Course description and objectives:
Microeconomics is the study of how individual consumers and businesses make decisions and interact in markets, of how markets operate, and the welfare consequence of markets when they operate well and when they don’t operate so well. Microeconomic policy issues of international trade, monopolies, pollution, and labor markets will be treated.

The objectives of the course are:

1. to familiarize the student with the basic concepts and methods of microeconomics – opportunity cost, comparative advantage, supply and demand, cost-benefit analysis and the logic of marginalism.

2. to enable the student to apply these concepts and methods to policy issues. One important set of policy issues is whether, when and how markets may fail and whether, when they fail, government intervention may be needed to correct those failures.

3. to lay the groundwork for future study – for the study of macroeconomic issues such as unemployment, inflation and long-run economic growth; and more generally for such courses as managerial accounting and management decision-making, as well as economics courses in finance, labor, international economics and managerial economics, which require mastery of basic microeconomic concepts.

Course prerequisites:
There are no specific course prerequisites; students are however expected to have a basic background in high-school algebra. If you can handle the appendix to chapter one, you should have little difficulty with the algebraic and graphical tools we will be using.

The Syracuse University website (http://syllabus.syr.edu/cid/graph/book.html) dealing with basic algebra and graphs for economics is an excellent source for review material.

Textbook:
Robert H. Frank and Ben S. Bernanke Introduction to Microeconomics, 2nd Edition. New York, McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2004. Robert Frank was the primary author of the microeconomics portion of the text and Ben Bernanke was the primary author of the macroeconomics portion, so that I will usually refer to Frank alone in talking about the text this term.

UPJ Economics Department website (www.pitt.edu/~upjecon) Click on my name (just to the left of the UPJ logo on the opening screen) to get to my course pages. The syllabus, web links, announcements, problem solutions, and other helpful material will be on the website; visit it early and often.
Exams and Grading: There will be 2 in-term exams, each worth 25 percent of your course grade, and a final exam, worth 30 percent of your course grade. Quizzes will be worth the remaining 20 percent of your grade. Your exam scores will be curved. Please note that a curved average on exams (not including quizzes) of 65 will be required to pass the course. The in-term exams will be primarily multiple choice, but may also include fill-in and graph and problem oriented questions. The quizzes will be based on the end of chapter problems, and will always include graphical and numerical questions.

The first exam, on Friday, 22 September, will cover chapters 1-3; and the second exam will be held on Monday, 23 October, and will cover chapters 4-6. The dates and coverage for exams may be superseded by later in-class announcement.

Make-up exams will be given only for serious and documented reason. You should contact the Office of the Assistant Academic Dean (Dr. Jonathan Gonder) and ask that office to provide me with written notice of the reason for your failure to take an exam. Only after receiving this notice will I allow credit for a make-up exam. No make up quizzes will be given, but one quiz score will be dropped in averaging the quizzes.

The final exam will be on Friday, December 15, at 9 AM for the 10 AM micro class, and at 3 to 5 PM for the noon class. Please note that scheduling of the noon class final is different from, and supersedes, that on the printed final exam schedule.

Study hints
1. Read the material carefully. Don't simply memorize definitions, but be sure you can distinguish similar-sounding terms ("price", "value" and "cost" are not synonyms, nor are "supply" and the "quantity supplied", and you must use the terms precisely in order to think about microeconomics).

2. Work all the problems at the end of each chapter. Frank has devoted a good deal of thought and care to writing problems that test your knowledge of the material and show whether you can apply the concepts to concrete situations.

3. Check your answers to the problems on the course web pages. If you don’t follow the solution given there, ask questions in class or during my office hours.

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. Roll will be taken, and if you do not sign the roll sheet at the beginning of class you will be marked absent. If you are unavoidably absent for several days due to a medical or personal emergency, you should notify the Assistant Academic Dean (Dr. Jonathan Gonder) who will in turn notify me and your other instructors. I will not accept any excuse without such notification. After three unexcused absences, five percent will be deducted from the final grade for any further absence.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities should notify the Office of Disability Services (ground floor, Owen Library) as soon as possible if special arrangements are necessary for class seating or during examinations. I must receive timely notification in writing from that office in order to make any special arrangements for examinations. Processing an application for special arrangements can take two weeks or more; and I must receive notification a week before I can make arrangements; this means that if you require special arrangements for the first exam (three weeks away) you must begin the process immediately.