PS 204B: Intermediate Game Theory
Course Syllabus
Spring 2017

Professor Leslie Johns
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Bunche Hall, office #3381

LOCATION and TIME:

BUNCHE 4357
TR 9:30 - 10:45 am

Office hours: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is an intermediate-level game theory course. Students are assumed to have already completed PS 204A (introductory game theory). Students who have not completed this training should consult with the professor before enrolling.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

Your grade in this course is based on the following components.

Weekly problem sets: 50%

Problem sets will be distributed each week and due the following Tuesday at the beginning of class. Late assignments will not be accepted. There will be no make-up assignments.

Final project: 25%

Students will write a 5-10 proposal for an applied game theory paper on a research topic of their choice. Details for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Final exam: 25%
TEXTS

Required text:


Many copies of this book are floating around Bunche Hall. If you don’t want to buy a copy of your own, you can surely borrow a copy from someone else.

Supplemental texts:

Readings from various texts will be assigned and available on the course website. However, you might wish to purchase the following books if you are particularly interested in the relevant topics or want supplemental readings. These vary greatly in their level of technicality. So talk to me first if you have any questions about which (if any) you should buy.


Articles:

These will be made available on the course website at:
https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/17S-POLSCI204B-1
TOPICS, READINGS, and SCHEDULE

The class will be altered to suit the needs of enrolled students. However, the following is a preliminary plan.

Theoretical Tools

Static games of incomplete information (weeks 1-2)
  • Gibbons, Chapter 3

(No classes on week 3)

Dynamic games of incomplete information (weeks 4-5)
  • Gibbons, chapter 4.0—4.1, pages 173—183

Common Political Science Applications

Costly signaling games (weeks 6-7)
  • Gibbons, chapter 4.2, pages 183—210
  • Gilligan, Johns, and Rosendorff (2010)
  • Hollyer and Rosendorff (2011)
  • Gordon and Hafer (2005)

Cheap talk games (week 8)
  • Gibbons, chapter 4.3.A, pages 210—218
  • Gilligan and Krehbiel (1987)

Bargaining games (week 9)
  • Muthoo, chapters 2 and 3

Stochastic (Markov) games (week 9)
  • Acemoglu and Robinson (2001)

Global games (week 10)
  • Morris and Shin (1998)

Other Possible Topics (time-permitting)

Repeated game
Timing games
Mechanism design