Instructor
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Teaching assistant
TBD

Class website
TBD

Description
This is a standard introductory course in macroeconomics. It does not require any background knowledge or specific mathematical know-how.

In the first half of the course, we’ll concentrate on the determinants of the long-term well-being (or not) of the economy and focus on questions such as the causes of economic growth, whether economic growth is desirable and why some countries are so much richer than others. The emphasis of our analysis will be on the underlying economic mechanisms to get a better understanding of which policies might be growth-promoting and why so many policies have failed in the past.

In the second half of the course we’ll look at short-run fluctuations, i.e., recessions. Our leading case study will be the recent financial crisis of 2007/09 and the following recession and recovery (sort of) in the US. As in the first half of the course, we’ll concentrate on the underlying economics of these phenomena. First, we’ll cover the economic mechanisms explaining the financial crisis and the near-collapse of the US financial system. Then we’ll study the economics of recessions using standard economic models. Lastly, we’ll use all this economic analysis to examine, from an academic economic viewpoint, two important recent policy debates: (a) the regulation of financial markets and (b) the effectiveness of the different policy options of the federal government during a recession (increased government spending, tax rebates, quantitative easing, etc.).

Grades and exams
There will be (quasi-)bi-weekly problem sets, a midterm and a final.

Your final grade will be the best of the following two combinations:

- 25% homework + 30% midterm + 45% final
- 25% homework + 15% midterm + 60% final

The first option rewards students who do well on the midterm. The second option gives students who didn’t do too well on the midterm a second chance by putting more weight on the final exam.

Good class participation can push your letter grade up a notch if you are close to a cutoff.

Please do not miss exams. There are no Dean’s excuses during the summer: if you miss an exam, you will need authorization from both the Dean of the Summer Session and the instructor for a retake. This will require a serious, unavoidable and documented reason.

Textbook (required)
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