

Review of Principles of Macroeconomics: OpenStax (First Edition)

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Reviewer Information

Textbook that was reviewed
Principles of Macroeconomics
For what level would this textbook be appropriate?
First Year
My name
Audrey Lowrie
My title/position
Instructor (Part Time)
My institution
Selkirk College

Comprehensiveness

The text covers all areas and ideas of the subject appropriately and provides an effective index and/or glossary.
<p>The textbook provides a comprehensive coverage of the principles of macroeconomics – ideal for an introduction to economics, first year class. It will take longer than two semesters to cover it thoroughly.</p> <p>There is a section on microeconomics at the beginning of the textbook to cover the main topics that should be understood before studying macroeconomic theory and practice. These chapters are broadly similar to those in “Principles of Economics” by the same author. These chapters are a useful guide for students studying macroeconomics only, or students who need a reminder of key micro concepts.</p> <p>Overall, the textbook is excellent with a clear presentation of topics in a logical manner with good flow.</p> <p>The examples and illustrations are clear, and the key terms at the end of each chapter are helpful. There is a math appendix at the end, which is useful for students who may be weak in this area.</p> <p>The index is clear, with each chapter subdivided into sections for quick reference. There is a good summary of what is to be achieved at the beginning of each section.</p> <p>There appears to be a wide selection of ancilliary resources including solutions to chapter problems, a testbank for faculty and powerpoints. However, there are no solutions to questions for the student in the textbook itself.</p>
How do you rate the book's overall comprehensiveness?
4

Content Accuracy

Content, including diagrams and other supplementary material, is accurate, error-free, and unbiased.
<p>The content is accurate. There are a few minor spelling typos but not that impact on the reading of the text.</p> <p>There is a bias towards US examples and data.</p> <p>There is no overt economic theory bias and the concepts are explained in an open-minded manner.</p>

Overall, how do you rate the accuracy of the content?

5

Relevance/Longevity

Content is up-to-date, but not in a way that will quickly make the text obsolete within a short period of time. The text is written and/or arranged in such a way that necessary updates will be relatively easy and straightforward to implement.

There are many up to date illustrations and examples, and the overall tone of the textbook feels very current. Some of the statistics are from 2013, which is good from a textbook. Good coverage on topics such as globalization, which is also up to date.

The advantage of online textbooks is that the authors can maintain this on a regular basis (please) without going through a major print update every few years.

Overall, how do you rate the relevance/longevity of the book?

5

Clarity

The text is written in lucid, accessible prose, and provides adequate context for any jargon/technical terminology used.

This textbook is an easy (and enjoyable) read and is ideal as an introduction to the subject. The language is clear, there are regular review tables to revisit terms and concepts, and the glossary at the end of each chapter is a quick useful reference. Economics is by its very nature a jargon-filled subject, but the authors make it as accessible as possible with content such as the "clear it up" or "bring it home" boxes, which relate the concepts to everyday life. There is a good emphasis on current examples and stories to help students relate to the concepts.

Overall, how do you rate the clarity of the book?

5

Consistency

The text is internally consistent in terms of terminology and framework.

There is good consistency throughout.

There did not appear to be any new concepts introduced later in the text that are not explained.

Terminology is consistent throughout.

How do you rate the overall consistency of the text?

5

Modularity

The text is easily and readily divisible into smaller reading sections that can be assigned at different points within the course (i.e., enormous blocks of text without subheadings should be avoided). The text should not be overly self-referential, and should be easily reorganized and realigned with various subunits of a course without presenting too much disruption to the reader.

The complete textbook contains more content than could be covered in one course of economics. This would be an excellent companion to a textbook on principles of microeconomics.

Chapters can be read on a stand-alone basis. Selected chapters could also be put together to provide a custom approach to the subject.

Its modular layout is a strength of this textbook. Even within chapters there are clearly defined sections. There does not tend to be lengthy blocks of text, and each concept is broken down into smaller parts each with its own subsections and examples.

Faculty could easily change the content order of each chapter, or even each chapter if required.

Overall, how do you rate the modularity of the text?

5

Organization/Structure/Flow

The topics in the text are presented in a logical, clear fashion.
The overall flow of the chapters is logical although chapters could easily be read out of order.
Within each chapter, the sections and subsections are clear and consistent and tend to flow well.
Overall, how do you rate the organization/structure/flow of the text?
4

Interface

The text is free of significant interface issues, including navigation problems, distortion of images/charts, and any other display features that may distract or confuse the reader.
The text is easy to read in terms of navigation.
Charts and tables are clear and easy to follow. The use of colours and highlighting is helpful.
The "link it up" sections allow the reader to link to a website or youtube video for further information – worked well.
Overall, how do you rate the textbook's interface?
5

Grammatical/Spelling Errors

The text contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
There were a few typos but no obvious grammatical errors.
How do you rate the grammar and spelling of the text?
5

Diversity and Inclusion

The text reflects diversity and inclusion regarding culture, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, religion. It does not include insensitive or offensive language in these areas.
The most important point to note is the heavy reliance on US policy and data. This is to be expected in a US textbook, however, Canadian students will need to accept that the policy detail relates only to the USA. Faculty could add additional information from websites such as Bank of Canada.
There is a good range of material on developing countries throughout and especially in the chapters on international trade and globalization.
Overall, how do you rate the diversity and inclusion of the text?
4

Recommendation

Do you recommend this book? If not, why?
A Canadian edition would be fantastic! If this is not feasible, then some Canadian updates would be useful.
Apart from that, this is a practical and easy to use textbook. I would certainly consider using it for a first year course, and I would just add Canadian material for the macroeconomic chapters that are particularly US-centric.