

Economics 202: Introduction to Macroeconomics, Spring 2021  
Section 03: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.  
Instructor: Graham Gardner  
Instructor's E-mail: [gardn366@msu.edu](mailto:gardn366@msu.edu)  
Office Hours: TuTh 10am to 12pm, or by appointment

## Welcome!

The purpose of this document is to describe what you can expect this semester. I will begin by stating my main goal for the semester: **I want everyone to succeed in this class!** Whatever your background, I want you to know that **you belong** here, and **you can** succeed in this course. The Office of Admissions would not have admitted you otherwise.

I am here to help you. I have regular office hours (shown above) and am also available by appointment. I check my e-mail regularly, including the night before exams. I will do my best to prepare you for the midterms and final exam. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help you succeed.

So, let's work together to make sure that everyone learns some economics, has some fun, and has a great semester!

## Course Overview

Should the United States impose a steel tariff on China? How can we prevent another Great Depression? What are the effects of an income tax increase? What is the purpose of the Federal Reserve?

These questions significantly impact people throughout the United States and around the world. This semester, we will investigate all of them, and many more. The topics we study will generally fall into two groups:

- 1) Understanding various terms you hear on the news that reflect the overall health of the economy, such as GDP, unemployment, and inflation.
- 2) Understanding theories of macroeconomics and how these theories lead to predictions about how we expect economies to function and how government intervention can help or hurt a nation's economy.

## Textbook

The textbook required for this course is a bit different than textbooks you have probably used in the past. You are required to purchase online access to McGraw-Hill's Connect Master product, where you will access homework, instructional videos, and an eBook version of the textbook. The course material is available from the various bookstores on campus. If you purchase the bundles from one of the bookstores, you will receive an access card to McGraw-Hill's Connect Master as well as the print companion text. You also have the option of purchasing online access to Connect Master directly through D2L. This is a lower-cost solution that does not include a printed version of the textbook.

When you do log on to this course's D2L section, click on the first assignment you see. You will be prompted to create an account and either enter your access code or purchase directly through the website. You can watch this video on how to register for this course: <http://video.mhhe.com/watch/vjUamLCTLAE2R3GxPkHUUC>.

If you are not sure if you will be taking this course, you may also get complimentary access to the course and Connect Master for 14 days. Follow the process described above but choose the complimentary access option for registration.

If you have trouble accessing Connect Master or submitting the homework modules, please follow the following steps:

- 1) Check the obvious issues – ensure you have WiFi, refresh your screen, restart your computer, switch browsers
- 2) Call McGraw-Hill tech support at (800) 331-5094. Their hours are:
  - Sunday: 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM EST
  - Monday-Thursday: 24 hrs
  - Friday: 12:00 AM to 9:00 PM EST
  - Saturday: 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM EST

Almost every case can be resolved this way. If not, the tech support person will provide you with a case number. If you have troubles with tech support, feel free to send me an email and I will do what I can to help solve the issue.

## Graded Components

Item	Percentage
Two highest exam scores	70%
Homework	15%
Top Hat	15%

## Exams

There will be a total of three exams – two midterm exams and a final exam. They will be administered on D2L during regular class time. The final exam will also be administered on D2L. **Only your two highest exam scores will count toward your course grade.** This formulation is intended to address issues such as illnesses or other emergencies, as well as if you just have a bad test day. Moreover, this allows students who have shown their comprehension on both midterms and are satisfied with their grade to skip the final exam, thereby basing their grade on the two midterm exams.

If you must miss an exam for reasons that can be anticipated (university-sponsored activities, religious observances, and other valid issues), an alternative exam time will be offered for the days before an exam. Reasons that can be anticipated must be conveyed to the instructor **at least one week before** the scheduled exam. **No make-up exams will be given after an exam.** If you do not take an exam, that will be the exam that is dropped when I calculate your final course grade. If you believe you have had issues with multiple exams that require special consideration, you must fully document the multiple issues and schedule an appointment with me to discuss. Unless there were legitimate and documented excuses that have kept you from multiple exams (a situation that will be rare), further accommodations will not be provided.

All exams are open-book, open-note, and open-Internet. You are not permitted to consult with any other person (either virtually or in real life) during the exam. All work must be your own. You also are not permitted to assist any other student who is taking the exam.

**Time Policy:** To ensure each student has the same amount of time, all exam time cutoffs are strict.

**Request for Accommodations:** If you are eligible for an accommodation, please contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) as soon as possible. Once RCPD has certified that you are eligible for an accommodation, please bring the VISA form to me as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Homework

This semester we will cover approximately 17 “modules” (similar to textbook chapters). There will be one homework assignment for each module. Each assignment will be weighted equally.

Assignments will be completed online using McGraw-Hill Connect Master. Connect Master is a product that is interactive and adaptive. These assignments are graded for completion, not accuracy.

Each assignment will be due at **11:59 p.m. on a Sunday**. Your **three lowest assignment scores will be dropped**. This is intended to account for illness, forgetfulness, travels, and computer issues. Because you will always be given several days to complete each assignment, the cutoff times are firm. I recommend you complete the modules before the due date so that you have plenty of time to resolve any issues that arise. **No late assignments are accepted.**

## Top Hat

We will be using the Top Hat ([www.tophat.com](http://www.tophat.com)) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

You can visit the Top Hat Overview (<https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide>) within the Top Hat Success Center which describes how to register for a Top Hat account and provides a brief overview to get you up and running.

You can register by simply visiting our course website: <https://app.tophat.com/e/213428> or downloading the app and entering in the course join code. The Course join code for each section is shown below:

Section	Join Code
003	213428

Top Hat will require a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: [www.tophat.com/pricing](http://www.tophat.com/pricing). Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email ([support@tophat.com](mailto:support@tophat.com)), the in-app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

During each class, I will pose numerous questions that to you will be asked to answer via Top Hat. Each question is worth 1 point. **All questions are graded for completion, not accuracy.** You can view of your Top Hat score throughout the semester at the Top Hat website. Keep in mind that grades are based on the percentage of possible points earned, not the percentage of classes attended (though there is an obvious relationship).

There will be a **12** percentage-point curve applied to your participation grade, with the final grade not to exceed **102** percent. For example, if you earn 97 percent of the semester’s Top Hat points, you will receive a score of 102 percent. This curve is intended to account for illnesses, skipped classes, and technical issues.

The maximum score is greater than 100%, which allows for students with excellent attendance to earn a small amount of extra credit.

Any changes to your Top Hat grade outside of the 12% curve are extremely rare. No grade changes will be made unless, for specific reasons such as documented medical issues or university-sponsored activities, you missed the opportunity to answer more than 12% of the questions asked. So, if you missed 5% of the questions because of an illness and 10% of the questions for other, non-documented reasons, your Top Hat grade will not be adjusted.

Please do not contact Top Hat support if you have occasional technical issues that cause you to miss a few questions throughout the semester. This happens to everyone and is one reason why there is a 12% curve.

There will be some questions where you must enter in the correct answer to receive points. This will only occur in situations when we are reviewing material that has already been taught, and I will make it clear that your score will depend on accuracy.

Your Top Hat score will not be updated on D2L until the end of the semester. However, you can view it at any time on the Top Hat website. I expect the median Top Hat score to be at least 100%.

### Informational Exercise

Faculty members in the Department of Economics are conducting a research project to provide more information about studying economics at MSU and the field of economics. This exercise includes completing 7 short tasks, which should take fewer than 20 minutes all semester. These tasks are worth **2% extra credit added on to your grade**. You will receive an e-mail from Info.Econ before and/or during the first week of class with more information and all questions about Info.Econ should go to: [info.econ@msu.edu](mailto:info.econ@msu.edu). As long as you provide your NetID, whether or not you consent to your responses being used for the research project, you will receive credit for all the short tasks you complete. I will not be informed about whether you consent to participate in the research project or how you answer any particular question.

### Course Grade

Course grade cutoffs are shown below:

Transcript Grade	Minimum Course Grade
4.0	89.00
3.5	82.00
3.0	74.00
2.5	67.00
2.0	58.00
1.5	55.00
1.0	52.00

Please note that these cutoffs are strict. If you have a score of 81.99, you will receive a grade of 3.0. Because this course is so large, no matter what cutoff I use, there will be people who missed out on a higher grade by a fraction of a percentage point.

While the exams are not curved, you have two things working in your favor when it comes to your course grade. First, I expect the non-exam component of course grades – which is 30% of your grade – to have a median score of 100%. Second, course grade cutoffs are likely lower (more generous) than may see in other classes.

### Grading Issues

All grading issues must be raised **within one week** of when your grade is provided to you. Because almost all grading is done by computer, mistakes are very rare, and it is unlikely that your grade will be adjusted.

### Course Attendance

I have included the Top Hat component of your grade to motivate you to attend class. I believe you will gain much more from the class if you attend consistently. Moreover, exams will cover the material I lecture about during class. Please come. If you must miss class, please review my lecture slides and get notes from other students. If any questions remain, please ask the teaching assistant, visit the economics help room, or attend office hours. When you do attend class, which I sincerely hope to be often, please be respectful of other students and me. Distractions – including talking, ringing phones, and noisily coming or going during class – affect the learning environment for everyone.

### Respect

Almost all students act respectfully toward their classmates, the teaching assistants, and me. However, there are extremely rare instances when students, for example, are disruptive during class or rude to me or the teaching assistants. In these instances, I reserve the right to deduct points from your grade.

### Honor Code

Your behavior is governed by the Spartan Code of Honor. If you do not yet understand your responsibilities under this code, I urge you to go to <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/spartan-code-of-honor-academic-pledge> to learn more. I will do my best to discourage cheating by actively proctoring exams, but there is a limit to what I can do. **Ultimately, you should recognize that nothing we do in this course is worth jeopardizing your integrity over.**

### Course Policies

I will strictly follow course policies, simply because it is not fair to deviate from these policies for some while applying them to others. If you believe you have circumstances that warrant special consideration, I will listen to your circumstances. However, I have designed the course to cover most situations (e.g., all students will have one exam score dropped), so I anticipate needing to accommodate very few special requests.

I am always happy to explain the reasoning behind any course policy. I strive to be objective and treat everyone fairly.

### Administrative Matters

I occasionally will tell you information related to course administration. For example, I may extend the deadline of a homework assignment. You are responsible for any material which is (a) in the syllabus, (b) sent to you via e-mail, or (c) included in class slides. I will typically convey this sort of information multiple times.

There is a folder on D2L called “Administrative”. It contains the course syllabus, a help room schedule, and other administrative materials.

Please do not ask me or a teaching assistant an administrative question that could be answered by looking at the syllabus, an e-mail, the class slides, or the “Administrative” folder on D2L.

## E-mails

If you are uncertain of a matter related to course administration (for example, if you do not know when a homework assignment is due), please take the following steps

- 1) Check the syllabus
- 2) Check the syllabus again, just in case
- 3) Check your e-mails from me and the teaching assistants
- 4) Review the class slides that have been posted and your notes on slides that have not yet been posted
- 5) Ask a friend
- 6) Email myself or one of the TAs

Please try your best to check all available information before sending an email to me or one of the TAs. If this happens, you may receive an email back stating to “check the corresponding section of the syllabus” or “see this email from the instructor.” These responses are more direct for the purpose of saving time.

Okay, now that we’ve gotten through that unpleasant bit, I want to make it clear that **I love receiving e-mails from students!** Below are just a few of the many reasons when it would be **great** for you to e-mail me:

- You did not understand something in lecture
- You are having trouble understanding a concept
- You are having trouble solving a practice problem
- You are confused by a homework question
- You want to talk about something you saw in the news
- You want to talk about something generally related to economics but outside the scope of this course
- You want help preparing for the next exam
- You want general advice pertaining to this course, taking additional economics courses, or college in general
- You want to talk about majoring in economics, or what graduate school looks like
- You have an idea for a research project
- You just want to introduce yourself
- You have a good joke to tell.

Note that all of these are also great reasons to stop by my office hours!

**Please include your course number and section number in all e-mail correspondence.**

## Teaching Assistants

There are several teaching assistants for the course. Please give each of them all the respect you would give me and assume everything they tell you comes from me. These teaching assistants include:

- Kaidi Wu – Office Hours 9-11am Tuesday. Schedule here: <https://calendly.com/wukaidi/ec-202-office-hours>
- Dongming Yu – Help Room Hours Monday 3-6pm. Help Room Zoom Link here: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/93817597767>

## Getting Help

I want you to do well in this course, and I am committed to providing whatever resources I can. These include:

**Office Hours:** I will hold office hours on Tuesday and Thursday from 10am to 12pm. I encourage all of you to attend! You can come by if you have questions about the material, and I am also happy to chat with you about any other topic. You are also welcome to just stop by to introduce yourself! With this many students, it is impossible for me to find a time that works for everyone, so I am also available by appointment. Since office hours will have to happen virtually this semester, you can schedule a time to meet with me over zoom via Calendly. **The link to my meeting room is [calendly.com/gardn366](https://calendly.com/gardn366)**

**Help Rooms.** The Economics Help Rooms offer academic support to students enrolled in this course and strive to enhance students' approaches to studying and learning. In Help Rooms, students may receive assistance in a number of areas, including: completing homework and practice problems; reviewing course concepts; and preparing for exams.

The Help Rooms are staffed by experienced undergraduate and graduate students and operate in the Neighborhoods and Main Library, with numerous sessions offered throughout the week to accommodate students' schedules. A full list of locations and hours of operation will be available within the first few weeks of the semester. Locations and hours will be posted at <http://socialscience.msu.edu/HelpRooms>. They are also available in the "Administrative" folder on D2L.

## Exam Preparation and Review

The teaching assistant and I will have additional office hours before exams. You will be given more information in the weeks leading up to each exam.

## Additional Comments and Advice

- 1) I want to reward students who consistently work hard throughout the semester. Nearly 30 percent of your grade is determined entirely by effort and showing up for class.
- 2) I understand that some of the policies may seem harsh. For example, a module submitted one minute past the deadline receives a score of zero. Because this class is so large, I believe it is important to set and enforce strict guidelines. Regarding the module deadlines, if I accept an assignment that is 5 minutes late, it becomes more difficult for me to justify rejecting an assignment that is an hour late, and if I accept an assignment that is an hour late, it becomes more difficult for me to justify rejecting an assignment that is a day late, and so on. To treat everyone fairly, I use the same rules for everyone.
- 3) **Do lots of problems.** This is, without question, the best way to prepare for exams. I will post practice problems before each midterm exam and the final. I recommend you do them by yourself, review the solutions, and come to office hours or the Economics Help Room if you have

any questions. The online textbook also contains practice problems, and we will do many practice problems in class.

- 4) It is easy to come to class, write down what you see on the slides, click through the homework assignments, and read through your notes before exams. This “bare-minimum” approach will not serve you well on the exams. Instead, be assertive and take ownership of your experience in this class! Which of the examples that we covered in class interest you? Go read some more about them! Is there something you don’t understand? Come ask me or ask the teaching assistant! Disappointed with your last exam score? Come ask me for advice! Not sure where to start studying? Do some practice problems!
- 5) A few semesters ago, a professor for Ec202 conducted a survey to try and gauge what kind of study habits successful students in the course had. The main takeaways were that, relative to other students, students who earned a 4.0 in the class were more likely to:
  - Do the practice problems posted to D2L
  - Re-work the Top Hat problems in the slides
- 6) Please do not wait until the last minute to come looking for help. Typically, my office hours are nearly empty at the beginning of the semester and extremely busy in the days before your final exam. However, that late in the semester, a substantial portion of your grade has already been determined, and it is difficult to learn a semester’s worth of material in a short period.
- 7) Please do not ask me for a grade change or extra credit opportunity after the semester has ended. I am happy to work with you during the semester to improve your grade.