



Department of Economics Course Outline

		Term:	Winter 2011
Course:	Economics 355 Canadian Public Finance	Section:	01
Time:	M 18:00 – 20:50	Place:	ST 147
Instructor:	Todd Hirsch		
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: Jan-April 2011

Jan 10:	CHAPTER 1: Introduction to Public Finance: Why It May Be the Most Interesting Economics Course You Ever Take!
Jan 17:	CHAPTER 2: Efficiencies, Externalities and Public Goods
Jan 24:	CHAPTER 3: Redistribution of Income: What's Fair?
Jan 31:	CHAPTER 4: Resource Allocation and Social Objectives .../2

Feb 7:	MID-TERM EXAM #1 + CHAPTER 5 Alternative Program Delivery Systems
Feb 14:	CHAPTER 6: Theory of Taxation
Feb 21:	READING WEEK (no class)
Feb 28:	CHAPTER 7: Federal and Provincial Governments
Mar 7:	CHAPTER 8: Non-tax Sources of Government Revenue
Mar 14:	MID-TERM EXAM #2 + CHAPTER 9: Debt Financing
Mar 21:	CHAPTER 10: Constitutional Reform and Natural Resources
Mar 28:	CHAPTER 11: Federal/Provincial Fiscal Relations
Apr 4:	CHAPTER 12: Public Finance Approaches to Environmental Policy
Apr 11:	LAST CLASS: flex lecture (guest lecturer, debate, etc)

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Mid-term Exam #1	33.3%	Feb 7	All readings and materials for CHAP 1-4
Mid-term Exam #2	33.3%	Mar 14	All readings and materials for CHAP 5-8
Final Exam	33.3%	TBA	All readings and materials for CHAP 9-12

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 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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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 – ICT Food Court

TH/mi