Course Syllabus

ECO 4320.001 Public Sector Economics
Fall 2011 MW 2:30-3:45 SOM 2.107

Professor Contact Information

James C. Murdoch
GR 2.508
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972-883-4989
Hours: M 4:30-5:30, W 1:00 – 2:15 and by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

ECON 3310. Realistically, you should have your math requirements out of the way by the time you take this class. You can probably get by with co-registration in ECON 3310 but I do not recommend this approach.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the field of public economics. It considers the economic reasons for government and the effects of government spending and taxation on businesses and individuals.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to demonstrate some understanding of:
- Externalities and Public Goods
- Efficiency and Equity
- The various categories of government spending
- The consequences of government spending
- Various revenue mechanism used by governments
- The consequences of taxation
- Essential details of the main government programs

By the end of the course, you should be able to think critically about:
- US Educational, Health Care, Environmental, Defense, and Social Security Policy
- The US Deficit
- The US tax system

Required Textbooks and Materials

Rosen, H. and T. Gayer. **Public Finance: 9th Edition.** McGraw-Hill.

Suggested Course Materials

Read a newspaper everyday

Readings & Academic Calendar

Exam Dates
First Exam: September 28
Second Exam: November 2
Third Exam: December 12

Course Outline and Readings (Tentative)
The core readings for the course will be chapters 1-21.
Part I. Welfare Economics. August 24 - September 28

Chapters 1-6, 8 and 9

Part II. PublicExpenditures. October 3 – November 2

Chapters 7, 10- 13

Part III. Taxation. November 7 – December 5

Chapters 14 - 21

Grading Policy

Media Assignments:	18% (6 assignments, 3% each)
Problem Sets:	12% (4 assignments, 3%)
Attendance/participation:	10%
Exam 1:	20%
Exam 2:	20%
Exam 3:	20%

Each exam, problem set, writing assignment, etc. will be graded on a 100 point scale (% correct). These will be combined using the weights above and then translated into final letter grades (A+ through F) as follows:

98 – 100	A+	88 – 89	B+	78 – 79	C+	68 – 69	D+	Below 60	F
93 – 97	A	83 – 87	B	73 – 77	C	63 – 67	D		
90 – 92	A-	80 – 82	B-	70 – 72	C-	60 – 62	D-		

I reserve the right to curve the grades in your favor. In other words the assignment from percent correct to letter grade will never be any more stringent than above but it may be more liberal so that, for example, the A-range may extend into the 80s, etc. For each grade, I will go over, in class, the relation between percent correct and letter grade.

Course & Instructor Policies

There are no make-up exams. If you miss an exam, you will need to see me. Assignments must be turned in by the due date/time. You must attend class to get class participation credit. There may be specific in-class exercises that I will grade in order to determine your participation grade and I will take attendance. I will also go over the nature of the media and problem sets assignments in class.

Other Information

http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies.