

REVISED March 26, 2020

Economics 355 (L01) Canadian Public Finance

Instructor: Kenneth McKenzie
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Lecture Location: EDC 388
Lecture Days/Time: MWF 12:00-12:50

Office: SS 450
Office Hours: MW 11:00-12:00

Winter 2020

Course Description:

Examination of the institutions behind and economic rationale for Canadian government policy relating to public expenditures and taxation. Topics include the history and present structure of government spending and taxation, tax expenditures, inter-jurisdictional issues, and program design.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- a. Develop skills around the use and interpretation of economic methods (and basic mathematics), in particular the use of welfare economics as the “lens” through which to view the rationale for government involvement in the provision of various public goods and services.
- b. Know and understand the general structural/institutional features of Canada’s federal system: health and social transfers, equalization, etc.
- c. Be able to employ concepts of welfare economics to analyze the rationale for and implications of Canada’s fiscal federal system (vertical and horizontal fiscal externalities, fiscal imbalances, etc).
- d. Understand the general structural/institutional features of Canada’s tax system (personal income tax, corporate income tax, consumption taxation).
- e. Be able to employ basic concepts of welfare economics to analyze Canada’s tax system in terms of efficiency and equity.
- f. Know and understand the basic stylized facts regarding income distribution in Canada and ways to measure it.
- g. Know and understand the various measures of poverty and economic theories (human capital, social identity) as to the causes of poverty.
- h. Know and understand the structural/institutional features of Canadian government programs to address inequality and poverty.
- i. Know and understand the rationale from the perspective of welfare economics for the public provision of health care, public education, and public pensions.
- j. Know the basic stylized facts regarding the structural/institutional features of Canada’s health care, public education and pension system.

Course Outline:

Topics will include (time permitting):

1. Introduction and Overview of Welfare Economics
2. Fiscal Federalism in Canada: CHT, CST, Equalization
3. A Framework for Tax Analysis
4. Personal Income Taxation
5. Corporate Income Taxation
6. Income Inequality and Poverty: Overview
7. Programs to Address Income Security
8. Public Education
9. Health Care
10. Public Pensions: CPP, OAS, GIS

A detailed reading list will be provided and posted to D2L during the first week of classes.

Prerequisites/corequisites:

Economics 201 and 203.

Required Textbook(s):

N/A

Desire2Learn:

This course will make use of the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform. Students who are registered in the course can log on at <http://d2l.ucalgary.ca> through their student centre. Please note that D2L features a class e-mail list that may be used to distribute course-related information. These e-mails go to your University of Calgary e-mail addresses only.

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Midterm 1 (February 12)	25%
Midterm 2 (Take-home, March 18)	25%
Final (Take-home, TBA)	50%

The official grading system will be used. See <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>.

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

If a student's letter grade on the final exam exceeds the average of the letter grade on the midterms, the weight of the midterms will be transferred to the final exam. For this to happen, the student must have written the midterms or provided supporting documentation for the absence such as a medical note or statutory declaration.

As per the Writing Across the Curriculum Statement in the Calendar, writing and grading thereof will be a factor in the evaluation of student work. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>.

Any student work which remains undistributed after the last day of classes will be available to students through the instructor's office during the instructor's office hours.

Mid-term 2 is a take-home exam. It will be available at noon on March 17, and the answers must be uploaded to Dropbox on D2L by 4:30 on March 18. Please save (perhaps by screen save) the confirmation provided when you submit the exam to Dropbox on D2L. If you encounter difficulties with uploading your answers to Dropbox on D2L you may email the exam to me.

The final examination will be comprehensive and scheduled by the Registrar. The final exam will be a take-home exam. It will be made available at least 24 hours before the time and date of the exam set by the Registrar and must be uploaded to Dropbox on D2L on or before the end time of the Registrar's scheduled exam. Please save (perhaps by screen save) the confirmation provided when you submit the exam to Dropbox on D2L. If you encounter difficulties with uploading your answers to Dropbox on D2L you may email the exam to me. If a student cannot submit the final exam by the date and time assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>. Under no circumstance will this be accommodated by the Department.

Tests and exams WILL NOT involve multiple choice questions.

Programmable calculators, cellphones, textbooks, course notes, and other electronic devices will not be allowed during the writing of tests or final examinations. Students are reminded that simply being able to access their cellphone during an exam is academic misconduct.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUP OR DEFERRED QUIZZES/TESTS/EXAMS under any circumstances, nor may the quizzes/tests/exams be written early. Students unable to write the quizzes/tests/exams because of documented illness, family emergency, religious observance, or university-sanctioned event will have the weight shifted to the final examination; otherwise a grade of zero will be assigned.

Reappraisal of Grades and Intellectual Honesty:

For Reappraisal of Graded Term Work, see Calendar I.2

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

For Reappraisal of Final Grade, see Calendar I.3

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Statement of Intellectual Honesty, see Calendar K.4

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-4.html>

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct, see Calendar K.5

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

Academic Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services. SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act:

Personal information is collected in accordance with FOIP. Assignments can only be returned to the student and will be accessible only to authorized faculty and staff. For more information, see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/files/legalservices/faq-students.pdf> and
http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/files/legalservices/faq-faculty_0.pdf.

Internet and Electronic Communication Device information:

The use of cell phones for any purpose in class is prohibited. Computers and tablets may be used for note taking only unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Copyright Legislation:

See the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright at www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf. Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is prohibited, except for audio recordings authorized as an accommodation by SAS or an audio recording for individual private study and only with the written permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized electronic or mechanical recording of lectures, their transcription, copying, or distribution, constitutes academic misconduct. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>.

Important Dates:

Please check: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html>.

Student Organizations:

Faculty of Arts Students' Association (F.A.S.A.):

Economics Department Representative

Office: SS 803, E-mail: econrep@fasaucalgary.ca and Web: www.fasaucalgary.ca.

Society of Undergraduates in Economics:

<https://www.ucalgarysue.com/>.

Society of Undergraduates in Economics is a student run organization whose main purpose is to assist undergraduate economics students to succeed both academically and socially at the University of Calgary. Services include access to the exam bank, career events such as Industry Night and information sessions, mentorship programs, and social events for members. They invite you to join by contacting SUE at societyofundergradsineconomics@gmail.com.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call them at 403-220-3580, or email them at 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, including program planning and advice.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them in the MacKimmie Library Block.

Student Support and Resources:

- See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information on campus mental health resources, the Student Ombuds' Office, Student Success Centre, Safewalk, and Emergency Evacuation and Assembly.
- Online writing resources are available at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>.

Notes:

1. Students are responsible for all assigned material, e.g., supplementary material posted on D2L, regardless of whether or not the material was covered in class.

KJM

2019-11-29