



University of British Columbia-Okanagan

Econ 221: Introduction to Strategic Thinking

Term 1 Winter Session 2016/17

Course title:	Introduction to Strategic Thinking	Location:	Art 386
Professor:	Dr. Mohsen Javdani	Monday, Wednesday 3:30 - 5pm	
Office:	Art 233	Office hour:	Wednesday 12-1 or by appointment
Phone:	(250) 807-9152	TA:	Victor Sun
Email:	mohsen.javdani@ubc.ca	TA office hour:	Monday, 5-6pm SCI 253

Overview:

Game theory is a language for the science of rational behaviour. One plays games of strategy all the time: with parents, siblings, friends, enemies and your professors. The applications of strategic thinking are broad and multi-faceted. Such games are played in business, politics, diplomacy and wars. In fact whenever humans interact to strike mutually agreeable deals or to resolve conflicts strategic interaction comes in to play.

Students will build and develop expertise in strategic interaction. Opportunities to use such skill will appear throughout the course of your study and indeed your life. You will go on playing such games with your employers, employees, spouses, children and strangers. Strategic thinking will have immediate pay off in your study of many subjects. Economics and Business courses use a lot of game theoretic thinking. Political science is an emerging area of application. Biology uses concepts of evolutionary game theory. Psychology and philosophy also extensively utilize game theoretic concepts.

Course Format:

This is a lecture course. The instructor will primarily deliver content in the classroom using the power point slides. The lectures will be related to the readings. There will be also additional materials in the lectures that are not covered in the readings. Lecture notes, additional readings and assignments will be delivered via Connect.

Required Textbook:

- Dixit, A., S. Skeath and D. Reiley, Games of Strategy, W. W. Norton and Company (New York), Third Edition.

Required Software:

- Top Hat One-Semester Subscription (**Join Code: 817228**). This software will be used to record attendance and ask questions during the lectures. See further below for more information about the software and how to subscribe.

Grading:

1) Assignments: 15%

There will be multiple problem sets assigned to you to be answered in written form. Assignments are posted on Connect, and are due at the beginning of class on the specified due date. These assignments have to be submitted in groups of 3, you create a group at the beginning of the term (by Sep. 14th) and use the same group throughout the term. A hardcopy needs to be submitted on the specified due date, single submissions and email submissions are not accepted. Not all the assignments will be graded, and only the ones graded will contribute to the 15%. For example, if you get six assignments throughout the semester, I might only grade 2, 3 or all of them, and the ones graded will contribute an equal weight to the 15%. You won't know in advance which assignments are graded and therefore you need to put in an equal amount of time and effort into all of them.

2) Class Attendance: 7%

All students are required to attend the lectures. The attendance will be recorded in every lecture using the Top Hat software that you need to purchase (see below for more information). The 7% will be equally divided among the number of lectures we have during the semester and for every lecture you miss without a legitimate excuse you will lose part of the 7%. For those who miss more than 5 lectures throughout the semester (without a legitimate excuse) they will lose the entire 7%.

3) Midterm Exam (Wednesday October 12th – 80 minutes): 30%

If you miss the midterm and provide a valid medical note, the weight will be added to your final. If you miss the midterm and do not provide a valid medical note, you will be given a grade of zero. You cannot shift the weight of one exam onto the other if you do not do well on one of the exams.

4) Final Exam: 48%

3-hour in-class final exam. Date and time TBA.

5) Bonus Questions

I will ask several questions throughout the semester (sometimes using Top Hat and sometimes simply orally). Some of these questions will have bonus points attached to them that will be added to your final grade.

Topics and Readings:

Below, you'll find an approximate sketch for the lectures and readings. We might however deviate from some of this as the semester progresses. I will keep you posted about any changes.

01. Introduction and General Principles: How to think about Strategic Games	Chapters 1 and 2
02. Games with Sequential Moves	Chapter 3
03. Simultaneous-Move Games with Pure Strategies	Chapters 4 and 5
04. Combining Sequential and Simultaneous Moves	Chapter 6
05. Simultaneous-Move Games with Mixed Strategies	Chapters 7 and 8
06. Prisoner's Dilemma and Repeated Games	Chapter 11
07. Collective Action Games	Chapter 12
08. Evolutionary Games	Chapter 13
09. Brinkmanship	Chapter 15
10. Voting	Chapter 16

Top Hat:

I am using an online platform called Top Hat for this course, and all students are required to subscribe to this online system if they are taking this course (you can use it with your laptop, tablet or cellphone). The subscription fee is reasonable: \$24 for one semester, \$36 for one year, and \$72 for lifetime. The subscription is not course specific, so if you have other courses that use Top Hat in the same semester you just need to purchase the subscription once. I will be using this platform for my Econ360 (Term1) and Econ204 (Term2) as well, so if you are planning to take Econ204 in the second semester it probably makes more sense to buy the one-year subscription.

To purchase the subscription, you can either buy it directly online ([click here](#)) with a credit card, or you can purchase it at the UBC bookstore. The join code for this course is **817228**. Here is some other information you might find useful:

- [Getting Started](#) with Top Hat
- [Learn more about Top Hat's iOS App](#).
- [Learn more about Top Hat's Android App](#).
- [How to Purchase your Top Hat Subscription](#).
- [Managing your Account Settings](#).

For questions and support for the software, contact the Top Hat directly. The easiest way to get in touch with them is to click Support at the bottom left-hand corner of your screen (when logged into your Top Hat Account). You can also send an email to support@tophat.com or call 1 (888) 663 5491.

Final Examinations

The examination period for Term 1 of Winter 2014 is Dec. 2-17. Except in the case of examination clashes and hardships (three or more formal examinations scheduled within a 24-hour period) or unforeseen events, students will be permitted to apply for out-of-time final examinations only if they are representing the University, the province, or the country in a competition or performance; serving in the Canadian military; observing a religious rite; working to support themselves or their family; or caring for a family member. Unforeseen events include (but may not be limited to) the following: ill health or other personal challenges that arise during a term and changes in the requirements of an ongoing job.

Further information on Academic Concession can be found under Policies and Regulation in the Okanagan Academic Calendar <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/okanagan/index.cfm?tree=3,48,0,0>

Academic Integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the Academic Calendar at <http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0>.

UBC Okanagan Disability Resource Centre

The Disability Resource Centre ensures educational equity for students with disabilities, injuries or illness. If you are disabled, have an injury or illness and require academic accommodations to meet the course objectives, please contact Earllene Roberts, the Diversity Advisor for the Disability Resource Centre located in Commons Corner in the University Centre building (UNC 227).

UNC 227A 250.807.9263

email earllene.roberts@ubc.ca

Web: www.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/drc

UBC Okanagan Ombuds Office

The Ombuds Office offers independent, impartial, and confidential support to students in navigating UBC policies, processes, and resources, as well as guidance in resolving concerns related to fairness.

UNC 227B 250.807.9818

email: ombuds.office.ok@ubc.ca

Web: <http://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/ubc-okanagan-2/>

UBC Okanagan Equity and Inclusion Office

UBC Okanagan is a place where every student, staff and faculty member should be able to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. UBC prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of the following grounds: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or unrelated criminal conviction. If you require assistance related to an issue of equity, discrimination or harassment, please contact the Equity and Inclusion Office.

UNC 227C 250.807.9291

email: equity.ubco@ubc.ca

Web: www.ubc.ca/okanagan/equity

Health & Wellness**SAFEWALK**

Don't want to walk alone at night? Not too sure how to get somewhere on campus? Call Safewalk at 250-807-8076. For more information, see: <http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/campuslife/safewalk.html>