

Department of Economics

Syllabus – Spring 2019

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Public Finance**Credits:** 3**Format:** Face-to-Face**Prerequisites:** ECON 2201 or 2211Q.

Recommended preparation: ECON 1200 or 1202; MATH 1071 or 1110 or 1121 or 1131 or 1151.

Professor: Dr. Natalia V. Smirnova**Email:** Natalia.Smirnova@uconn.edu**Office:** Room 3.65, Stamford campus**Office Hours/Availability:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. and by appointment**Course HuskyCT Web Page:** <https://lms.uconn.edu>

Course Materials

Required Materials:**Hyman, David N.** Public Finance: A Contemporary Application of Theory to Policy, 11th edition, Cengage.ISBN: 978-1-285-17395-5

Students can purchase access to the e-book or rent the printed text at: <https://www.cengage.com/c/public-finance-a-contemporary-application-of-theory-to-policy-11e-hyman>. They just need to click on the tab that says Textbook/eBook from \$26.49.

Cengage also has the *Unlimited* option which is separate from the Hyman book access. [Cengage Unlimited](#) subscription costs \$119.99 for the semester. If a student already has a subscription, they can view the Hyman e-book in their account at no additional charge.

Course Description

This course covers the economics of government and government policies in the United States. It introduces students to the economic basis for government activity, government expenditures and policy issues in the United States, theory and structure of taxation, and state and local government finance.

This course requires completion of a team research project focusing on one public policy issue. The project consists of a research stage, several presentations, and a written paper/report.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- 1) Identify the objectives of various levels of government in the United States;
- 2) Deconstruct various theories of public choice and of alternative tax systems;
- 3) Appraise expenditures and tax revenues at various levels of government;
- 4) Defend an analysis of one fiscal policy proposal orally in front of the class;
- 5) Evaluate the effectiveness of one policy proposal in a written format as a research paper.
- 6) Relate their own thinking and writing as well as work in a team to contribute to the team project.

Course Outline and Calendar

Week	Topic	Assignment
1. Tuesday, January 22	Course overview, requirements, team organization, logistics, etc.	<u>Research Project</u> : Start selecting research topic; Read Chapter 1
2. Tuesday, January 29	Efficiency, Markets, and Governments	Read Chapter 2 <u>Research Project</u> : Report on your topic selection
3. Tuesday, February 5	Externalities and Government Policy	Read Chapter 3 <u>Research Project</u> : Literature Review – draft 1
4. Tuesday, February 12	Public Goods	Read Chapter 4 <u>Research Project</u> : in-class presentation of Literature Review
5. Tuesday, February 19 Thursday, February 21	<u>Quiz # 1 – in-class on Thursday</u> Public Choice and Political Process	<u>Coverage: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4</u> Read Chapter 5 <u>Research Project</u> : start working on the Data section
6. Tuesday, February 26	Public Choice and Political Process	Read Chapter 5 <u>Research Project</u> : in-class presentation of the Data
7. Tuesday, March 5	Introduction to Government Finance	Read Chapter 10 <u>Research Project</u> : work on Methodology and Data Analysis
8. Tuesday, March 12	Taxation, Prices, Efficiency, and the Distribution	Read Chapter 11 <u>Research Project</u> : continue working on Methodology and Data Analysis
Tuesday, March 19	Spring break	
9. Tuesday, March 26 Thursday, March 28	<u>Quiz #2 – in-class on Thursday</u> Budget Balance and Government Debt	<u>Coverage: Chapters 5, 10, 11</u> Read Chapter 12 <u>Research Project</u> : finalize Methodology and Data Analysis
10. Tuesday, April 2	Taxation: Theory of Income Taxation	Read Chapter 13 <u>Research Project</u> : in-class presentation of Methodology and Data Analysis
11. Tuesday, April 9	Taxation: Personal Income	Read Chapter 14 <u>Research Project</u> : work on Conclusions and Introduction
12. Tuesday, April 16	Taxation: Corporate Income	Read Chapter 15 <u>Research Project</u> : finalize your paper
13. Tuesday, April 23	State and Local Government Finance	Read Chapter 18 <u>Research Project</u> : finalize your paper
14. Tuesday, April 30	Research Project Presentations	<u>Research Project</u> : in-class presentations
15. May 6 -- 11	<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>Coverage: Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, 18</u>

Summary of Course Grading:

Course Components	Percent	
Participation and Team Work	20	Participation is consistent attendance, preparedness, engagement, and punctuality. It is also an engagement in your research team's work. The evaluation of your contribution to the team-work will be provided by your peers at the end of the semester.
Quiz # 1	10	
Quiz # 2	10	
Final Exam	15	
Research Project	45	Research Project is a team project. It involves several in-class presentations and a written paper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class presentations = 20% • Paper = 25%
Total	100%	

Participation

Students are expected to come to class regularly and to participate in class discussions. Students are expected to participate in a team-project. The evaluation of your contribution to the team-work will be provided by your peers at the end of the semester.

Midterm Quizzes

There will be 2 midterm quizzes, which will be given in class. The details will be provided closer to the quizzes' dates.

Final Exam

Final exam will be non-cumulative. It will be given in class.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Letter Grade	GPA
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
73-76	C	2.0
70-72	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
63-66	D	1.0
60-62	D-	0.7
<60	F	0.0

Due Dates and Late Policy

Due dates are strictly enforced. Late submissions will be heavily penalized.

The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.

Email and HuskyCT

I will communicate with you via your UConn email address (usually firstname.lastname@uconn.edu). It is your responsibility to check this email account for messages. If you have a personal email address that you prefer to use, forward your UConn email to that address.

I will use [HuskyCT](#) to communicate any developments in our class matters, i.e. new materials, snow days cancelations, and other matters pertaining to the whole class will be communicated through HuskyCT. It is your responsibility to stay tuned to our class portal.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
 - Academic Integrity
 - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University's [Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\)](#). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government." (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

Software Requirements

The technical requirements for this course include:

- Word processing software
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)
- Reliable internet access

Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course's online portion is facilitated using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular

business hours through the [Help Center](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.

WRITING TUTORING IN THE SOURCE FOR ACTIVE LEARNING, JEREMY RICHARD LIBRARY

Writing tutoring will begin on Monday, Feb. 4 and end on Friday, May 3.

Spring 2019 schedule: Monday-Thursday 10 am-7 pm
Friday 11 am-3 pm

Our appointments are made online at <http://advapp.uconn.edu>.

- Go to the website and select "The Source (Stamford Writing Center & Q Center)" in the drop-down menu and click "Continue."
- -In the next screen, log on with your UCONN NetID (If you don't know your NetID and password, you need to visit <http://netid.uconn.edu> to find out and activate it).
- -Following the instructions after you log on, schedule your appointment (no more than two 30-minute appointments per day).
- -Meet with your tutor in the Learning Commons area of the Jeremy Richard Library.

After you make an appointment online, you will receive an email confirmation. Please make sure to cancel your appointment online if you realize you cannot keep it. You can meet with your writing consultant for a 30-minute one-on-one session in the library. You should bring the assignment sheet and instructions to your session, if coming for an assignment.

Can't visit the Source during the scheduled hours?

To reach online, email your essay or assignment to uconn.stamford.writing.center@gmail.com, along with the following information:

- What kind of essay/assignment are you submitting, and for what class?
- Was there a prompt given for this assignment? If so, include it.
- When is the essay/assignment due? *Please note: we require at least two days to review your assignment.
- Select two of the following issues you would most like us to address:
 - Understanding the assignment
 - Coming up with ideas/Outlining/Planning
 - Thesis statement/argument

- Focusing the subject
 - Audience
 - Support of main ideas
 - Introduction or conclusion
 - Using sources
 - Citations (MLA, APA, etc.)
 - Grammar/mechanics such as punctuation, sentence structure, etc.
- Tell us some of the strengths/weaknesses you see in the writing you did in response to the assignment.

Have questions? Email our director at serkan.gorkemli@uconn.edu.