



Department of Economics Course Outline

Course:	Economics 355 Canadian Public Finance	Term:	Fall 2010
Time:	M 18:00 – 20:50	Section:	01
Instructor:	Todd Hirsch	Place:	ST 147 (subject to change)
Office:	SS 405	Telephone:	403-815-2277
Office Hours:	TBA	E-mail:	thirsch@ucalgary.ca

Textbook(s):

Journal articles, special reports, topical papers, and current events readings will be assigned throughout the course, and will be made available through Blackboard. The goal is to use timely readings on issues of the day.

Book(s) on Reserve:

none

Course Outline:

This course provides a practical overview of the institutions and economic rationale for Canadian government policy relating to public expenditures and taxation. Notions of efficiency and equity are developed and used to discuss policies such as public health insurance, education, social welfare, and progressive income taxation.

The course is divided into 12 chapters -- one per class -- and each will be accompanied by special readings posted on Blackboard. Current events and news clippings on public policy will also be used to motivate class discussions. There will also be GUEST LECTURERS as available.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS AND TOPICS TO BE COVERED: Sept-Dec 2010

Sept 13:	CHAPTER 1: Introduction to Public Finance: Why It May Be the Most Interesting Economics Course You Ever Take!
Sept 20:	CHAPTER 2: Efficiencies, Externalities and Public Goods
Sept 27:	CHAPTER 3: Redistribution of Income: What's Fair?
Oct 4:	CHAPTER 4: Resource Allocation and Social Objectives .../2

Oct 11:	THANKSGIVING (no class)
Oct 18:	MID-TERM EXAM #1 + CHAPTER 5 Alternative Program Delivery Systems
Oct 25:	CHAPTER 6: Theory of Taxation
Nov 1:	CHAPTER 7: Federal and Provincial Governments
Nov 8:	CHAPTER 8: Non-tax Sources of Government Revenue
Nov 15:	MID-TERM EXAM #2 + CHAPTER 9: Debt Financing
Nov 22:	CHAPTER 10: Constitutional Reform and Natural Resources
Nov 29:	CHAPTER 11: Federal/Provincial Fiscal Relations
Dec 6:	CHAPTER 12: Public Finance Approaches to Environmental Policy

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Mid-term Exam #1	33.3%	Oct 18	All readings and materials, CHAPTERS 1-4
Mid-term Exam #2	33.3%	Nov 15	All readings and materials, CHAPTERS 5-8
Final Exam	33.3%	TBA	All readings and materials, CHAPTERS 9-12

The midterm exams will be in-class, 1 hour each. You may only miss a midterm if you have a valid medical note indicating illness, or in the case of other extenuating circumstances as judged by the instructor. Otherwise, a grade of zero is assigned. In the case of a legitimately missed midterm, there is no make-up test: the weight of the final exam will be adjusted.

Each of the three exams (2 mid-terms, 1 final) are weighted equally toward the final course grade. The final exam will be non-inclusive (i.e., it will cover only Chapters 9-12).

Tests and final exams are marked on a numerical (percentage) basis, and will then be converted to letter grades. The course grade is then calculated using the weights indicated above. As a guide to determining standing, these letter grade equivalences will generally apply:

A+	90-100	B	73-76	C-	60-62
A	85-89	B-	70-72	D+	56-59
A-	80-84	C+	67-69	D	50-55
B+	77-79	C	63-66	F	0-49

A passing grade on any particular component of the course is not required for a student to pass the course as a whole.

Non-programmable calculators **WILL NOT** be allowed during the writing of tests or final examinations (although given the nature of the exams, they will not be helpful anyway).

There will be a Registrar scheduled final examination, lasting **2** hours.

Tests and exams **WILL** involve multiple choice questions.

Students' Union Vice-President, Academic

Alyssa Stacy

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Students' Union Faculty Representative (Arts)

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Society of Undergraduates in Economics (S.U.E.)

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www.ucalgary.ca/sue

Notes:

- Students seeking reappraisal of a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, etc.) should discuss their work with the Instructor *within fifteen days* of the work being returned to the class.
- It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

Safewalk / Campus Security: 220-5333
Emergency Assembly Location – SS Food Court

TH/mi

2010-06-24