ECO 509 - Business Conditions Analysis
DePaul University

Instructor: Professor Tim Opiela
DPC Rm. 6230
Tel.: 312 362-5584
Office Hours: Wednesday 16:00-17:30, Thursday 16:00-17:30
E-mail: topiela@depaul.edu
Website: http://fac.comtech.depaul.edu/topiela

Course Description: This is a course in macroeconomics at the intermediate level. Intermediate macroeconomics usually concentrates on explaining relationships between certain key macroeconomic variables, such as GDP, inflation, unemployment, interest rates, trade deficits, and exchange rates. These variables are thought to be indicators of our current and future standard of living and economic stability. We are interested in explaining what causes economic growth and how policy can be used to promote growth. We are also interested in what causes economic fluctuations (business cycles), how those fluctuations interfere with short-run and long-run economic growth, and how policy can be used to smooth these fluctuations. You will also understand more about how economists think and formulate problems, and how they formulate solutions to economic problems.

The models we build in this course (i.e. the theories) are applicable to any market macroeconomy and as does the book, we will spend a lot of time going through examples of the U.S. economy. Still, we will emphasize the particular differences/problems of many countries around the world. For example: European Union (EU and EMU), particularly with respect to monetary policy and financial markets (chapter 7, 9-15); emerging markets (in Europe, East Asia and South America, particularly with respect to financial markets and monetary policy (chapter 7, 9-15) and long-run growth theory (chapter 6)); and socialist economies (e.g., China and Vietnam) that are liberalizing their markets to some extent (again in chapters 6 and 7).

Text: Macroeconomics, 5th Edition (with the update included), Abel and Bernanke. The textbook is meant to be a complement (not a substitute for lectures). The book provides a good background for the material presented in class. Chapter 1 is an introduction and you should read over this quickly. Chapter 2 provides some useful information how macroeconomic variables are measured and the usefulness in gauging our standard of living and economic stability. The subsequent chapters form a well-structured model of the macroeconomy. We will follow chapters 3, 4 and 6 carefully. Chapter 5 is covered to some extent on the first day and in more detail later. There will be a lot more added to Chapter 7 than the textbook presents. Chapters 8-10 will be followed loosely. We will skip Chapter 13. There will be pieces pulled out of Chapters 11-15 and put into the final model of the macroeconomy. So, these last few chapters will be done in a different way than in the book.
**Exams:** There will be two exams – a mid-term exam (03MAY for the Wednesday class, and 04MAY for the Thursday class) and a final exam (07JUN for the Wednesday class, and 08JUN for the Thursday class). The exams will be multiple-choice, short-answer and essay. There will be a review sheet available on my website prior to each exam.

**Assignments:** There will be assignments from the *Analytical Problems* at the end of each chapter. Please make your answers to these exercises as brief and concise as possible. These exercises and class participation will comprise 20% of your grade.

**Review Sheets:** I will give you copies of an abbreviated version of my notes (they are also available on my website). These will be about 25 pages typed for the material for the mid-term exam and about 20 pages for the material for the final exam. These reviews will form the outline and many of the details of this course. They take the place of a detailed syllabus.

**Articles:** I will give you articles associated with the topics covered in class. We will discuss some of these in class and the content in these articles may appear on the exams.

**Grading:** Exams will comprise 80% of your course grade (40% for each). The remaining 20% will be from your assignments. You cannot make “Fs” on both exams and pass the class. Letter grades are calculated based on the usual percentage breakdown.