

Econ 3 - Principles of Macroeconomics - UC San Diego
Spring - 2026
Syllabus (March 30, 2026)

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Hello and Welcome

Hello and welcome to Econ 3 - Principles of Macroeconomics!

The syllabus outlines essential organizational details for the course. It serves as my agreement with you, and I am committed to adhering to its content. However, external events beyond our control may necessitate modifications. Although I do not anticipate this, unforeseen situations could arise, requiring adjustments to uphold the quality of your learning experience. Consequently, please regard the information in the syllabus as subject to revision. I am committed to keeping you promptly informed and involving you in the decision-making process should any adjustments become necessary. Your understanding and cooperation during such instances will contribute to maintaining the integrity of the learning environment. Note: all times in this document are in Pacific Standard Time.

Our Goal

Our goal in Econ 3 is to learn how the (macro)economy works. We will approach the subject as social scientists following the [scientific method](#): explore the data to ask questions, develop hypotheses/explanations grounded in the behavior of the actors involved (households, workers, businesses, banks, the government), and critically evaluate how well those hypotheses match what we observe in reality.

Topics

The topics covered are organized in color-coded modules (intro, yellow, red, green, blue, purple). The table below lists the topics covered in each module and the week in which we will cover them.

Module	Topic	Weeks
Intro	Why Macroeconomics?	1
Yellow	Measuring the Economy: Income, Prices, and Labor	1-2
Red	Employment, Prices, and Income Distribution	3-4
Green	The Financial System	5-7
Blue	Unemployment, Inflation, and Macroeconomic Policy	7-9
Purple	Economic Growth	9-10

Essential Competencies

The material we will study in Econ 3 is designed to foster the development of five essential competencies in Economics:

1. *Apply the scientific process to macroeconomic phenomena*: students will be exposed to the process of asking an economic question, gathering information, forming an explanatory hypothesis, and using data to evaluate the hypothesis.
2. *Analyze and evaluate behavior and outcomes using economic concepts and models*: students will use economic concepts and models to explain and evaluate the behavior of economic actors (firms, households), predict and evaluate economy-wide outcomes, and suggest government policies to improve those outcomes;
3. *Use quantitative approaches to macroeconomics*: students will develop the ability to work with mathematical formalizations of economic concepts and models in the form of graphs and simple equations.
4. *Think critically about economic methods and their applications*: students will be able to explain economic models as deliberate simplifications of reality that economists create to think through complex, nondeterministic behaviors; identify the assumptions and limitations of each model and their potential impacts; select and connect economic models to real economic conditions.
5. *Communicate economic ideas in diverse collaborations*: students will acquire fluency in economic terminology and graphical tools, demonstrate knowledge of major economic institutions, the magnitude of common economic statistics, and discuss economic issues in ways that promote mutual understanding and inquiry.

Lectures, Discussions, Supplemental Instruction

We meet in person two times a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays in CENTER HALL 101 from 3:20 pm to 4:50 pm. Our TAs will hold discussion sessions in CSB 001 on Thursdays from 6 pm to 6:50 pm (A01), 7 pm to 7:50 pm (A02), and 8 pm to 8:50 pm (A03). Office hours times and locations will be communicated in Week 1 and posted on our Canvas page. Finally, check the Supplemental Instruction schedule for additional tutoring support at the link <https://sites.google.com/ucsd.edu/ucsdsi/si-schedule>

Learning Platform

We will be using [Uflo](#) as a learning platform. Uflo is an AI-powered educational ecosystem trained on the instructor's course content that we'll use to enhance your learning experience throughout this course. On Uflo you will find pre-recorded short videos that can help you prepare for lecture and review material. You'll benefit from advanced AI-generated study materials, including smart notes, flashcards, and step-by-step instructional support for recorded lectures, problem sets and assessments. To register for Uflo, click the link below or scan the QR code on Canvas, log in with your UCSD email, and follow the steps to pay and enroll in the course. Uflo has a minimal, nonrefundable cost of \$24.99 for the entire quarter. The link for enrollment is [here](#), or you can scan the QR code on the left. Because of Uflo's experimental nature, we will have access to new and exclusive innovative learning tools. There may be kinks to work out in the process, but Uflo's CEO and support team are fully committed to supporting our class.



Communication

For all questions on class material, clarifications on logistics etc. please use our [Piazza](#) discussion board. The TAs and I will monitor the board constantly, and you will receive a quick response. For all other questions, please use the following email address: econ3rondina@gmail.com. Please do not use my personal email address (grondina@ucsd.edu) for communication that relates to the class, unless it is a personal urgent matter. Finally, please do not use the Canvas messaging system.

Textbooks

We will use a variety of textbooks for the class. The main reference of the material presented in class will be the open-access textbooks from the CORE Econ project, <https://www.core-econ.org/>. Links to the Units in the CORE textbooks are indicated in the weekly schedule posted on Canvas. The inclusive access textbook listed for the class is the same one you have used in Econ 1, *Principles of Economics*, by Frank, Bernanke, Antonovics, and Heffetz. The textbook can be used as a secondary source of the material, but it is not strictly needed. If you purchased the textbook for Econ 1, you should still have access to the textbook at no cost via BryteWave directly on Canvas. If you have not purchased the textbook before, the textbook will be available for two weeks, and you should feel free to opt out.

Assessment

Research shows that frequent testing is the best way for students to assess whether they are learning at the appropriate level. The assessment design for the class is intended to help you work on the material regularly throughout the quarter and to give you frequent feedback on your level of understanding and mastery of the concepts and tools. Many of the assignments are low stakes, and in-class exams are designed to allow you to make up for earlier gaps in learning. However, constant and deliberate practice is essential for long-lasting learning to occur. It is important that you set aside time *every day* in the quarter to work on Econ 3. If you do so, all the assessment deadlines will fit naturally into your learning path, and you will be able to excel in the class and keep test anxiety at a minimum.

Lecture Survey Questions (LSQ) - In each live lecture, you will be asked to answer one or two questions on Canvas. The questions are graded for completion, and their goal is to get us thinking about the topic we are about to cover or provide feedback on a topic we just covered. *The LSQs will be available during the live class only.* LSQs count towards the participation points for the final grade.

Weekly Reflection Notes - Reflection notes are due at the end of each week and are meant to create a space for you to reflect on what you have learned and what you have worked on during the week. Reflection notes count towards the participation points for the final grade.

Online Homework - There will be five homework assignments due every other week. The assignments are administered in Uflo. Multiple attempts are possible; you can use the Socratic Tutor tool, and only the highest score will count. Homework points count towards the practice points for the final grade.

Online Quizzes - There will be four online quizzes administered in Uflo throughout the quarter. Quizzes can be taken from 2 pm Sunday to 2 pm Tuesday. Once you start the quiz, you will have 90 minutes to complete it. Make sure that you have time to finish the quiz once started. Once an answer is submitted, you will not be able to go back and change it. You can use your notes, textbook, and the Socratic tutor in Uflo to answer the questions in the quizzes, but you cannot ask for outside help. The goal of the quizzes is for you to practice the type of questions you will encounter in the exams. Quizzes points count towards the practice points for the final grade.

In-Person Exams: There will be one **midterm** and one **final** exam. The midterm will take place from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Thursday, April 30th. The Final Exam will take from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Monday, June 8. The midterm exam will ask questions on the Yellow, Red, and part of the Green modules material. The final exam will have two parts. One part is mandatory, and it asks about the material covered in the Green, Blue and Purple modules. One part is optional, and it asks questions about the Yellow, Red, and part of the Green modules, so that if you did not reach the desired score in the midterm, you have a second chance to improve it in the final exam by answering the questions in the optional part. More information about the logistics of the exams will be provided later in the quarter.

Exams Policies

You must take the final exam in order to receive a grade in this course. The date is written above. Be sure to mark your calendar. If you miss the midterm exam without a university-accepted excuse, you will receive a score of zero (0) for the exam. Acceptable excuses for missed exams or assignment deadlines must be pre-approved by Professor Rondina (except when this is not possible in an emergency situation). A student who misses an exam due to physical illness will be required to provide documentation from a healthcare professional indicating why the student was physically unable to take the exam. All documentation must be provided to Professor Rondina within two working days of the end of the emergency. Failure to comply with any of the above in the specified manner will result in a score of zero (0) for the exam. The instructor reserves the right to re-weight the composite grading structure to accommodate valid excused absences (i.e.: medical emergency, etc.). This could involve an oral exam or an alternate format. It is in the student's best interest to complete as many of the course assessments as possible.

Grading

Your grade in the class will reflect **class participation**, **practice**, and demonstrated learning in **in-person exams**. Class Participation points are obtained by answering the Lecture Survey Questions during live class and the Reflection Notes at the end of each week. Practice points are obtained via the Online Homework and Online Quizzes. In-person exams are meant to evaluate achievement of learning standards according to Bloom's taxonomy: Gateway (Basic Knowledge), Understanding (U), and

Execution/Analysis (E). The tentative grading scale thresholds are reported in the table below. The percentages are averages across the assignments in each category. For example, a “75% Gateway” means obtaining 75% of all the Gateway points available between the Midterm and the Final exam. Similarly, 85% of U+E means obtaining 85% of all the Understanding + Execute points available between the Midterm and the Final.

Grade	Participation	Practice	Gateway	U + E
A+	≥ 80%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
A	≥ 80%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 82.5%
A-	≥ 80%	≥ 90%	≥ 85%	≥ 75%
B+	≥ 75%	≥ 85%	≥ 80%	≥ 67.5%
B	≥ 75%	≥ 85%	≥ 80%	≥ 60%
B-	≥ 75%	≥ 85%	≥ 75%	≥ 52.5%
C+	≥ 70%	≥ 80%	≥ 70%	≥ 45%
C	≥ 70%	≥ 80%	≥ 70%	≥ 37.5%
Passing (C-)	≥ 70%	≥ 75%	≥ 65%	≥ 30%

The parameters indicated above are to be considered *sufficient*, but not necessary: if you meet those standards, you are guaranteed the corresponding grade. There are no grade quotas in the class, but thresholds can be adjusted downward depending on overall class performance (in other words, the class will be curved if needed).

Summary of Assessment Dates

- LSQs - only available during every live lecture.
- Weekly Reflection Notes - available after Thursday’s lecture, to be submitted before each Sunday by 11:59 pm.
- Online Quizzes - available from 2 pm Sunday to 2 pm Tuesday (4/12/26, 4/26/26, 5/17/26, 5/31/26).
- Midterm Exam - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Thursday, April 30, in person
- Final Exam - 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Monday, June 8, in person

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to do their own work, as outlined in the [UCSD policy on Academic Integrity](#). All students of UC San Diego are responsible for knowing and adhering to this institution's policy regarding academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, lying, bribery, threatening behavior and assistance to acts of academic dishonesty are examples of behaviors that violate this policy. Ordinarily, a student engaged in any act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Academic Integrity Office. Depending on its findings, students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to non-academic sanctions, including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion. The Academic Integrity Office can be contacted by email at aio@ucsd.edu or by telephone at 858-822-2163. Additional information regarding the University Academic Integrity policy is available at <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>.

University Policies and Resources

Conduct Code. To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UC San Diego strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. UC San Diego's [Principles of Community](#) illustrate the expectations of all members of our community. Consistent with such principles, the [Student Conduct Code](#) underscores the pride and the values that define UCSD's community, while providing students with a framework to guide their actions and behaviors. I recommend reviewing the [Student Conduct Code](#) to make sure you are familiar with the behavior that is expected from you in class and on campus in general.

Disability Accommodations. Campus policy regarding disabilities requires that faculty adhere to the recommendations of the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Any student eligible for and needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of disability should submit to me a letter from OSD describing appropriate adjustments or accommodations and should arrange to meet with me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. University policies regarding disabilities are available at <https://osd.ucsd.edu/>. Appointments with OSD (phone or in-person) can be made by calling 858.534.4382 or by email at osd@ucsd.edu.

Religious Observance. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly accommodate all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled examinations, assignments or required attendance. See full details of policies on examinations [here](#) and [here](#). If you have scheduling conflict covered by this policy, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can reschedule the relevant assignment/examination.

Harassment Policy. [The University Policy on Discrimination and Harassment](#) applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff member or faculty member who believes (s)he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy, should contact the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) at (858) 534-8298, ophd@ucsd.edu, or <https://ophd.ucsd.edu/report-bias/index.html>.

Data Privacy. The University adheres to the standards for student privacy rights and requirements as stipulated in the Federal Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, see <https://catalog.ucsd.edu/about/policies/notification-of-rights/index.html>.

Counseling. Managing the many challenges of being a college student can be very stressful. Always remember that talking to somebody that is professionally trained to help is just an email, or short walk, away: <https://caps.ucsd.edu/>.

Tentative Schedule of Topics (topics covered in each lecture may vary)

Week	Topics	Videos	Lecture
1	The Big Questions in Macroeconomics + Learning	I1,I2	Tue Mar 31
1	Measuring the Economy- Income	Y1-Y5	Thu Apr 2
2	Measuring the Economy - Prices	Y6-Y10	Tue Apr 7
2	Measuring the Economy - Labor	Y11-Y13	Thu Apr 9
	<i>Online Quiz 1</i>		<i>Sun Apr 12</i>
3	Employment, Prices, Income Distribution: Wage Setting	R1-R2	Tue Apr 14
3	Employment, Prices, Income Distribution: Price Setting	R3-R4	Thu Apr 16
4	The Aggregate Labor/Product Model	R5	Tue Apr 21
4	Income Inequality	R6-R7	Thu Apr 23
	<i>Online Quiz 2</i>		<i>Sun Apr 26</i>
5	The Financial System: Borrowing and Lending	G1-G6	Tue Apr 28
5	Review Ahead of Midterm Exam		Thu Apr 30
	<i>Midterm Exam</i>		<i>Thu Apr 30</i>
6	The Financial System: Banks	G7-G9	Tue May 5
6	The Financial System: Money	G10-G13	Thu May 7
7	The Financial System: Financial Instruments	G14-G16	Tue May 12
7	Unemployment, Inflation and Policy: Business Cycles	B1-B5	Thu May 14
	<i>Online Quiz 3</i>		<i>Sun May 17</i>
8	Unemployment, Inflation and Policy: The Multiplier Model	B6-B12	Tue May 19
8	Unemployment, Inflation and Policy: Inflation	B13-B17	Thu May 21
9	Unemployment, Inflation and Policy: Monetary Policy	B18-B22	Tue May 26
9	Economic Growth: The Malthusian Trap	P1-P3	Thu May 28
	<i>Online Quiz 4</i>		<i>Sun May 31</i>
10	Economic Growth: Technology and Innovation	P4-P8	Tue June 2
10	Economic Growth: Present and Future	P9-P15	Thu June 4
	<i>Final Exam</i>		<i>Mon June 8</i>