



## Department of Economics Course Outline

		<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2012
<b>Course:</b>	Economics 355 [Canadian Public Finance]	<b>Section:</b>	01
<b>Time:</b>	W 18:00-20:45	<b>Place:</b>	ST 139
<b>Instructor:</b>	Arthur Olson		
<b>Office:</b>	SS 447	<b>Telephone:</b>	587-999-9179
<b>Office Hours:</b>	W 17:00-18:00	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:aolson@ucalgary.ca">aolson@ucalgary.ca</a>

### 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: September- December 2012

- Sept 12: TOPIC 1: Introduction to Public Finance
- Sept 19: TOPIC 2: Public Financing of Health Care
- Sept 26: TOPIC 3: Redistribution of Income: Thinking About What's Fair?
- Oct 3: TBA
- Oct 10: TOPIC 4: Public Choice – Part I
- Oct 17: **MID-TERM EXAM #1** + TOPIC 5: Public Choice – Part II
- Oct 24: TOPIC 6: Theory of Taxation

Oct 31	TOPIC 7: Theory of Taxation – Part II
Nov 7	<b>MID-TERM EXAM #2</b> + TOPIC 8: Non-tax Sources of Government Revenue
Nov 14	TOPIC 8: Non-tax Sources of Government Revenue - Continued
Nov 21	TOPIC 9: Federal/Provincial Fiscal Relations
Nov 28	TOPIC 10: Constitutional Reform and Natural Resources
Dec 5	TOPIC 11: Public Finance Approaches to Environmental Policy

### Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Midterm Examination 1	33.3%	Oct 17	All readings and materials for Topics 1-4
Midterm Examination 2	33.3%	Nov 7	All readings and materials for Topics 5-7
Final Examination	33.4%	TBA	All readings and materials for Topics 8-11

Tests and final exams are marked on a numerical (percentage) basis, and then 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+	95 – 100	B	73 - 76	C-	60 - 62
A	85 - 94	B-	70 - 72	D+	56 - 59
A-	80 - 84	C+	67 - 69	D	50 - 55
B+	77 - 79	C	63 - 66	F	0 - 49

The midterm exams will be in-class, 1.5 hours 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 Topics 9-11).

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.

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

Tests and exams WILL involve multiple choice questions.

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

[www.ucalgary.ca/sue](http://www.ucalgary.ca/sue)

Society of Undergraduates in Economics is a student run organization whose main purpose is to assist undergraduate economics students succeed both academically and socially at the University of Calgary. Services include access to the exam bank, career partnerships with the Career Centre through hosting industry nights and information sessions, recognizing achievements in teaching, and organizing social events for members. Join now by contacting [sue@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sue@ucalgary.ca).

*Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources*

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

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

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