



- Course framework
- Instructional section
- Sample exam questions
- 🗸 Classroom poster

AP[°] Microeconomics

COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION



AP[®] Microeconomics

COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

Effective Fall 2020

AP COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTIONS ARE UPDATED PERIODICALLY

Please visit AP Central (apcentral.collegeboard.org) to determine whether a more recent course and exam description is available.

Introduction

The AP Microeconomics course outlined in this framework reflects a commitment to what economics teachers, professors, and researchers have agreed is the main goal of a college-level microeconomics course: to introduce students to the principles that apply to individual economic decision-makers.

The AP Microeconomics Course and Exam Description defines concepts, skills, and understandings required by representative colleges and universities for granting college credit and placement. The course prepares students to think like economists by using principles and models to describe economic situations and predict and explain outcomes. Like economists, students do so by using graphs, charts, and data. Although the course framework is designed to provide a clear and detailed description of the course content and skills, it is not a curriculum. A college-level textbook that covers the required course content should be used, and teachers create their own curricula to meet the needs of their students and any state or local requirements.

Course Framework Components

Overview

This course framework provides a clear and detailed description of the course requirements necessary for student success.

The course framework includes two essential components:

1 COURSE SKILLS

The course skills are central to the study and practice of economics. Help students develop and apply the described skills on a regular basis over the span of the course.

2 COURSE CONTENT

The course content is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide a suggested sequence for the course. These units comprise the content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master to qualify for college credit and/or placement. This content is grounded in big ideas, which are cross-cutting concepts that build conceptual understanding and spiral throughout the course. 1

AP MICROECONOMICS

Course Skills

The AP Economics skills describe what a student should be able to do while exploring course concepts. The table that follows presents these skills, which students should develop during the AP Microeconomics and AP Macroeconomics courses. These skills form the basis of the tasks on the AP Exam.

The unit guides later in this publication embed and spiral these skills throughout the course, providing teachers with one way to integrate the skills in the course content with sufficient repetition to prepare students to transfer those skills when taking the AP Exam. Course content may be paired with a variety of skills on the AP Exam.

More detailed information about teaching the course skills can be found in the Instructional Approaches section of this publication.

AP MICROECONOMICS AP Economics Skills

Skill Category 1

Skill Category 2

Skill Category 3

Principles and Models 1

Define economic principles and models.

Interpretation 2 Explain given economic outcomes. Manipulation Determine outcomes of specific economic situations.

Skill Category 4

Graphing and Visuals 4 Model economic situations using graphs or visual representations.

SKILLS

1. Describe economic concepts, principles, or models.

1.B Identify an economic concept, principle, or model illustrated by an example.

I.C Identify an economic concept, principle, or model using quantitative data or calculations.

Describe the similarities, differences, and limitations of economic concepts, principles, or models. **2.** Using economic concepts, principles, or models, explain how a specific economic outcome occurs or what action should be taken in order to achieve a specific economic outcome.

2.B Using economic concepts, principles, or models, explain how a specific economic outcome occurs when there are multiple contributing variables or what multiple actions should be taken in order to achieve a specific economic outcome.

2.C Interpret a specific economic outcome using quantitative data or calculations.

3.A Determine the outcome of an economic situation using economic concepts, principles, or models.

3.B Determine the effect(s) of one or more changes on other economic markets.

S.C. Determine the effect(s) of a change in an economic situation using quantitative data or calculations.

4.A Draw an accurately labeled graph or visual to represent an economic model or market.

4.B Demonstrate your understanding of a specific economic situation on an accurately labeled graph or visual.

4.C Demonstrate the effect of a change in an economic situation on an accurately labeled graph or visual.

2

AP MICROECONOMICS

Course Content

Based on the Understanding by Design® (Wiggins and McTighe) model, this course framework provides a clear and detailed description of the course requirements necessary for student success. The framework specifies what students must know, be able to do, and understand, with a focus on big ideas that encompass core principles and theories of the discipline. The framework also encourages instruction that prepares students for advanced economics coursework.

Big Ideas

The big ideas serve as the foundation of the course and allow students to create meaningful connections among concepts. They are often abstract concepts or themes that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting the big ideas and applying them in a variety of contexts allows students to develop deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the big ideas of the course and a brief description of each:

BIG IDEA 1: SCARCITY AND MARKETS (MKT)

Limited resources and unlimited wants result in the need to make choices. In a market economy, the choices of buyers and sellers determine market prices and the allocation of scarce resources.

BIG IDEA 2: COSTS, BENEFITS, AND MARGINAL ANALYSIS (CBA)

There are trade-offs associated with any decision. Making optimal decisions requires evaluating the additional costs and benefits of possible actions.

BIG IDEA 3: PRODUCTION CHOICES AND BEHAVIOR (PRD)

Firms seek to minimize costs and maximize profits, which influences their production decisions in the short run and long run.

BIG IDEA 4: MARKET INEFFICIENCY AND PUBLIC POLICY (POL)

Private markets can fail to allocate resources efficiently, and well-designed public policy can endeavor to promote greater efficiency and equity in the economy.

UNITS

The course content is organized into commonly taught units. The units have been arranged in a logical sequence frequently found in many college courses and textbooks.

The six units in AP Microeconomics and their weighting on the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam are listed below.

Pacing recommendations at the unit level and on the Course at a Glance provide suggestions for how to teach the required course content and administer the Personal Progress Checks. The suggested class periods are based on a schedule in which the class meets five days a week for 45 minutes each day, with the assumption that there are approximately 70 instructional days per semester. While these recommendations have been made to aid planning, teachers should of course adjust the pacing based on the needs of their students, alternate schedules (e.g., block scheduling), or their school's academic calendar.

TOPICS

Each unit is broken down into teachable segments called topics. The topic pages (starting on page 34) contain the required content for each topic.

Units	Exam Weighting
Unit 1: Basic Economic Concepts	12–15%
Unit 2: Supply and Demand	20–25%
Unit 3: Production, Cost, and the Perfect Competition Model	22–25%
Unit 4: Imperfect Competition	15–22%
Unit 5: Factor Markets	10–13%
Unit 6: Market Failure and the Role of Government	8–13%

Spiraling the Big Ideas The following table shows how the big ideas spiral across units.

Big Ideas	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
(<u></u>)	Basic Economic Concepts	Supply and Demand	Production, Cost, and the Perfect Competition Model	Imperfect Competition	Factor Markets	Market Failure and the Role of Government
Scarcity and Markets MKT	 Image: A start of the start of					
Costs, Benefits, and Marginal Analysis CBA	 		 			
Production Choices and Behavior PRD			 	 		
Market Inefficiency and Public Policy POL		 				

Course at a Glance

Plan

The Course at a Glance provides a useful visual organization of the AP Microeconomics curricular components, including:

- Sequence of units, along with approximate weighting and suggested pacing.
 Please note, pacing is based on 45-minute class periods, meeting five days each week for a full academic semester.
- Progression of topics within each unit.
- Spiraling of the big ideas and skills across units.

Teach

SKILL CATEGORIES

Skill categories spiral throughout the course.



Assess

Assign the Personal Progress Checks—either as homework or in class—for each unit. Each Personal Progress Check contains formative multiplechoice and free-response questions. The feedback from the Personal Progress Checks shows students the areas where they need to focus.



~13-		Class Periods 20-25% AP Exan Weightin Demand
4 MKT 4	2.2	Supply
МКТ 3	2.3	Price Elasticity of Demand
<u>мкт</u> 3	2.4	Price Elasticity of Supply
МКТ 3	2.5	Other Elasticities
<u>МКТ</u> 2	2.6	Market Equilibrium and Consumer and Producer Surplus
МКТ 3	2.7	Market Disequilibrium and Changes in Equilibrium
POL 4	2.8	The Effects of Government Intervention in Markets
POL 4	2.9	International Trade and Public Policy

Personal Progress Check 1

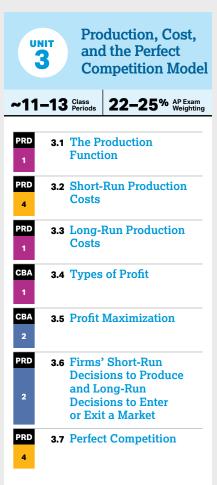
Multiple-choice: ~20 questions Free-response: 2 questions • Short

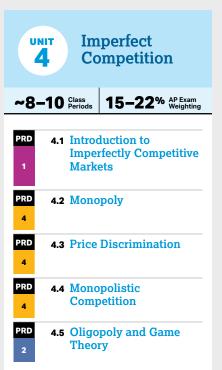
Short
 Short

Personal Progress Check 2

Multiple-choice: ~25 questions Free-response: 2 questions • Short

- ShortShort
- V.1 | 20 © 2020 College Board







Personal Progress Check 3

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions Free-response: 2 questions

Short

Short

Personal Progress Check 4

Multiple-choice: ~15 questions Free-response: 2 questions

Short

Long

Personal Progress Check 5

Multiple-choice: ~10 questions Free-response: 1 question • Short

UN	and the Dele of	
~9.	-11 Class 8-13% AP Exam Weighting	
POL 2	6.1 Socially Efficient and Inefficient Market Outcomes	
POL 4	6.2 Externalities	
POL 1	6.3 Public and Private Goods	
POL 4	6.4 The Effects of Government Intervention in Different Market Structures	
POL 1	6.5 Inequality	

Personal Progress Check 6

Multiple-choice: ~15 questions Free-response: 2 questions • Short

SnortLong