



ECON 325 A01
Public Economics
CRN #21077

Winter Session: 2023 01 – Term 02

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Office Hours:

Monday, 10:00-11:00am

Thursday, 10:00-11:00am

Or by appointment

Please note this syllabus is subject to small changes during the semester.

UVic Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEC peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Course Content

This course provides a general introduction to the economics of government expenditures and taxation. We will consider the role of government in the economy and use economic analysis to predict and verify the effect of government intervention on the behaviour of individuals, households, and firms. We will examine public goods, externalities, and information asymmetries, as well as market failures resulting from these conditions and policies to address those market failures. We will discuss the implications of policy for efficiency and equity. Throughout the course, relevant Canadian, United States, and other international public policy will be discussed.

Textbook

The required text is **Public Finance in Canada (5th edition)** by Harvey S. Rosen, Jean-Francois Wen, and Tracy Snoddon. Some sections of the text are more difficult than the material that will be covered in the lectures, so the pages and sections that should be read in each chapter will be provided.

Students can purchase the e-book through the UVic Bookstore. After the e-book is purchased, students will be provided access to Connect, which is an online learning platform that is used in the course. The document "Connect_Quick_Start_Guide" on Brightspace provides instructions on how to register to use McGraw Hill Connect. In addition to the e-book, students can purchase looseleaf text of the book for an addition \$30 if a printed version of the book is desired.

Supplementary readings from outside of the textbook will be provided as PDFs on the Brightspace page.

Grading

Given student performances on the requirements listed below, final grades will be assigned based on the university's grading scale.

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F or N
90-100	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	65-69	60-64	50-59	0-49

Grading Scale:

Students should review the University's more detailed [summary of grading](#).

This course is designed to provide students opportunities to improve their grades based on effort. The table below lists each course requirement that will determine a student's final grade.

Item/Requirement	Number	Date of requirement	Weight
Reading questions	11	Completed before the start of each class on Monday, beginning the second week of class (Jan. 16)	15%
In-class exercises	19	Each class except when there is an exam, beginning the second week of class (Jan. 16)	15%
Midterm 1	1	Thursday, February 9 th , 2022	20%
Midterm 2	1	Thursday, March 13 th , 2022	20%
Final exam	1	To be determined	30%

Below is a description of each requirement with late/missing penalties described.

- 1. Reading questions (15%)** – There will be 11 online reading assignments (question sets) that each student needs to complete online through Smartbook on McGraw Hill Connect. These assignments need to be completed before class on Monday each week (beginning January 16th and ending on April 3rd). The question sets will typically take 15-20 minutes to complete and will be based on the assigned readings from Public Finance in Canada. The reading assignment will be made available on the Thursday before the reading assignment is due. If a student completes the reading assignment, they will receive full credit for the assignment.

Reading assignments that are not submitted by the time the assignment is due *cannot* be made up.

- 2. In-class exercises (15%)** – Unless there is an exam, each class will have an in-class exercise. In-class exercises will be comprised of practice problems or analytical questions that must be completed and submitted during class for assessment. The exercises will typically take 15-20 minutes to complete. Only students who are physically present in class can complete and submit an in-class exercise. In-class exercises *cannot* be submitted for students who are not present in class. In rare circumstances, we may not have an in-class exercise. In these situations, you will be given full credit for attendance at class.

If you miss a class, the in-class exercise *cannot* be made up. However, each student will be given four excused absences from in-class exercises. Each excused absence will reduce the total number of in-class exercises that contribute to a student's overall grade for the in-class exercises. For example, if a student misses one in-class exercise, the student's grade for the in-class exercises will be calculated out of a point total for 18 in-class exercises. If a student misses two in-class exercises, the student's grade for the in-class exercises will be calculated out of a point total for 17 in-class exercises, etc.

- 3. Midterm 1 (20%), Midterm 2 (20%), and Final Exam (30%)** - Participation for all scheduled examinations is mandatory. Consideration for missed examinations will be given only on the basis of documented illness, accident or family affliction, and for no other reasons. In the event of a missed final examination, students are advised to follow the procedures outlined in the [University Calendar](#).

Students are advised not to make work or travel plans until after the examination timetable has been finalized. Second Term (April) exam timetables are posted at the end of February. Students who wish to finalize their travel plans at an earlier date should book flights that depart after the end of the examination period. There will be no special accommodation if travel plans conflict with the examination.

All exams are essential course requirements, meaning, they must be attempted to pass the course.

ECON 325 Spring 2023 Course Calendar

Note: The specific weeks that particular topics are covered and the specific topics that are covered may change depending on the progress made in the course.

The course calendar is below. It lists each week of the course and the topics for each week. It also lists the exam dates in red text

No.	Dates	Topic
1	Jan. 9-12	Class Introduction; Introduction to Public Finance (Ch. 1); Review of Microeconomics
2	Jan. 16-19	Review of Microeconomics; Fundamentals of Welfare Economics (Ch. 2)
3	Jan. 23-26	Public Goods (Ch. 4)
4	Jan. 30-Feb. 2	Public Goods (Ch. 4); Externalities (Ch. 5)
5	Feb. 6-9	Externalities (Ch. 5); Midterm 1 (Thursday, Feb. 9)
6	Feb. 13-16	Externalities (Ch. 5); Income Distribution (Ch. 6)
7	Feb. 20-23	<i>No Class – Reading Break</i>
8	Feb. 27-Mar. 2	Income Distribution (Ch. 6); Social Welfare Programs (Ch. 12)
9	Mar. 6-9	Health Care (Ch. 9)
10	Mar. 13-16	Taxation and Income Distribution (Ch. 14); Midterm 2 (Thursday, Mar. 13)
11	Mar. 20-23	Taxation and Income Distribution (Ch. 14); Taxation and Efficiency (Ch. 15)
12	Mar. 27-30	Personal Income Tax (Ch. 17); Personal Taxation and Behavior (Ch. 18)
13	Apr. 3-6	Personal Taxation and Behavior (Ch. 18); Consumption Taxation (Ch. 19)

Brightspace

- *Brightspace* is used extensively for the course. All students are expected to be fully functional with the system.
- The lecture notes will be posted in *Brightspace*. Please note that the lecture notes online are only outlines of the actual lectures.
- The specific pages or sections of for each chapter will be provided before the reading assignment is made available and the chapter is covered in lecture.
- All announcements will be posted in *Brightspace*. Students are advised to check it frequently.

Course Policies

This course adheres to the [Undergraduate Course Policies](#) of the Department of Economics that deal with the following issues:

- Academic concessions
- Academic integrity (plagiarism and cheating)
- Attendance
- Grading
- Inclusivity and diversity
- Late adds
- Late assignments
- Repeating courses
- Review of an assigned grade
- Sexualized violence prevention and response
- Students with a disability
- Term assignments and debarment from examinations
- Travel plans
- Waitlists

The following policies are explicitly included because of their importance.

Waitlist Policies

- Instructors have no discretion to admit waitlisted students or raise the cap on the course.
- Students on the waitlist should discuss with the instructor how to ensure they are not behind with coursework in the event they are admitted.
- Registered students who do not participate as specified in this outline during the first 7 calendar days from the start of the course may be dropped from the course.
- Registered students who decide not to take the course are responsible for dropping the course, and are urged to do so promptly out of courtesy toward waitlisted students.
- Waitlist offers cease after the last date for adding courses irrespective of published waitlists.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students are expected to observe the same standards of scholarly integrity as their academic and professional counterparts. A student who is found to have engaged in unethical academic behaviour, including the practices described in the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) in the University Calendar, is subject to penalty by the University.

Review [What is Plagiarism](#) for the definition of plagiarism. Note: Submitted work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

Student Code of Conduct

The Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences Faculties have adopted this [Student code of conduct](#). Please, review.

University Policy on Human Rights, Equity and Fairness

The University is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

See [General University Policies](#)

Accessibility & Health Resources

Centre for Accessible Learning

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, you are free to approach me; however, you must register with the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) for formal arrangements to be made. The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

[Health Services](#) - University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.

[Support Connect](#) - a 24/7 mental health support service for students

- Toll-free (calls from North America): 1-844-773-1427
- International collect calls: 1-250-999-7621

[Counselling Services](#) - Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.

[Elders' Voices](#) - The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future.

When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to the [CES log-in](#). You will use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be completed on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

- What strengths did your **instructor** demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
- Please provide specific suggestions as to how the **instructor** could have helped you learn more effectively.
- Please provide specific suggestions as to how this **course** could be improved.

E-mail correspondence

Emails should be limited to critical matters, such as inability to attend class, an exam, or prolonged illness, and should include the course name and number in the subject line. Questions on course material should be asked during office hours or in class. The standard format for writing a letter must be used. This means it should begin with a salutation (e.g. Dear...), include full sentences and it must conclude with a signature that includes your **full name**. Text message lingo should not be used.

Electronic devices

Students can use laptops and tablets to take notes during lectures, reviews, and discussion sections. Mobile phone use is prohibited in the course. Electronic devices may *not* be used in the exam.

COVID-19 policies

The instructor will not wear a mask during lecture. Students are encouraged to wear masks but not required. Illness due to COVID is considered a legitimate reason to be absent for class.

Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. Students are encouraged to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting www.uvic.ca/svp . If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Contact svpcoordinator@uvic.ca.