



Department of Economics Course Outline

		Term:	Winter 2012
Course:	Economics 355 Canadian Public Finance	Section:	01
Time:	M 18:00 – 20:50	Place:	ST 132
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-Apr 2012

Jan 9:	CHAPTER 1: Introduction to Public Finance: Why It May Be the Most Interesting Economics Course You Ever Take!
Jan 16:	CHAPTER 2: Efficiencies, Externalities and Public Goods
Jan 23:	CHAPTER 3: Redistribution of Income: What's Fair?
Jan. 30:	TBA
Feb 6:	CHAPTER 4: Resource Allocation and Social Objectives

Feb 13:	MID-TERM EXAM #1 + CHAPTER 5 Alternative Program Delivery Systems
Feb 20:	Spring Break
Feb 27:	CHAPTER 6: Theory of Taxation
Mar 5:	CHAPTER 7: Federal and Provincial Governments
Mar 12:	CHAPTER 8: Non-tax Sources of Government Revenue
Mar 19:	MID-TERM EXAM #2 / TERM PAPER + CHAPTER 9: Debt Financing
Mar 26:	TBA
Apr 2:	CHAPTER 10: Constitutional Reform and Natural Resources and CHAPTER 11: Federal/Provincial Fiscal Relations
Apr 9:	CHAPTER 12: Public Finance Approaches to Environmental Policy

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Mid-term Exam #1	33.3%	Feb 13	All readings and materials for CHAP 1-4
Mid-term Exam #2	33.3%	Mar 19	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).

OPTIONAL TERM PAPER: in lieu of writing Mid-Term #2, any student may opt to prepare a 3,000 word term paper on a topic in Canadian Public Finance. The paper will be due on March 19th (the day of the second mid-term). It will be assigned a percentage grade, and weighted at 1/3 of the total course grade (same as Mid-Term #2). Possible paper topics will be discussed in class, or through direct meetings with the instructor.

Tests, term papers, and final exams are marked on a numerical (percentage) basis, 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+	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.

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

Tests and exams WILL involve multiple choice questions.

Students' Union Vice-President, Academic

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

E-mail: sue@ucalgary.ca

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.

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.

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.

Safewalk / Campus Security: 403-220-5333
Emergency Assembly Point – Professional Faculties Food Court
