

ECON0002: ECONOMICS
(ECON0095 is the one-term version of this module)

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Live sessions with lecturer: Wednesdays 11am-1pm**Live practicals with lecturer:** Wednesdays as announced, 9-10am**Live sessions with tutor:** Weekly, as per your UCL timetable

Course Description: This module provides the introduction to economics for undergraduates in the Department of Economics. It introduces the characteristics of economies using historical and cross-country comparisons across the major dimensions of economic performance (growth, inequality, stability). By taking the main economic actors and showing how they make decisions, the course covers behaviour in goods, labour and credit markets, highlighting the role of the rules of the game (institutions), and showing the sources of market successes and market failures. Behaviour of households and firms is analysed in the economy as a whole, along with that of fiscal and monetary policy makers.

Main text: In this module, we use the **free** online interactive text *The Economy* produced for the CORE project by experts from around the world (www.core-econ.org). This text is also available in hard copy: [The CORE Team \(2017\), The Economy, Oxford University Press](#). For offline use, download the app <https://www.core-econ.org/our-apps/>

How you will learn each week:

Before the live session each Wednesday, you will need to read the e-book unit, go through additional core materials posted for that week and complete the tasks by the specified deadline, usually a short Moodle quiz and/or a discussion forum. This will prepare you for the interactive learning in the live session. In addition, you will have a live tutorial session in smaller groups with your tutor. You can check the exact time of your tutorial on your UCL online timetable.

In order to deepen your understanding and prepare you for the assessment in this module, you will also have to complete the following:

- The First Year Challenge multimedia project (more details on the Moodle page)
- All MCQs in *The Economy* for the Unit covered each week
- Weekly assignments to be completed before your live tutorial session, submitted on Fridays.

You are expected to actively participate in all live class sessions each week.

How you will be assessed:

All assessments will be online and open book in 2020/21.

- Average mark of best twelve of sixteen short weekly Moodle quizzes (no quiz in the first and last week of each term) – 15% of module mark
- January Moodle exam covering all Term 1 material (usually in the first week of Term 2, exact date TBC) – 20% of the module mark
- Individual Writing Assignment (due after Reading Week, Term 2, exact date TBC) – 15% of the module mark
- End of Year Coursework covering all Term 1 and Term 2 material (due in Term 3, exact date TBC) – 50% of the module mark

Updates on all aspects of the assessment will be provided in the ‘Assessment’ area of the ECON0002 Moodle page.

The assessment pattern for Econ0095 is as above, with all assessment only covering Term 1 material.

All of the above elements of ‘How you will learn’ and ‘How you will be assessed’ are mandatory. They are designed to help you keep on top of the material week by week, to enable you to do well in all the assessments and to be prepared for other economics modules and later years of the degree.

What you will learn:

The aim of the course is to introduce students to the systematic study of economics through addressing five questions.

What is economics about?

Who are the main economic actors?

What can markets do and what can they not do?

How can public policies improve economic performance?

How do economists produce knowledge?

Economics is defined as the study of how people interact with each other and their natural surroundings in order to produce their livelihoods rather than the narrower Robbins’ definition.¹

Students learn how to analyze a wide variety of economic situations by identifying the decision maker(s) (including individuals, households, firms, communities, unions, governments, and central banks), their objectives, the action(s) they have to decide, the constraints they face (the feasible set) and the decision rule. This provides a broadly applicable method for identifying the possibilities for mutual gains from an economic interaction and the presence of conflicts of interest. The concepts of trade-offs and opportunity cost, and the evaluation of economic outcomes according to the criteria of efficiency and fairness are used repeatedly.

¹ Economics is the science that studies human behaviour as a relationship between given ends and scarce means which have alternative uses.

Students will use (a) historically and methodologically informed narrative, (b) graphical economic models and (c) mathematical models to analyze these issues.

The course material in the ebook, *The Economy* includes

- a set of ‘When economists disagree’ segments, which highlight areas of disagreement, the basis on which disagreement rests and how it may be resolved. In some of the examples, students are introduced to the way new empirical methods or new data have narrowed the grounds for disagreement.
- a set of ‘Great economist’ segments. These show students the contested nature of the subject and how new knowledge is produced. It reveals both how knowledge has been created in response to developments in the economy and how economists have affected the economy through changes in policy based on economic knowledge.
- a set of ‘How economists learn from facts’ segments, which show the methods economists use to find out whether, for example, a change in policy or in circumstances affects economic outcomes (and how large the effect is).
- Leibniz supplements in which the conceptual material is represented mathematically, providing connections with your ECON0010 module and later modules in your degree.
- a Glossary, which defines the terms used in the course

Each week, and in each Unit of the book that we cover, a set of big questions are emphasised at the start of the Unit. When reviewing the detailed material, you are encouraged to revisit these big questions and consider how you would use the materials from that week to answer them. This is something that will be considered in live sessions during the year

Where to find further information

The ECON0002 Moodle Page is the source of all information about the course. This is where materials will be placed, links to live sessions provided and announcements made. You should be on the page regularly each week and follow all the instructions in Week 0 to make sure you get relevant alerts in your inbox. Details of how to contact the lecturers, tutors and the course manager are also provided.