More Information about Econ 135:

Grading and Exams

Grades are based on two multiple-choice quizzes and a two-part final exam. The final has a multiple-choice part (a.k.a. Quiz #3) and problem questions. All exams are closed book.

• Quizzes and the final are mandatory. There are no make-ups. Missing an exam without valid excuse means zero points. Missing with a valid excuse means that the weight of the quiz is moved to the problem part of the final.

• Quiz #1 and Quiz #2 each count for 25% of the course grade. The Final counts for 50%. The Final divides into about 40% quiz (20% of the grade) and about 60% problem questions (30% of the grade).

• Letter grades are based on the overall, combined distribution. Grade cutoffs are set so that about 25-35% of scores are in the range A+ to A- and about 65-75% in the range A+ to B-. However, I have taught this course often enough to know how well students normally perform. If the distribution is better than expected, I don’t hesitate to give better grades – especially if you impress me in the final.

For all exams, bring:

(1) small scantron card (green/white, 50 questions each side). (2) picture ID. (3) no.2 pencils.

I provide exam copies—no need for a blue book. Complete instructions will be printed on each exam.

Typical exam instructions include (here with some hints, as preview):

• Use a #2 pencil for scantrons. Use pencils or pens for problem questions, any color except red.

• Scratch paper is not permitted. Use the back of the exam as scratch pad if needed.

• You may use a simple pocket calculator, but not a programmable/graphing calculator. (In problem questions, I usually give points for knowing what to do, not for numerical accuracy, and reasonably rounded answers earn full credit.)

• Phones and other wireless or networked devices are not permitted, must be turned off and be out of reach. You cannot use your cell phone as watch or calculator.

• Special rules for the final two minutes and until all exams are collected: No questions are taken and everyone must stay seated. (Ending in early is okay but not in the last two minutes.) When the “drop pencils” instruction is given, stop writing. Do not get up or talk until all exams have been collected.

• A bonus point is usually given if you follow all exam instructions promptly, exam and scantron have all required information and your form scans properly without special processing or re-grading.

Academic Integrity

See https://econ.ucsb.edu/undergraduate/cheating for general information. Cheating deserves sanctions because it’s unfair to honest students. To discourage cheating:

• Exams may come in multiple versions, without further announcement. Make sure you put the number or letter code of your exam on your scantron.
• Put your name on your scantron before you start the test. Possession of a scantron without name is considered cheating.

• Put your name and signature on your exam copy as soon as the test starts. Possession of an unsigned exam copy is considered cheating.

• Bring a picture ID and have it on display during the test. I may walk up to randomly selected students to compare signatures on the exam and on their ID.

• No phones or other network-capable devices, no scratch paper, no programmable/graphics calculators. Using or having access to unapproved materials or devices is considered cheating.

• Students may not leave the room. If the room is small, there may be assigned seating (TBA).

If you believe I could do more to maintain the integrity of tests, I would appreciate a hint. You may also report cheating to https://econ.ucsb.edu/undergraduate/cheating.

Exam FAQs

• Is the final cumulative? For the quiz part: no. For the problem questions: yes.

• Where do I stand in the class? Point scores will be posted on Gauchospace. Quiz answers are given in the following class; answers are not posted anywhere, due to copyright restrictions. If you missed the quiz discussion or wish to review your test in more detail, please see me during office hours.

Cautionary Note about Old Exams

When an exam approaches, I usually provide an old exam. However, your main study material should be your class notes, readings, and practice problems. Use old exams cautiously—keep in mind:

• Many questions look easy once you have seen the answers. Best do old exam problems without looking at the answers. To encourage this, answers are not provided until a few days before a test.

• Course content changes: Don’t “study” the old exams. Study your notes from this course. The timing and sequencing of the material varies from year to year, mostly because I like to address current issues and respond to student questions. If an old exam asks about a topic we did not discussed, there is a good chance it’s an irrelevant/obtdate question.

• My write-in comments in old exams (if any) are not meant to be complete answers but hints how to proceed. In the exam, I expect to see intermediate steps for numerical problems and full-sentence answers for essay problems, or at least bullet points. The more explanations and/or intermediate steps I see, the more credit I can give, especially partial credit on answers that are not quite right.