

Economics 649 (L01) (Empirical Public Economics)

Instructor:	Stefan Staubli	Lecture Location:	ZOOM Delivery
Phone:	(403) 220-6180	Lecture Days/Time:	MW 8:00 – 9.15
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Office:	ZOOM Delivery		
Office Hours:	By appointment	Winter 2021	

Course Description:

Economics 649 focuses on learning techniques that can be applied to produce original research and to critically analyze existing research in the field of public economics. The course will emphasize empirical research and will contain a discussion of relevant econometric techniques used in public economics. The course covers material on taxation, public expenditures, and social insurance. Familiarity with STATA or another statistical software is required.

Course Outcomes:

The course aims to give students a broad overview of this growing field and to bring them to the research frontier. By the end of the course students should be able to understand and critically evaluate issues related to social and government policy from an economic perspective. Students will also learn and implement quasi-experimental econometric methods to estimate causal effects.

Course Outline:

The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. Introduction and Road Map
2. Tax Incidence
3. Taxation, Transfers, and Labor Supply
4. Social Insurance: Adverse Selection
5. Social Insurance: Moral Hazard
6. Optimal Social Insurance: Unemployment Insurance
7. Tagging: Disability Insurance
8. Behavioral Public Finance

Prerequisites/corequisites:

Familiarity with STATA or another statistical software is required.

Required Textbook(s):

There is no required textbook or reading packet for this course. A detailed reading list and course calendar will be distributed during the first week of classes. Course readings will be made available through the course website or in class.

Recommended Textbook(s):

You may find the following books to be useful reference materials:

A. Atkinson and J. Stiglitz, Lectures on Public Economics, McGraw-Hill (1980)

A. Auerbach and M. Feldstein, eds., Handbook of Public Economics, North-Holland, volumes 1 (1985), 2 (1987), 3 (2002), 4 (2002), and 5 (2013). [Note: Full text online at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/handbooks/15734420>]

J. Gruber, Public Finance and Public Policy, Worth Publishers (any edition).

Books on Reserve:

None

Online Delivery:

This course will be delivered online. Students are expected to be able to participate online in accordance with this Course Outline. Lectures, assignments, office hours, exams, readings and other course material, etc. all require online access and this access is the responsibility of the student. The instructor will make an effort to provide reasonable accommodations and flexibility as circumstances require. Students are expected to raise with the instructor at the beginning of the semester any potential concerns that require such accommodations.

In order to remotely participate in online courses, students will need to have: computer with a current and updated operating system (macOS or Windows will work with all university-supported online learning technologies), a current and updated web browser installed – the latest versions of Firefox, Safari, Chrome or Edge will help to avoid compatibility issues, secure and reliable internet, microphone / headphones, webcam (optional), scanner (or camera to scan your work).

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.

Lectures:

Lectures will be delivered online at the Registrar scheduled times and delivered using ZOOM. The lectures will be recorded and subsequently posted to D2L.

Grade Determination/Assessment:

3 Assignments	30%
Referee Reports	15%
Paper Presentation	15%
Own Research Project	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details

Department of Economics Criteria for Letter Grades. Economics professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance, showing-comprehensive understanding of subject matter
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below "B-" are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.

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

Reappraisal of Grades and Intellectual Honesty:

For reappraisal of graded term work, see Calendar 1.2

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

For reappraisal of final grade, see Calendar 1.3

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

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior that compromises proper assessment of students' academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

Student committing academic misconduct during the final exam will not receive a passing grade on the course.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>.

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 Grad Studies website: <http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home>

Graduate Students Association: <http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

Professional Development for Grad Students

Workshops and resources can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/mygradskills/>
Economics Graduate Association: <http://econ.ucalgary.ca/ega/>

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>.
- 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.

Notes:

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.

SS

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