Department of Economics  
Course Outline  

Term: Fall 2011  

Course: Economics 401  
Section: 01  

[Public Sector Economics: Expenditures]  

Time: TR 11:00 – 12:15  
Place: ICT 116  

Instructor: Dr. Jean-François Wen  

Office: SS 418  
Telephone: 220-2478  

Office Hours: TR 15:30 – 17:00 (or by appointment); subject to change  

E-mail: wen@ucalgary.ca  

Web Page: A Blackboard web page will be set up for the course.  

Course Description:  

Economics 401 focuses on the expenditure side of public finance (Economics 403 deals with the taxation side). The course examines the main government expenditure programs in Canada: health care, education, employment insurance, public pensions, and welfare programs for the poor. We will also consider the current economic crisis and questions of government debt and political economy. Coverage of each topic will consist of a presentation of institutional facts and a development of the economic theory required for understanding the economic purposes of the government programs. The course will follow a fairly pragmatic, policy oriented approach. Class discussions are encouraged. Check Blackboard for the postings of some of the readings.  

Textbook(s):  


Books On Reserve:  

A copy of the textbook is on Reserve.
Topics and Readings for EC401 Fall 2011

1. Public Debt and the Economic Crisis
   d. Internet Chapter 3 (Deficit Financing)

2. Political Economy and the Growth of Government
   a. Chapter 8 (Public Choice)

3. Welfare Theorems and Program Evaluation
   a. Chapter 2 (Background reading on welfare analysis)
   b. Chapter 7 (Cost-Benefit Analysis)

4. Public Goods and the Privatization Debate
   a. Chapter 4 (Public Goods)

5. Social Insurance and Health Care
   a. Chapter 13 (Health Care)

6. Automatic Stabilizers and Employment Insurance
   a. Chapter 11 (Employment Insurance)

7. Social Assistance for Lower Income Families
   b. Chapter 10 (Social Welfare Programs)

8. Public Pensions and Intergenerational Accounting
   a. Chapter 11 (Public Pensions)

9. Public Schools and Universities
   a. Chapter 14 (Education)
Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

1. Three assignments 40%
2. Midterm Exam 30% (Thursday, October 20, in class)
3. Final Exam 30%

A numerical grade will be determined for each item of work and a final numerical grade will be calculated using the above weights.

A letter grade for the course will be assigned according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85 – 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>76 – 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73 - 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>66 – 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>63 – 65</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>60 - 62</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>56 – 59</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50 – 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 49</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A passing grade on either the midterm or final exam is required in order to pass the course.

If, for some reason, the distribution of grades determined using the aforementioned conversion chart appears to be abnormal, the instructor reserves the right to change the grade conversion chart if the instructor feels it is necessary to more fairly represent student achievement.

Calcuators will NOT be allowed during the writing of tests or final examinations.

The midterm exam will be held in regular class time at a date to be announced during the first week of classes.

The final exam will be held during the examination period at a time and place to be determined by the Registrar. It will be two hours long, will cover the FULL course, and will be held in a class room.

Blackboard:

This course will make use of blackboard – students who are registered in the course can logon at http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/webapps/login. Please note that Blackboard features a class email list that I will use. It is your responsibility to make sure that Blackboard uses the email of your choice. The default is your University of Calgary email address.

Notes:

1. Students must comply with the university regulations concerning "Intellectual Honesty", "Examinations", etc., which are published in the University Calendar.

2. Any work not submitted on time will receive a grade of zero. Extensions and exemptions for assignments will not normally be given except in the case of documented illness, family emergency, or religious observance.
3. **THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUP OR DEFERRED MID-TERM EXAM** under any circumstances, nor may the exam be written early. Students unable to write the exam because of *documented* illness, family emergency or religious observance will have the weight shifted to the final examination; otherwise a grade of zero will be assigned.

4. Students seeking reappraisal of term work should discuss the issue with the instructor within fifteen days of the work being returned in class. Unclaimed work will be available from the instructor during office hours.

5. **WARNING:** The lectures, assigned readings, or Internet outlines are complements, not substitutes. You are responsible for material presented in all three forms. I will often take a different approach to presenting a concept than the assigned reading does, and I will often present material in class that is not covered in the readings nor included in the Internet outlines. **MISS LECTURES AT YOUR OWN PERIL.**

6. 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.


8. Students' Union Vice-President, Academic
   Ola Mohajer
   Phone: 220-3911
   E-Mail: suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

9. Students’ Union Faculty Representative (Arts)
   Phone: 220-3913 Office: MSC 251
   E-Mail: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

10. Society of Undergraduates in Economics (S.U.E.)
    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.
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. 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 3rd 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.

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Emergency Assembly Location – SS Food Court

JFW/mi
2011-09-07