



**Carleton University Department of Economics**

Fall 2024

ECON 3880Z

Intro to Strategic Thinking

## The Instructor

**Instructor:** Lanny Zrill

**Email Address:** lannyzrill@cunet.carleton.ca

**Office Location:** Loeb C875

**Office Hours:** see Brightspace

## The Course

**Course Location/Delivery:** See Brightspace

**Course Day and Time:** Wednesdays, 1435 - 1725

**TA:** TBA

**Email Address:** TBA

**Office Location:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Brightspace Course Page:** <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/288641>

### Course Description:

Many important economic interactions require strategic thinking due to the interconnected nature of consequences, from competition between firms to global environmental regulation. Therefore, success in these situations requires careful analysis of the strategic connections between participants. This course will introduce students to the basic tools of strategic thinking, often referred to as Game Theory. Our focus will be on developing an intuitive understanding of formal concepts, as well as testing various theories using laboratory experiments. Where possible, we will also explore real-world applications. Topics include price and quantity competition, insurance, voting, auctions, bargaining and contracts, teamwork, and evolution. Students will acquire an appreciation for the ubiquity of strategic decisions in everyday life and, as a result, a better understanding of the way in which the world is organized around them.

### Learning Outcomes:

After this course, students will be able to:

- Formally define a strategic interaction as a game
- Recognize abstract types of strategic interactions and categorize them according to their features.
- Implement the appropriate analytical tools to solve a particular game.
- Evaluate models and methods according to experimental evidence.
- Apply formal abstract reasoning to real-world strategic scenarios.

**Preclusions and Prerequisites:**

Precludes additional credit for ECON 3402 (no longer offered).

Prerequisite(s): ECON 1001 and ECON 1002, or ECON 1000 or FYSM 1003.

**Textbooks and Resources**

**Required Software:**

All students are required to register an account with MobLab, an online platform for economics experiments. The cost of registration is **\$20 USD**. Instructions for registration can be found on Brightspace.

**Recommended Texts:**

Title	Author(s)	ISBN
Games of Strategy, 5 <sup>th</sup> Ed.	Dixit, Skeath, and McAdams	9780393680843

The textbook can be obtained through the Carleton University bookstore <https://www.bkstr.com/carletonstore/shop/textbooks-and-course-materials>

We will cover material from Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11 as well as additional topics if time permits.

**Evaluation**

**Evaluation:**

Assignment/Test	Date	Mode of Delivery	Percentage of Grade
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Problem Sets (Best 3 out of 4)	Various	Submitted on Brightspace	10%
MobLab Reflections (Best 10 out of 12)	Various	In-class	30%
Midterm Exam	Oct. 16	In-person	20%
Final Exam	As Scheduled by the University during the Examination Period	In-person	40%
			Total: 100%

### **Information About Evaluations:**

**Reflections:** Each class will involve playing games using MobLab. Students are expected to reflect on their experience playing one or more of the games by responding to certain questions. You must attend class in order to participate in this activity hence I will only count your best 10 (out of 12) submissions in order to allow for reasonable absences.

**Problem Sets:** There will be a total of 4 problem sets. Problems Sets will be graded for effort and full marks will be issued for completion of all questions and sufficient evidence of effort. Please note that the plagiarism policy still applies. Each problem set will be assigned at least two weeks prior to their due dates. Due dates can be found above. Problem Sets must be submitted online before 2:25pm Ottawa-time on the due date. Solutions must be typed or legibly hand-written (no exceptions).

**Midterm:** The midterm exam will take place **in-class on Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>**. It will cover material from Chapters 2 to 7.

**Final:** The final exam will take place in-person at a time and place determined by the University. It will be open book/notes and cumulative, i.e. it will cover all material from the course. The format will be the same as the midterm.

### **Late Policies and Extensions for Term Work**

**Problems Sets:** Late submissions will lose 1 mark per day up to a maximum of 2 marks. Hence, a problem set submitted on Wednesday at 5pm that is graded as 8/10 will receive a score of 6/10. **Problem Sets submitted more than 48 hours after the deadline will receive a grade of zero. Extensions will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances.**

### **Midterm/Test Policies:**

- If you are absent for a midterm, email me as soon as possible to discuss how we will weight your course evaluations differently. I reserve the right to request a Self-Declaration form or PMC letter of accommodation depending on the length of incapacitation.

**Final Exam:**

The final exam will be in-person as scheduled by the University during the exam period. Students are not to make travel plans during the exam period as that is not a valid reason for missing a final exam.

**Satisfactory Performance Criteria:**

Students must fulfill all of the course requirements, including the final exam, in order to achieve a passing grade (D- or higher).

**Deferred Finals:**

Students who do not write the final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply for to write a deferred final examination by contacting the Registrar's Office no later than three working days after the original final examination was scheduled. In the event that a student writes a deferred examination, the deferred examination will carry the same weight as the final examination in determining the course grade. Any deferred examination will not be identical to the original final examination.

Deferred finals (which must be applied for at the RO) are only available if the student is in good standing in the course.

**E-Proctoring:**

E-proctoring will not be used for evaluations in this course.



You are responsible for reading and knowing the information about plagiarism, Carleton University resources, and academic accommodations found [HERE](#).