

## ECONOMICS 248 – Economics of Market Regulation, Spring 2026

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Class: TuTh 11:30-12:45pm (HIP 107)  
Office Hours: Flexible...just ask!  
Course website: <http://courses.furman.edu>

### WELCOME!

Welcome to Economics of Market Regulation! I'm excited to have you in this class as we explore how markets actually work when firms have market power, when competition breaks down, and when government steps in through regulation, antitrust, and other institutions that shape real economic outcomes. This course builds on the foundational models and tools you encountered in ECN 111, and it will invite you to apply and expand that knowledge in new ways.

Whether you are here because you're an economics major, because you're interested in public policy or law, or because you're curious about industries you interact with every day (health care, tech platforms, airlines, banking, telecommunications), this course has something for you. My goal is to create a classroom environment where we approach complex topics with respect, open-mindedness, and a willingness to test our ideas against evidence, even when the conclusions are not simple.

Economics gives us a powerful toolkit for making sense of strategic firm behavior and the tradeoffs embedded in policy choices. Over the semester, we'll learn the core models, and then we'll use real cases and industry investigations to ask: *What is the problem? What is the mechanism? What evidence matters? What remedies make sense and what might go wrong?* I'm looking forward to learning together and using economics to better understand the rules, institutions, and incentives that shape markets and our daily lives.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores why markets may fail and how governments respond through regulation and antitrust. We build a foundation in industrial organization (market structure, strategic firm behavior, market power, and welfare) and then apply those tools to real cases and industries. The second half emphasizes how policy works in practice: how agencies and courts evaluate evidence, why outcomes differ across similar cases, and how industry context shapes intervention.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Use core industrial organization (IO) models to generate predictions about firm behavior and welfare.
2. Diagnose market power and competition using clear market definition reasoning and basic structure measures (e.g., concentration/HHI when feasible).
3. Evaluate antitrust and regulation cases by connecting the facts of a case to an economic theory of harm, assessing the evidence presented, and considering the remedies proposed or adopted; use this framework to explain why similar cases can produce different outcomes.
4. Explain institutions and incentives shaping enforcement (agencies, courts, remedies, political economy, lobbying/co-regulation).
5. Communicate like an applied economist through an industry briefing presentation and an individual policy memo grounded in evidence and course tools.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

All required readings are posted on Moodle.

## **PREREQUISITES**

ECN-111

If you need a review of any ECN-111 concepts, free online textbooks can be found at [OpenStax](#) and [Core Economics](#).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All activities and assignments that you complete during this course are governed by the Furman University academic integrity policy ([www.furman.edu/integrity](http://www.furman.edu/integrity)). Furman University asks all students to abide by the integrity pledge ([found here](#)). You should familiarize yourself with the important definitions and examples of plagiarism found on the University academic integrity website (see above). Trust and respect are vital to the success of collaborative learning endeavors. As such, any and all integrity violations will be taken extremely seriously and will be adjudicated according to Furman's policy 190.6. I expect all students to review Furman's policies on academic integrity. You are responsible for upholding these standards as you complete your homework, write your short papers, and take exams. You should be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. I will report all academic integrity violations to the Associate Academic Dean. In this class, any academic integrity violation results in an F for the course.

## **GENERATIVE AI**

In this course, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)-based assistance, such as ChatGPT, is treated the same way as collaboration with others: for most assignments you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with GenAI-based assistants. GenAI is a subset of AI that utilizes machine learning models to create new, original content, such as images, text, or music, based on patterns and structures learned from existing data. However, as is indicated in the University academic integrity policy, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in an assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes). By submitting assignments in this class, you pledge to affirm that they are your own work and you attribute use of any tools or sources, including AI-assisted work. Violations will be considered academic misconduct.

Generative AI use is explicitly prohibited for use in exams.

It is your responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GenAI output that is submitted. You bear the final responsibility. You should be aware that all GenAI tools can make up incorrect facts and fake citations and might confidently reassert factual errors, that code generation models have a tendency to produce inaccurate outputs, and that image generation models can occasionally come up with highly offensive products. You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit regardless of whether it originally comes from you or a GenAI tool. Please also note that different classes at Furman may implement different GenAI policies, and it is your responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.

### **AI Use and Disclosure**

I want to be transparent with you about how I use generative AI. I use AI tools to review my syllabus for clarity, brainstorm examples for class, or think of different ways to explain concepts. What I will never use AI for is grading your assignments.

In this course, if you use AI to help with your work (for example, to generate ideas, get feedback on drafts, or check clarity), you must include a brief AI disclosure statement in your paper. In this statement, describe how

you used AI (e.g., “I used ChatGPT to suggest examples, then revised them myself,” or “I asked Claude to act as a peer reviewer for clarity”). This helps ensure transparency and makes clear what parts of the work are yours.

I see AI as a tool that you may need to learn to use thoughtfully and responsibly in your future career. While free tools exist, paid tools often differ in quality and reliability. I personally use BoodleBox because it provides access to multiple paid models (like Claude, Gemini, and ChatGPT), though the free version limits the number of daily premium searches.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Grades will be based on the following**

Problem Sets	10%
Case day quizzes and industry worksheets	10%
Class Participation	10%
Industry Project:	40%
In-class exams (at midterm and final)	30%

#### **(1) Problem Sets (10%)**

In the first half of the semester, there will be three assignments that have you explore the topics we covered in class in more depth. This type of assignment may contain questions that vary from traditional problem set questions to data exercises to short essays to reflections. If you turn an assignment in on time, the minimum grade you will earn is a 60.

Late problem sets will incur a 5% penalty per day late, up to a maximum of 7 days. After 7 days, assignments will not be accepted.

#### **(2) Case day quizzes and industry worksheets (10%)**

In the second half of the semester, there will be weekly in-class quizzes based on readings, along with periodic short in-class group worksheets connected to our class activities and your industry project. The quizzes are designed to check basic understanding of the assigned reading/case and will typically have two parts: an individual quiz followed by a team version completed with your industry group (a team-based learning format). We will then use class time for structured activities (discussion, case comparison, and short applications) that connect the reading to the economic tools from the first half of the course. When worksheets or other brief written group products are assigned, they will be completed in class and collected at the end of the period. These submissions are intended to capture your analysis and preparation in real time, so grades will reflect how specific, accurate, and well-supported your work is (using evidence from the reading and course concepts).

#### **(3) Class Participation (10%)**

Students are expected to attend class in-person unless there is an excused reason (for example, documented health issue or representing Furman at an official event). Students are expected to play an active role in learning. This includes showing up on time, being prepared, participating in class discussions, paying attention to the instructor and your peers, and respecting the opinions, needs, and rights of others. I anticipate that you give any pre-class reading your fullest attention so that when you enter class you are ready to engage in a thoughtful discussion. Your participation and preparedness are critical to individual and class success as meaningful class discussions are influenced by your inquiry, experience and insight.

You will receive two grades for class participation, one at midterm and one at the end of the course. You will have an opportunity to reflect on your class participation at each point to demonstrate and

document how you think you have done before I assign a grade. Class participation has multiple components as seen by the following rubric:

Category	What it assesses	Met	Partially met	Not met
Respect and Engagement	Evaluates your attitude and behavior in the classroom, focusing on creating a constructive and respectful environment.	Consistently respectful, engages actively without dominating, encourages others, and challenges ideas respectfully to foster collaboration.	Generally respectful and engaged but may occasionally dominate, disengage, or struggle to respond constructively to challenges.	Often disengaged, disrespectful, or argumentative. Behavior disrupts or discourages others from contributing.
Preparation and Contribution	Assesses the depth and quality of your contributions, measuring preparation, understanding of material, and discussion advancement.	Demonstrates thorough preparation through well-reasoned, evidence-based arguments that deepen discussion, analyze ideas, or introduce new perspectives.	Contributions show preparation but may rely on surface-level understanding, lack evidence, or occasionally misunderstand key ideas.	Contributions lack preparation, are unsupported opinions, or misunderstand key points. Little familiarity with material.
Listening and Collaboration	Evaluates how well you engage with others' ideas, including active listening, thoughtful responses, and building on discussions.	Actively listens and engages by building on, clarifying, or responding thoughtfully. Frequently connects earlier comments to advance discussion.	Generally listens but may occasionally miss or repeat points. Contributions don't consistently connect to the discussion flow.	Frequently inattentive or disengaged. Repeated comments, non sequiturs, or failure to build on others' ideas.

#### (4) Industry Project (40%)

You will be working as a group on an industry project that involves the application of topics we cover in class a specific industry. Information on the structure of this project can be found in the [separate document for the industry project](#).

#### (5) Exams (30%)

Two exams will be given and each will be worth 15% of your total grade. One will occur at midterm (Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>) and one will happen during finals period (Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 12-2:30pm). You may bring in one 8.5x11 inch piece of paper with notes (front and back). Access to online resources or devices during the exam is not permitted.

#### Grade Categories (from the *Furman University Catalog*):

Grade	Description
A	Excellent. The mark of highest distinction earned by those students whose work represents the best that can be expected of a student at Furman.
B	Good. The mark of distinction earned by those students whose work represents a high degree of achievement in meeting the characteristic demands of the course.
C	Satisfactory. The mark earned by those students who have attained such familiarity with the content of the course and such ability to apply this knowledge as may be expected of a student who gives to the course a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention.

Grade	Description
D	Marginal. The lowest passing grade representing inferior work. It indicates that the student would be seriously handicapped in attempting subsequent courses for which this work is a prerequisite.
F	Failure. The mark indicates unconditional failure. No credit earned.

Grades will be determined by the following scale: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (88-89), B (83-87), B- (80-82), C+ (78-79), C (73-77), C- (70-72), D+ (68-69), D (63-67), D- (60-62), F (0-59).

### **Late Assignments:**

Please refer to the late assignment policy that may be listed for each individual assignment type.

If a student misses an assignment due compelling circumstances beyond the student's control as communicated to me by the Associate Academic Dean, late assignments will be permitted and new due dates will be assigned accordingly. If you have an anticipated absence (required extra-curricular activity, official representative of Furman), you are responsible for turning in assignments on schedule.

### **Makeup Exam Policy:**

If you have an anticipated absence (required extra-curricular activity, official representative of Furman), you must talk to me in advance so we can make alternate arrangements. If you don't talk to me until after the missed exam, you will receive a zero for that exam. If a student misses an exam due to serious illness or other compelling circumstance beyond the student's control as communicated to me by Furman, an alternate makeup exam date will be agreed upon.

### **Final Exam Schedule Changes:**

Any changes in the schedule of the final examination for a course must have the approval of the Associate Academic Dean. You can email [academic.deans@furman.edu](mailto:academic.deans@furman.edu) to complete a request form, except in the following two cases (in which case just talk to me)

- Students with approved SOAR accommodations for extended time on exams that have two final exams on the same day.
- Students with approved University sponsored events that are scheduled over the exam time.

### **Meet with me (also known as "Office Hours")**

I don't hold fixed office hours, but I am very glad to meet with you! The easiest way is to email me or talk to me after class so we can find a time that works. We can meet either in person or on Zoom. When setting up a meeting, think about which format works best for your schedule and for the kind of conversation you'd like to have.

Students often meet with me to ask questions about class material or assignments, debrief after exams (review solutions, talk about strategies for next time, and reflect on what went well or what to improve), get feedback on ideas for papers, or connect economics to their interests, career goals, or current events. If you're not sure how to get started, a simple email like "*Hi Dr. Hennessey, could we set up a time to go over [paper idea / exam debrief / lecture notes]?*" works perfectly.

### **Student Resources:**

Many excellent, additional resources and services, including writing, speech, and technology consultations, are provided at Furman. Please take advantage of these services.

- The [Writing and Media Lab](#) is available to support students with writing and multimedia projects. Students may schedule individual appointments with consultants.
- The [Center for Academic Success](#) employs professional staff who work with students to assist with executive functioning skills, test-taking strategies, study strategies and other academic success-related skills. Students can directly access resources on the website at any time.
- Library Support is provided by a dedicated team of librarians who can assist locating documents, information, and resources for your course or research projects. For more information about how to utilize these resources, visit the [Library website](#).
- Empowering and equipping students to manage their mental health and academic success, the Trone Center for Mental Fitness's stepped care model offers an array of evidence-based services. The resources listed below are free, confidential and accessible to all enrolled students. Go to the [Trone Center for Mental Fitness Website for details](#).
- The [Office for Spiritual Life](#) provides individual confidential counseling for students in person and online.
- Whether you are still exploring career paths or looking to land that first position after Furman, the [Malone Center](#) has resources to help you in each step of your career journey.

### **Accommodation Requests**

It is my goal to fully include everyone in our classroom. The Student Office for Accessibility Resources (SOAR) is committed to helping qualified students with disabilities achieve their academic goals by providing reasonable academic accommodations under appropriate circumstances. If you have a disability and anticipate the need for an accommodation in order to participate in this class, please register with the Student Office for Accessibility Resources. They will assist you in getting the resources you may need to participate fully in this class. You can contact the SOAR office at 864.294.2320 or at [soar@furman.edu](mailto:soar@furman.edu). You can find additional information and request academic accommodations at the [SOAR webpage](#).

### **Name/Pronoun Use:**

I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

### **Classroom Technology:**

*ITS and Help Desk:* If you have technical problems with Moodle, or if you have any other computer issue that is preventing your access to course materials and sessions, please contact the ITS Service Center by calling 294-3277 or by emailing [service.center@furman.edu](mailto:service.center@furman.edu).

Devices such as phones, laptops, tablets, iPads, etc., should only be used if their use is immediately relevant to a specific task related to what we are doing in class. In other words, *if you aren't using it to perform a task specifically related to what we are doing in class at that very moment, please put it away.*

### **Course Notifications:**

Announcements related to the class will be communicated via email. Changes made to assignments and deadlines will also be updated in Moodle.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy and Sexual Misconduct:**

Furman University is committed to providing programs, activities and an educational and work environment free from unlawful Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment. In furtherance of this commitment, Furman encourages all members of the community to report any Discrimination or Discriminatory Harassment promptly, so it can be addressed.

The University's Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination [website](#) and [policy](#) sets forth available resources, describes prohibited conduct, and establishes procedures for responding to complaints of Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation.

The University's Sexual Misconduct Policy identifies prohibited Sexual Misconduct, establishes grievance procedures for addressing Sexual Misconduct, describes supportive measures and sets forth available resources. For information about Title IX, measures Furman takes to prevent Sexual Misconduct, [reporting options](#), and supportive measures and resources visit [Furman's Title IX page](#).

### **Consent to Use Student Materials**

Your work in this class may be used for future research purposes and will be kept confidential. Use of your materials is completely voluntary. You have the right to choose not to allow the use of your materials for future research. Please know that if you choose not to have your materials used, your grade will not be affected in any manner. There are no anticipated risks to you, beyond those encountered in everyday life. All records will be maintained securely on Box. The results of any research using these materials may be published but will not include your name or any identifiable references to you. If you choose to allow me to use your materials this semester, you have the right to opt out at any time by notifying me. You have the opportunity to ask questions about your materials or any related research at any time.

If you DO NOT wish for your materials to be used in future research, please complete and return [this form](#) either in print or digital form to me before the end of the course. If you do not return this form, you give consent for me to use your materials for future research.

## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS COURSE

*“Learning results from what the student does and thinks, and only from what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does to learn.” – Herb Simon.*

This course invites you to examine the dynamic relationship between markets, firms, and government—using economic models to understand real regulatory and antitrust problems. To fully benefit from this experience, consider the following strategies:

1. **Be Prepared and Present:** Engaging class discussions and activities start with preparation. Complete the assigned readings/cases and come ready to use them. In the second half of the semester especially, being prepared will make in-class quizzes, case discussions, and group work much more valuable (and much less stressful).
2. **Engage Actively:** Take ownership of your learning by asking questions, sharing insights, and respectfully challenging ideas during class. This course works best when we treat class time as a workshop, testing economic logic, weighing evidence, and practicing applied reasoning together.
3. **Think in Frameworks (Not Just Opinions):** When we discuss regulation and antitrust, it’s easy to jump straight to “what should happen.” Push yourself to start with the economist’s workflow: define the market, identify the mechanism (theory of harm or market failure), consider what evidence would support or reject the story, and then evaluate remedies and tradeoffs.
4. **Develop a Habit of Reflection:** After each class, take a moment to write down key takeaways, lingering questions, and one connection to a current event or industry you care about. These quick reflections will help you retain the toolkit from the first half and use it effectively in the second half.
5. **Collaborate Thoughtfully:** Collaboration enhances learning. Whether it’s working through models, comparing cases, or building your industry project, engaging with peers will sharpen your thinking. Practice active listening, constructive disagreement, and clear communication; these are professional skills as much as academic ones.
6. **Approach the Industry Project with Purpose:** This major assignment is an opportunity to apply course concepts to a real industry. Start early, set milestones, and use class workshops to make steady progress. Treat this as a chance to build a concrete “work sample” you could discuss in interviews or internships.
7. **Seek Support and Resources:** Use office hours, peer study groups, and campus resources (Writing and Media Lab, library support, etc.) to strengthen your work, especially when you’re learning how to find industry data, interpret cases, or turn analysis into clear writing.
8. **Embrace a Growth Mindset:** Learning economics is iterative. Expect some struggle...especially when models feel abstract at first or when real-world cases don’t fit neatly into a model. Use mistakes as feedback, focus on progress, and remember that the goal is not perfection but developing reliable analytical habits you can use beyond this course.

## COURSE SCHEDULE (Any important changes will be announced in class)

Date	Topic	Required Reading/Assignments (out of class)
Week 1 1/13 1/15	Introduction to Market Regulation	<b>Reuters article - High US meat prices packer profiteering or capacity crunch?</b>
Week 2 1/20 1/22	Review: Cost Curves	<b>Stiglitz - Government Failure vs Market Failure</b>
Week 3 1/27 1/29	Competition as Market Regulator	<b>Problem Set 1 Due</b> <b>Project: Industry Proposal</b>
Week 4 2/3 2/5	Challenges - Market Structure (Models of Monopoly, Oligopoly, Monopsony)	
Week 5 2/10 2/12	Challenges - Market Practices (Tying, Bundling, etc) <i>No class - Furman Bicentennial convocation</i>	<b>Problem Set 2 Due</b>
Week 6 2/17 2/19	Challenges - Externalities	<b>Project: Individual research reflection</b>
Week 7 2/24 2/26	Review for First Exam <b>First Exam</b>	<b>Problem Set 3 Due</b>
Week 8 3/3 3/5	<i>Spring Break - no class</i>	
Week 9 3/10 3/12	History of Governments, Firms and Antitrust Law <i>Project: Industry Dossier</i>	<b>Wallis - Market Augmenting Government</b>
Week 10 3/17 3/19	History of Governments, Firms and Antitrust Law Application - Horizontal Mergers	<b>Lamoreaux - The Problem of Bigness</b>
Week 11 3/24 3/26	Application - Horizontal Mergers <i>Project: Storyboard</i>	<b>Choice of two cases (see Moodle)</b>
Week 12 3/31 4/2	Application - Horizontal practices	<b>Choice of two cases (see Moodle)</b>
Week 13 4/7 4/9	Application - Social Regulation, Vertical, Network	<b>Choice of two cases (see Moodle)</b>
Week 14 4/14 4/16	Other actors in regulation: consultants, lobbyists, private organizations	<b>Balleisen - Prospects for Effective Coregulation in the United States</b>
Week 15 4/21 4/23	<i>Project: Group presentations</i> <i>Project: Group presentations</i>	
Week 16 4/28	Wrap-up class	<b>Project: Individual Paper and reflection</b>
Final 5/1	<b>Second Exam during finals period 12:00-2:30pm</b>	