

# Core Course Syllabus - Spring 2026

<b>Course</b>	BA 1310.005
<b>Course Title</b>	Making Choices in Free Market Systems
<b>Professor</b>	Mouli Modak
<b>Term</b>	Spring 2026
<b>Meetings</b>	T/Th 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

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## Professor's Contact Information

<b>Office Location</b>	JSOM 12.201A
<b>Email Address</b>	Mouli.Modak@utdallas.edu
<b>Office Hours</b>	T/Th 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM or By Appointment

**Other Information** This course also has a course channel on  
Microsoft Teams: BA 1310.005 Spring 26

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## General Course Information

**Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions:** N/A

**Course Description:** An introduction to decision-making in the free market system. Models from economic and decision sciences provide a foundational understanding of how people make choices – as consumers, employees, managers, and citizens. We explore how the creative destruction of the marketplace expands social wealth, creating gains for some individuals and losses for others. Debates, case studies and simulations, introduce the psychological, social norm, and moral factors that influence how markets work and how, as a society, we interact with markets and the limitations that we sometimes impose on markets and choice.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will participate in a series of simulations and case studies designed to illustrate the problems faced by individuals, businesses and society, and will learn to apply principles of good decision making to develop creative solutions to these problems. From their active class participation, students will learn:

- The strengths and limitations of free markets in achieving individual and socially desirable outcomes. Examples include debates about a market exchange for kidneys and proposals for congestion pricing on urban streets.
- How entrepreneurs, businesses and government influence the ‘creative destruction’ of the marketplace. For example, the fall of Barnes and Noble in face of Internet competition or change in consumer behavior.
- How to incorporate risk into making good choices when uncertainty is a factor.
- The advertising and pricing strategies of business and how these strategies influence consumer choices.

**Required Texts & Materials:** This class requires digital courseware. It will use Connect, an online courseware system by McGraw Hill, which includes the eBook. You’ll find this course combines two textbooks in one Connect shell.

- Karlan, Dean and Jonathan Morduch, Microeconomics: Improve Your World, 2025 Release (referenced as ME below)

- Ferrell, O.C., Geoffrey A. Hirt and Linda Ferrell, Business Foundations: A Changing World, 2025 Release (referenced as BF below)

**Each person needs access in order to complete the required homework.** There are two ways to purchase our custom Connect material.

1. Buy directly from a Connect homework link within the course page on eLearning.
2. Visit the bookstore online or in person and later redeem on the paywall that is produced when logging into the Connect platform.

**It is important that you register with your UTD email address.**

If you need more time, McGraw Hill has an option on the pay screen for two weeks free access. Here is the link on how to access.

This class also requires MobLab access. This platform is used for in-class simulations, as well as surveys and polls. You can purchase directly from MobLab or from the Bookstore. **As with Connect, it is important that you register with your UTD email address.**

Once you have purchased Connect access for this custom course, you can purchase loose-leaf texts at a discount and you can download the “Read Anywhere” app (Apple App Store or Google Play) to access your custom eBooks from a phone or tablet. You can download chapters or view the entire eBook, as well as, make notes, highlight, annotate, etc.

For tech support, please contact McGraw Hill. You can call them at 800-331-5094. You can also email or chat. Their student self-help is available here.

You have various purchase options – through the UTD bookstore or direct from each vendor. **The price may be different depending on where you purchase, so please make the decision that best-suits your needs.**

**Suggested Texts, Readings, & Materials:** In addition to this textbook, additional readings and case studies will be provided throughout the class. These will be made available on eLearning. (Referenced as CP below)

## Assignments and Academic Calendar

Students should consult eLearning for assignments and due dates. Each week, there will be assigned textbook readings and activities (e.g., multiple choice questions/quizzes or other activities related to the textbook material). In addition, about half of the meetings will consist of simulations or other activities, for which participation is expected. In addition to the regular assignments, there will be two (2) in-class debates and multiple online discussions throughout the semester.

1. Debate: There will be two (2) debates throughout the semester. A student can participate in ONLY one (1) debate. Each debate should have 6 participants (3 for each side). To organize the debates, everyone is expected to fill out a survey under Week 1 on eLearning page of this course.
2. News Reporting: Each student must participate in at least one (1) online discussion. If the student is not participating in any debate, they must participate in two (2) other online discussions.

There are three (3) main types of assignments. All assignments are typically live from Sunday at 12:00AM before the material is covered in class until the following Sunday at 11:59PM after the material has been covered in class.

1. Reading Assignment: Late submission is NOT generally allowed

2. Application Based Activities: Late submission is NOT generally allowed. You can do each activity twice, with the highest score counting.
3. Chapter Assessment: Late submission is generally allowed for ONE week after the due date. However, a 25% penalty is imposed for the late submissions. You can do each assessment twice, with the highest score counting.

If you are ever offered “study attempt” of the material, which can be beneficial for studying for exams, you are free (and even encouraged) to do them. However, these attempted with not be graded.

Very importantly, if you are eligible for an extension for a valid reason (e.g., medical situation, family emergency - with proper documentation), DO NOT start a study attempt. Once a study attempt has been started, the platform will not allow granting an extension.

Week	Date	Material to be covered
Week 1	Jan 20 (Tuesday)	Introduction to the course and Syllabus <b>(Discussion)</b> <i>What are the roles/responsibilities of business?</i> <b>ME</b> Chapter 1; <b>BF</b> Chapter 1
	Jan 22 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Production Possibilities, Opportunity Cost and Economic Growth <b>ME</b> Chapter 2
Week 2	Jan 27 (Tuesday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Gains from Trade</i>
	Jan 29 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Market Supply and Demand Analysis <b>ME</b> Chapter 3 <b>Online: ME</b> Appendix A - Math Essentials: Understanding Graphs and Slope
Week 3	Feb 3 (Tuesday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>The Hidden Hand of Competitive Markets</i> <i>(Double oral auction pricing mechanism)</i>
	Feb 5 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Efficiency & Markets in Action <b>ME</b> Chapter 5 & 6
Week 4	Feb 10 (Tuesday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Market Restrictions (Price Floors and Ceilings)</i> <i>Shifts in Demand/Supply</i>
	Feb 12 (Thursday)	<b>(Debate)</b> <i>Organ Donation</i>
Week 5	Feb 17 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Externalities <b>ME</b> Chapter 18
	Feb 19 (Thursday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Putting a price on Traffic</i> <i>(Congestion Pricing)</i>
Week 6	Feb 24 (Tuesday)	<b>Review</b> Exam 1 Contents
	Feb 26 (Thursday)	<b>Exam 1</b> (No Class) <i>To be taken on your own time at the UTD testing center</i>

Week 7	Mar 3 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Production Costs and Distribution <b>ME</b> Chapter 12; <b>BF</b> Chapter 8
	Mar 5 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Price Elasticity of Demand and Supply <b>ME</b> Chapter 4
Week 8	Mar 10 (Tuesday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>The Beer Game</i>
	Mar 12 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Market Structures - Perfect Competition <b>ME</b> Chapter 13
Week 9	Mar 17 & 19	(No Class) Spring Break
Week 10	Mar 24 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Market Structures - Monopoly <b>ME</b> Chapter 14
	Mar 26 (Thursday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Monopoly &amp; Price Discrimination</i>
Week 11	Mar 31 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Market Structures - Monopolistic Competition & Oligopoly <b>ME</b> Chapter 15
	Apr 2 (Thursday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Entry, Pricing and Equilibrium</i>
Week 12	Apr 7 (Tuesday)	<b>(Review)</b> Exam 2 Content
	Apr 9 (Thursday)	<b>Exam 2</b> (No Class) <i>To be taken on your own time at the UTD testing center</i>
Week 13	Apr 14 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Marketing: Building Profitable Customer Connections <b>BF</b> Chapters 11 & 12
	Apr 16 (Thursday)	<b>(Debate)</b> <i>Tariffs</i>
Week 14	Apr 21 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Accounting: Decision Making by the numbers <b>BF</b> Chapter 14
	Apr 23 (Thursday)	<b>(Activity)</b> <i>Financial Statements Analysis</i>
Week 15	Apr 28 (Tuesday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Social Responsibility <b>BF</b> Chapter 2
	Apr 30 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Finance: Acquiring and Using Funds to Maximize Value <b>ME</b> Chapter 11; <b>BF</b> Chapter 14
Week 16	May 5 (Tuesday)	<b>(Simulation)</b> <i>Introducing risk in decision-making</i>
	May 7 (Thursday)	<b>(Lecture)</b> Summarizing the course and role of markets <b>(Review)</b> Final Exam Contents
<b>Exam Week</b>	May 12 - 14	<b>Exam 3:</b> <i>To be taken on your own time at the UTD testing center</i>

## Examinations

Students must register for a seat at the UT Dallas Testing Center (<https://ets.utdallas.edu/testing-center>). Registration is required for each of the three exams. The windows of time for taking the exams are in the schedule above. All exams are closed book and no access to outside materials are permitted. There is an assignment on eLearning associated with this task. This is to encourage students to register in a timely manner. You should ensure that you register for the exam for the class in which you are enrolled.

Failing to properly register for an exam is not a valid excuse for missing an exam.

## Health and Other Issues

If you have a health or family issue that limits your ability to fully participate in class, the time to raise and document the issue is **when the issue arises**. It is much easier to work to accommodate legitimate and documented issues if promptly notified than when the issues are first mentioned at the end of the semester. This is an issue of fairness to everyone in the class.

## Course Policies

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<b>Class Materials</b>	The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student Accessibility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
<b>Classroom Attendance</b>	Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. In each class, students will be expected to record their attendance using a MobLab assignment.
<b>Class Participation</b>	Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

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<b>Class Recordings</b>	<p>Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the AccessAbility Resource Center has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The instructor may record meetings of this course. These recordings will be made available to all students registered for this class if the intent is to supplement the classroom experience. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law. Note that I will only record in-class activities if I have been notified that a student is in University mandated quarantine/isolation due to Covid-19.</p>
<b>Grading (Credit) Criteria</b>	<p>3 Exams (25%, 25%, 20%, respectively) Attendance, Simulations, Debates &amp; Online Discussions (15%) Assignments or Quizzes (15%)</p>
<b>Make-Up Exams</b>	<p>Make-up exams will be given only under JUSTIFIED circumstances, and documentation is required. Contact the instructor before the day/time of the exam to make arrangements.</p>
<b>Extra Credit</b>	<p><b>No extra credit will be given. Please don't ask, it isn't fair.</b></p>
<b>Late Work</b>	<p>See above. Late submission may be possible for Chapter Assessments up to a week after the deadline, but incur a 25% penalty. <b>There is a "statute of limitations" on how long you can wait to ask for extensions or being excused from absences (typically two weeks) and proper documentation must always be provided.</b></p>
<b>Classroom Citizenship</b>	<p><i>i.</i> Class begins on time. Please maintain class decorum and be respectful towards fellow students in the class. If you have a doubt or misunderstanding regarding course work, feel free to discuss it with me.</p> <p><i>ii.</i> Using your phone during class is not permitted and it is rude. Keep it on silent at all time and away from your desk. No texting. Offenders will be asked to turn off their phones. If this is a recurring problem, students will be asked to leave the classroom. <b>No pictures or video during class time.</b></p> <p><i>iii.</i> Use of your computer or tablet is allowed (and even necessary for many simulations) as long as it is not interrupting the class or distracting other students in the classroom. If such situation occurs, the first time you will be asked to turn off your computer. Recurrent offenders will be asked to leave the classroom.</p>
<b>Comet Creed</b>	<p>This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."</p>

<b>Accommodations for Students with Disabilities</b>	The University of Texas at Dallas is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008), you are required to register with the AccessAbility Resource Center, located in the Administration Building (AD), Suite 2.224. Their phone number is 972-883-2098, email: <a href="mailto:accessability@utdallas.edu">accessability@utdallas.edu</a> (opens in a new tab) and website is <a href="https://accessability.utdallas.edu">https://accessability.utdallas.edu</a> (opens in a new tab). To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper AccessAbility Resource Center letter of accommodation and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.
<b>Academic Support Resources</b>	The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please go to <a href="http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources">http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources</a>
<b>UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures</b>	The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the sections regarding the credit/no credit grading option and withdrawal from class. Please go to <a href="http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies">http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies</a> for these policies.

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*