



Course: ECON 4320.001 Public Sector Economics
Professor: Brian W. Buckles
Term: Fall 2014
Meetings: Monday & Wednesday (MW) 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. in ATC 1.305

Professor Contact Information

Email Address: buckles@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and by appointment

Description:

ECON 4320 - Public Sector Economics (3 semester credit hours) A study of the economics of the public sector, including taxation, public expenditures, and fiscal policy. Examines the theoretical foundation for government intervention in the economy, and the incentive effects of government policies on work, investment, and the spending of income.

Course Prerequisites and Other Restrictions:

ECON 3310 - Intermediate Microeconomic Theory. The study of theories of demand, production, competition, markets, and welfare. Implications of theory for purposes of public policy prescriptions are given particular emphasis.

Because the course uses mathematical skills, it is essential that students know the following:

- * how to solve an (algebraic) equation in one unknown
- * how to solve two (algebraic) equations in two unknowns
- * how to read graphs
- * calculations involving fractions, including solving algebraic equations with fractions
- * the mathematical concept of slope, including the definition and formula of slope and how to calculate it

Course Objectives:

After completing this course successfully, students will

- 1) develop a broad based knowledge of the economic approach to the public sector
- 2) have a grounding in the problems facing markets and why they might fail, and
- 3) be able to apply the concepts of the course to the real world.

Required Textbook:

Holcombe, Randall G. *Public Sector Economics: The Role of Government in the American Economy*. Pearson Education, Inc. 2006.

ISBN-10: 0131450425

ISBN-13: 9780131450424

Optional Texts:

You may find these books useful in your essays.

The Wealth of Nations by Adam Smith

The Theory of Moral Sentiments by Adam Smith

The Road to Serfdom by Friedrich Hayek

eLearning - Academic

- ✓ *Students will need to log into eLearning-Academic regularly for this course.*
- ✓ In order to log into eLearning - Academic, you must have a current and valid NetID.

The following documents pertaining to the course will be posted on eLearning - Academic:

- Course Syllabus
- Short Essay/Homework Assignments
- Handouts from class
- Other relevant information for the class including announcements and schedule changes
- Students' grades on essays/homeworks and exams

Additional Course Materials

You may need to bring a blank Scantron form, Blue Book, or a calculator for exams. I will provide more information on exam details as the date approaches.

Important Dates for Class Calendar

Monday, August 25 – First day of class

Monday, September 1 – NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Monday, October 13 – Midterm Exam

Monday, November 24 – Wednesday, November 26 – NO CLASS (Fall Break)

Wednesday, December 10 – Final Exam

*Schedule of essay/homework due dates will be provided on eLearning.

UTD Academic Calendar

The UTD Academic Calendar is available online at the following URL:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/registrar/calendar/>

(Scroll down and click on “Fall 2014 Academic Calendar and Payment/Refund Calendar.”)

Grading Policy

Essays/Homeworks: 35%

Midterm Exam: 30%

Final Exam: 35%

Each essay/homework and exam will be graded on a 100 point scale (% correct). These will be translated into 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 lenient so that, for example, the A- range may extend into the 80s. Your final grade will be a weighted average as shown above. Any extra credit opportunities will be announced during the semester at the professor's discretion.

Course Topics:

We will limit ourselves to the following chapters from the textbook in order to focus on two sub-fields within Public Sector Economics: the Public Choice / Public Policy field, and the traditional Public Finance field. We will adjust the schedule as the semester progresses, depending upon our pace of study and student interests.

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	The Public Sector
2	Principles for Analyzing Government
3	Property Rights and Economic Efficiency
4	Externalities
5	Public Goods
6	The Economic Role of the State
7	A Theory of Collective Action
8	Public Sector Demand
9	Supply and Demand in Political Markets
10/13	MIDTERM EXAM
10	Positive Principles of Taxation
11	Principles of Tax Policy
14	Personal Income Taxation in the United States
16	The Tax System in the United States
17	The Government Budgeting Process
18	Taxation and Redistribution
19	Government Redistribution Programs
20	Social Security
24	The Federal System of Government
12/10	FINAL EXAM

Short Essays/Homeworks, Examinations, and Make-up Policy:

There will be occasional short essays/homeworks. The short essay/homework with the lowest score will be dropped. YOU MUST TAKE THE MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS. *There will be no makeup essays/homeworks or exams unless a documented University excused absence has occurred.*

Attendance, Class Participation, and Classroom Rules:

The course will use a lecture style with class participation. Students are expected to arrive at class on time and prepared, which includes *having completed the required reading prior to class*. The following are classroom guidelines to which all class participants are expected to adhere during class:

- Please be attentive and respectful to all speakers, including the instructor and the other students in the class.
- Before class begins, please turn off all cell phones, iPods, pagers, video games, and any other devices that make noise. If you must use your cell phone during class time, please leave the classroom to do so.
- *No texting, instant messaging, surfing the Internet, or playing video games is allowed in class at any time.*
- Students may use computers in class but only for class-related activities such as accessing eLearning.

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Student Conduct and Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, A to Z Guide, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SSB 4.400, telephone number 972-883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>.

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Withdrawal from the Course

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of undergraduate courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, the professor cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V of The University of Texas at Dallas' Handbook of Operating Procedures. Chapter 51 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures covers Student Grievance Procedures.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, who will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed.

Office of Student AccessAbility

The goal of the Office of Student AccessAbility is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. The Office is located in SSB 3.200 (Student Services Building) on campus. Office hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., and evenings by appointment.

How to contact the Office of Student AccessAbility at UT-Dallas:

- website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess/>
- email: studentaccess@utdallas.edu
- telephone: 972-883-2098 (voice or TTY)
- fax: 972-883-6561
- Mailing Address:
 UT Dallas Student AccessAbility
 800 W. Campbell Rd., SSB32
 Richardson, TX 75080

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with staff at the Office of Student AccessAbility at UT-Dallas. Staff are available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Office of Student AccessAbility to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The Office of Student AccessAbility can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. The Office of Student AccessAbility provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

*****Tutoring Available*****

Econ Lab is available on MTWR in room GR 3.416 (Galveston Room). The lab will be staffed by PhD students in economics and primarily serve students who want some extra help on analytics, problem sets, reviews, etc. Students from all of our undergraduate classes are eligible to receive help. Please refer to their webpage for operating hours:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/epps/resources/econ-lab.html>

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor. The syllabus and class schedule are subject to change, and students will be kept informed of all changes. Updates to the syllabus and class schedule will be announced in class and also posted on eLearning-Academic.