

AGEC 333: Food Distribution – A Retailing Perspective

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Office Hours: 2:30-4:30pm Wed & Friday

Course Information
Spring, 2018
MWF 12:30-1:20PM
Krannert G002
(Note: some exams will take place
in a computer lab)

Course webpage and App

Use Blackboard Learn at <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/tools/blackboard>

Note: There is now a Blackboard learn app which you can get for iPhones, Android, or Windows phones. The app is called “Bb Student” by Blackboard, Inc. Go to the app store on your phone to download it.

Course Description

This course teaches students how to conceptualize business and economic problems related to food distribution and retailing. We will also discuss contemporary issues related to food.

Prerequisites

You are expected to have taken a course in microeconomics at the level of AGECE 203 or ECON 210.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Learn economic principles that are useful for understanding food distribution, retailing, and consumption;
2. Improve analytic writing skills;
3. Learn how to critically evaluate essays written by others;
4. Learn a conceptual framework for structuring complex business and economics problems.

With regard to (4) because real world problems are often complex and ambiguous, it is important that students learn a conceptual framework that allows them to put structure on a problem. Structuring problems allows managers to quickly identify the “big issues” and to efficiently use time and resources to target these big issues, rather than to waste time and resources on secondary considerations. While there are a number of useful frameworks for structuring problems, this course will show you how microeconomics can be a useful business problem solving tool.

Course Requirements

The assignments for this course are:

1. **Four Gradient based, peer reviewed writing assignments**, which includes three in-class calibration exams (I will discuss these in detail during a class lecture near the beginning of the semester).

Note: the first Gradient assignment will not have a calibration exam since it is mainly used to help you become familiar with the computer interface.

The three remaining Gradient assignments will have calibration exams that will take place in computer lab **SC 179 from 12:30-1:20 on Monday February 12; Monday March 26; and Monday April 16.**

2. **Two in-class exams** – a midterm and a final which involve true/false, multiple choice and problem solving questions. The midterm will take place on **Friday March 2**. The final exam date will be determined by Purdue and will be announced during the semester.

Grading

1. The midterm is worth 20% of your grade.
2. The final exam will be worth 25% of your grade (final is not cumulative).
3. Your first Gradient writing assignment will be worth 10% of your grade as you become familiar with the system. The remaining Gradient assignment will be worth 15%. **Note:** each in-class Gradient calibration exam is worth 50% of a Gradient assignment. In other words, each calibration exam is worth 7.5% of the total grade for the class.

Grading criteria for Gradient assignments will be discussed in detail in class and are also described in the “Gradient overview handout.pdf” document that I have posted on Blackboard Learn in the “Gradient Materials” folder.

While I do not have a fixed formula for assigning grades, here is a general guideline:

An **A** will require 95 percent of the total points in the class.

An **A-** will require at least 90 percent of the total points.

A **B+** will require at least 87 percent of the total points.

A **B** will require at least 84 percent of the total points.

A **B-** will require at least 80 percent of the total points.

All **C** and **D** grades will require total points on a comparable scale to B grades.

However, I reserve the right to deviate from the above guideline. You should be comforted in knowing that I will not deviate in a way that will make it more difficult for you to get a good grade. If I depart from the guideline, it's usually to lower the thresholds for each grade. For example, if no students in the class attain 90% of the total points, then I might grade on a curve and give at least an **A-** to any student who is in the top 10% of the class.

Required Texts

Unfortunately, there are no good textbooks for the material covered in this class. The presentation slides for this course also serve as the course notes. You can purchase copies of the slides\notes from Boiler Copy Maker in room 186 of the Purdue Memorial Union.

Policies

- **Make-up Exams:** If you miss an exam and do not have a written excuse for an unavoidable emergency or a university sponsored academic activity, then there will be no makeup exams for you. You will receive a zero on the exam. Even if you have a valid excuse, the make-up-exam will not be the same version as the exam given in class.
- **Gradient assignment deadlines:** A typical Gradient writing assignment will be comprised of several parts, including a written essay, a calibration exam, peer reviews and self-assessment. Each part will have a time window that will be made clear to you in advance.

With the exception of the in-class calibration exams, the time windows typically span several days and you can complete the non-calibration parts online from any computer with internet access. Therefore, you will have no excuse for missing a deadline. To avoid missing deadlines, I strongly advise you to complete the assignments well in advance of the deadline to leave yourself with some insurance against emergencies. Gradient programming is not very forgiving if students fail to complete each part of the assignment. Failure to complete a part means the assignment stops for that student (Note: there is not much I can do about this since I did not program the software).

- **Missed Calibration Exams:** Calibration exams are crucial for each Gradient assignment. If you miss the calibration exam, then that particular Gradient assignment will no longer continue for you. You will receive a score of zero for the entire Gradient assignment. If you have a written excuse for an unavoidable emergency or a university sponsored academic activity, then I will allow you to submit the calibration late at an arranged time and location, but the calibration must be completed before the time expires for the next part of the Gradient assignment.
- **Frequently check the course webpage or app for Blackboard Learn.** Class announcements, updates, and/or assignments will be posted on Blackboard Learn. You are responsible for keeping up with the information I post on Blackboard Learn.
- **Attendance and taking good notes will be crucial for doing well in this course.** Given that there is not good textbook support available, assignments and exams will be based mainly on my lectures and lecture slides. While the slides available through Boiler Copy Maker cover major points, many of the subtle points, graphs, and solutions to example problems will be covered only during lectures. I do this to provide you with an incentive to attend lecture and to pay attention. Students who attend lectures and pay attention are more likely to be successful.

Academic Dishonesty

Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, University Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that "the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972] **In order to minimize plagiarism, you will be required to also provide a pdf copy of your Gradient essays through Purdue's SafeAssign software which checks for plagiarism.**

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Among the materials that may be protected by copyright law are the lectures, notes, and other material presented in class or as part of the course. Always assume the materials presented by an instructor are protected by copyright unless the instructor has stated otherwise. Students enrolled in, and authorized visitors to, Purdue University courses are permitted to take notes, which they may use for individual/group study or for other non-commercial purposes reasonably arising from enrollment in the course or the University generally.

Notes taken in class are, however, generally considered to be “derivative works” of the instructor’s presentations and materials, and they are thus subject to the instructor’s copyright in such presentations and materials. No individual is permitted to sell or otherwise barter notes, either to other students or to any commercial concern, for a course without the express written permission of the course instructor. To obtain permission to sell or barter notes, the individual wishing to sell or barter the notes must be registered in the course or must be an approved visitor to the class. Course instructors may choose to grant or not grant such permission at their own discretion, and may require a review of the notes prior to their being sold or bartered. If they do grant such permission, they may revoke it at any time, if they so choose.

Attendance

Students are expected to be present for every meeting of the classes in which they are enrolled. Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility. When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as for many University sponsored activities and religious observations, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. For unanticipated or emergency absences when advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email, or by contacting the main office that offers the course. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor’s department because of circumstances beyond the student’s control, and in cases of bereavement, the student or the student’s representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students.

Special Needs

If you have a disability that requires academic adjustments, please make an appointment to meet with me during the first week of classes to discuss your needs. Please note that university policy requires all students with disabilities to be registered with [Adaptive Programs](#) in the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) before classroom accommodations can be provided.

Emergencies

In the unusual event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. To get information about changes in this course visit the course home page, contact me by email sywu@purdue.edu, call me at my office (494-4299). To report an emergency, call 911. To obtain updates regarding an ongoing emergency, sign up for Purdue Alert text messages, view www.purdue.edu/ea. There are nearly 300 Emergency Telephones outdoors across campus and in parking garages that connect directly to the PUPD. If you feel threatened or need help, push the button and you will be connected immediately. If we hear a fire alarm during class we will immediately suspend class, evacuate the building, and proceed outdoors. Do not use the elevator. If we are notified during class of a Shelter in Place requirement for a tornado warning, we will suspend class and shelter in the basement. If we are notified during class of a Shelter in Place requirement for a hazardous materials release, or a civil disturbance, including a shooting or other use of weapons, we will suspend class and shelter in the classroom, shutting the door and turning off the lights. Please review the Emergency Preparedness website for additional information. http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/index.html