week 8:  
Tuesday Mar 7th: Tracking the Macroeconomy (Ch. 8).
Thursday Mar 9th: Long-run Growth (Ch. 9)

Week 9:  
SPRING BREAK

Week 10:  
Tuesday Mar 21st: Long-run Growth (Ch. 9)
Thursday Mar 23rd: Saving, Investment and the Financial System (Ch. 10)

Week 11:  
Tuesday Mar 28th: Saving, Investment and the Financial System (Ch. 10)
Thursday Mar 30th: Review

Week 12:  
Tuesday Apr 4th: Midterm #2
Thursday Apr 6th: Short-run: Income and Expenditure (Ch. 11)

Week 13:  
Tuesday Apr 11th: Short-run: Income and Expenditure (Ch. 11)
Thursday Apr 13th: Aggregate Demand and Aggregate Supply (Ch. 12)

Week 14:  
Tuesday Apr 18th: Aggregate Demand and Aggregate Supply (Ch. 12)
Thursday Apr 20th: Money Banking and the Fed (Ch. 14)

Week 15:  
Tuesday Apr 25th: Money Banking and the Fed (Ch. 14)
Thursday Apr 27th: Monetary Policy (Ch. 15)

Dead Week:  
Tuesday May 2nd: Fiscal Policy (Ch. 13): If time allows

FINAL EXAM:  
Thursday May 11th 4:30-6:30pm: Final Exam for Section 900.