

ECON0106: **Microeconomics**

Choice and Game Theory

University College London

2026-27. Term 1

Contact Information: Duarte Gonçalves* (duarte.goncalves@ucl.ac.uk).

Office: Room 112, Drayton House. Office Hours: By appointment via email.

Meeting Times and Location:

Time: Monday 13:00-15:00 and Tuesday 10:00-12:00.

Location: B06 Drayton House.

This term we will have 21 lectures:

October (8 lectures): 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, and 27.

November (9 lectures): 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, and 30.

December (4 lectures): 7, 8, 14, and 15.

The lectures start on time. Please don't be late.

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Office Hours: TBA

Tutorials: Time: Thursday 13:00-14:00. Location: B06 Drayton House.

This term we will have 10 tutorials:

October (4 tutorials): 8, 15, 22, and 29.

November (4 tutorials): 5, 12, 19, and 26.

December (2 tutorials): 3 and 10.

Description: ECON0106 is the core microeconomics course in the doctoral sequence in economics. Term 1 provides an introduction to the analysis of behaviour, both in individual choice contexts, as well as in settings of strategic interaction.

In the first half of the term, we will lay out the foundations for the analysis of choice and examine the behavioural implications underlying specific preference representations, which we will then connect with the study of consumer theory. We then turn to choice under risk and under uncertainty. During the second half of the term we will focus on modeling of behaviour of interacting agents.

Prerequisites: This is a graduate economics class intended for the first-year students of the doctoral program in Economics. This course presupposes prior exposure to analysis in metric spaces and linear algebra (e.g., you should be familiar with the mathematical appendix of MWG

*A first-order approximation on how to pronounce my name is 'doo-art' 'gone-sal-vush' (sal as in salary).

– see reference below).

Course Materials: The course will be based on lecture notes, which I will make available online before or shortly after the corresponding lecture.

A textbook that will be useful for the entire term (and beyond) is the following:

- (MWG) Mas-Colell, Whinston, and Green (1995). **Microeconomic Theory**.

For the first half of the term, covering choice theory, I will supply lecture notes for each topic. Useful textbooks are

- Rubinstein (2018). **Lecture Notes in Microeconomic Theory**.
- Kreps (2012). **Microeconomic Foundations I**.
- Kreps (1988). **Notes on the Theory of Choice**.
- Kreps (1990). **A Course in Microeconomic Theory**.

For the second half of the term, I will rely almost entirely on these excellent lecture notes

- Kartik. **Lecture Notes for 1st Year Ph.D. Game Theory**

which I will make available online (with Navin's permission). I will provide lecture notes for specific topics not covered there. Other materials you may want to consult (or at least be aware of) are

- Fudenberg and Tirole (1991). **Game Theory**.
- Osborne and Rubinstein (1994). **A Course in Game Theory**.
- Maschler, Solan, and Zamir (2013). **Game Theory**.

Grading: Your grade for this term will be given by the weighted average of two components: written tests (80 points), and a written assignment (20 points).

Written Tests: The tests will be individual, in-person, closed-book, and during lecture or tutorial time:

- 22 October (50min, during tutorial); 10 points
- 5 November (50min, during tutorial); 15 points
- 30 November (1h50min, during lecture); 20 points
- 15 December (1h50min, during lecture); 35 points.

Written Assignment: A fundamental part of research is being able to learn about related literature. The goal of this assignment is that you develop a survey of the literature on a topic in (micro)economic theory. This assignment is meant to foster your ability to search, summarise, and discuss the literature related to a topic.

The written assignment is individual, so everyone needs to choose a different topic. The expectation is that you are able to present the motivation behind the topic, summarise the main results and recent developments, and possibly discuss how to advance the literature — by highlighting gaps in the literature or by proposing how to use these results. You are naturally not expected to master all the related literature, but rather to find, present, and discuss some relevant literature.

The assignment is deliberately open-ended: its purpose is to get you started in thinking about how to use what you learn for your own research. You should find a topic related to class material that inspires you.

You will find a list of suggested themes here:

https://liveuclac-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/uctpdgo_ucl_ac_uk/IQB8yuUjWrW1SpDXPjbSkUINAFU_lCB6vU4DFLs9BwS85DU?e=A88nUZ. On the tab “Topics” you have a list of suggested themes for the written assignment. Please write down your name and topic you would like to work on for the assignment next to a specific theme. You are expected to narrow down the theme to a particular, well-defined topic. The assignment is first-come-first-served. You can work on themes not listed insofar as they are related to the class materials and have a strong theoretical component. If you would like to do so, please sign up for office hours.

You will need to submit your written assignment here: https://liveuclac-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/uctpdgo_ucl_ac_uk/IgBVUUVtFpNuS7AZRPjXnbVwAZZ0L4oUDCYbLsxxw9soHuk. The due date is 22 December 2026, 16:00 UK time. Do try to have it done earlier so that you can account for unforeseeable situations; there will be no extensions. You will need to type your assignment using $\LaTeX$. Please submit a single .zip file with a .pdf file typed in $\LaTeX$ along with .tex file and any other files necessary to compile it. I recommend using overleaf (<https://www.overleaf.com>). Note that I will also check the source file. The survey should have *up to* 5 pages, A4, with 2cm margin, 1.35 line spacing, and font 12pt.

Class Policies:

- Ask questions, google, work together with to your colleagues, browse wikipedia and stack exchange, come to office hours, read other books/papers.
- Come to class prepared (and willing) to participate.
- Show your work (derivations) and cite your sources. Do not plagiarise; do not cheat.
- You can use either pen and paper or a tablet to take notes.
- Using mobile phones or laptops in the classroom is not allowed.
- Recording lectures or tutorials is not allowed.
- Respect your classmates and instructor by limiting yourself to class-related activities.

- Try to be on time.

Why Economic Theory? Economic theory provides you with tools that enable you to develop models. We need models to

- Explain puzzling phenomena: what is the mechanism driving a particular regularity?
- Make predictions: if we observe a change in the environment, how will agents react?
- Develop counterfactual analysis: what would the effect of a given policy be?

When developing new models, these occasionally led to discovering new regularities (that are then tested). Which leads to another purpose of theory: determining the whether a model is a good approximation of reality, that is, whether it captures the relevant features of the environment they are meant to describe. Namely,

- Identifying models: e.g., can we recover the model from observable data?
- Derive testable implications: e.g., is the model falsified by existing data?

This is then used in empirical research to obtain identification restrictions that you can use in empirical analysis, as well as with a structure that you can estimate from the data to do counterfactuals.

A good command of theory is important regardless of your field of specialisation. The first year in the doctoral programme is likely the time where you will have the last broad exposure before becoming an expert in a particular topic.[†] You should take this opportunity to learn as much and as best as you can.

Course Outline:

1. **Choice, Preferences, Utility:** Choice to Preferences, α , β , WARP, Preferences to Utility.
2. **Structural Properties of Preferences and Utility Representations:** Continuity and Debreu's Theorem, Monotonicity, Convexity, Separability, Homotheticity, Quasi-linearity.
3. **Optimal Choice and Consumer Theory:** Utility Maximisation Problem, Correspondences, Expenditure Minimisation Problem, Afriat's Theorem.
4. **Monotone Comparative Statics of Individual Choices:** Lattices and Strong Set Order, (Quasi)supermodularity, Strong Monotone Comparative Statics.
5. **Expected Utility:** von-Neumann–Morgenstern Representation Theorem.
6. **Risk Attitudes:** Risk Aversion, Arrow-Pratt Measure, CARA, DARA, Examples.

[†]I would strongly suggest taking other economic theory courses and keeping up-to-date with the frontier in the field: there is abundant evidence on the sizeable returns to taking a novel theoretical approach/model/concept/tool to a particular setting or to the data (in IO, macro, health, labour, education, political economy, trade, etc).

7. **Stochastic Orders:** FOSD, Likelihood Ratio Order, SOSD, Mean-preserving spreads.
8. **Uncertainty and Belief Updating:** Subjective Expected Utility, Uncertainty Aversion, Bayesian Updating.
9. **Stochastic Choice:** Random Utility and Discrete Choice, Luce's Model.
10. **Strategic Interaction:** Primitives of Normal-Form games, Strict and Weak dominance, Iterated Elimination of Dominated Strategies, Rationalisability, Examples and Applications, Level- k .
11. **Nash Equilibrium:** Definition, Existence, Interpretation, Examples, Robustness, Correlated Equilibrium.
12. **Games of Incomplete Information:** Bayesian-Nash Equilibrium, Purification, Envelope Theorem(s), Auctions, Global Games.
13. **Monotone Comparative Statics in Games:** Tarski Fixed-Point Theorem, Weak Set Order, LCKK Fixed-Point Theorem, Monotone Comparative Statics on Fixed Points, Applications to Games with Strategic Complementarities.
14. **Extensive-Form Games and Equilibrium Refinements:** Primitives of normal- and extensive-form games, Kuhn's Theorem, Backward Induction, Subgame Perfection, Applications, (Weak) Perfect Bayesian Equilibrium, Sequential Equilibrium, Examples.
15. **Repeated Games:** Finitely Repeated Games, One-Shot Deviation Principle, Folk Theorem(s), Connection to Dynamic Choice and Dynamic Programming, Examples.
16. **Information Orders:** Information Structure, Blackwell Order.

The course outline is provisional and will depend on how quickly we cover the topics listed; I may skim or skip some of the topics.