

ECON 441: Public Economics
Section * – CRN ******
Monday-Friday 10:30 am – 11:45 am
Room: 440 B&E

Instructor: Hossein Radmard

Office: 256 B&E

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, **and by appointment.**

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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

WVU Course Catalog Description: “Economic roles of the public sector. Particular attention to market failure, redistributing income, the financing of public sector activities, relationships between federal, state, and local governments, and public choice.”

This course will cover the broad range of topics which comprise the field of Public Economics. Upon completion of the course, the student will have an understanding of government’s role in the economy as well as how the tools of economics can be used to analyze the public sector. The course will cover issues in public finance including public good provision, optimal taxation, expenditures, and externalities, as well as topics in public choice including the median voter theorem, special interest effects, bureaucracy, regulation, and positive theories of taxation.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

ECON 201 and 202

Familiarity with ECON 301 is not required, but will prove helpful.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

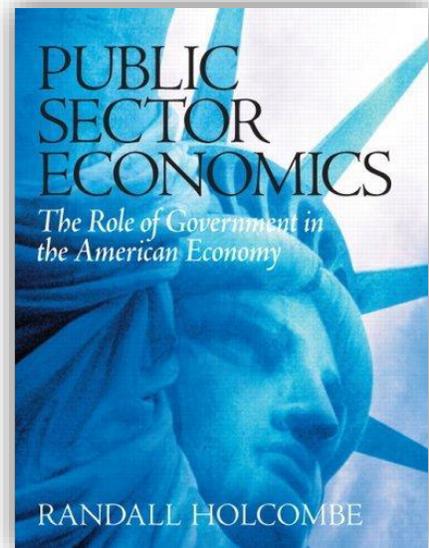
Public Sector Economics: The Role of Government in the American Economy,
Holcombe, Randall, 2006,
(ISBN: 0131450425)

*Supplemental articles and materials will be provided during the semester.

GRADING POLICY:

Students will be graded on the basis of:

1. Three Short Papers
2. In-Class-Assignments (ICA) and Participation
3. Midterm Exam
4. Final Exam



Assignment	Weight
ICA and Participation	10%
Short Papers	30% (10%each)
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale	
A	89.50 and up
B	79.50 – 89.49
C	69.50 – 79.49
D	59.50 – 69.49
F	Below 59.49

A. In-class Assignments and Participation:

Every session starts with review of previous lectures. This review can be in form of written questions. So please come prepared to every session and participate in class discussions. Participation and ICAs accumulate ten percent of your grade.

B. Short Papers:

Over the course of the semester students will be responsible for writing three short response papers. Each paper counts 10% towards the final course grade. These papers will be due at the *beginning* of class on Fridays of each *non exam week*. Late submissions will be penalized a letter grade for each day it is late. For example, an ‘A’ paper submitted after the *beginning* of class on Friday will receive a ‘B.’ If the same paper is submitted the following Monday it will receive a ‘C.’ After the *beginning* of class the following Tuesday, a student will receive a ‘zero’ for the paper. Papers should be typed, double-spaced with 1 inch margins, and written in a 12 point ‘normal’ (e.g. Times New Roman or Arial) font. Students should make an effort to submit papers which are free of spelling/grammatical errors.

A writing topic pertaining to the material covered in class will be provided at least one week prior to each paper’s due date. Students will be graded primarily on how well they address the topic, but poorly written papers will be marked down. While no specific length is required, approximately 3-5 pages should prove sufficient. Note that the content of a paper is obviously more important than its length. Shorter papers will not be discounted automatically and long papers will not necessarily score well. All else equal a concise and well written paper will score higher than a long, rambling submission.

Papers must represent the student’s own work. If another author’s work is referenced, it must be cited properly. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in an irrecoverable ‘zero’ for the paper at a minimum and potentially an ‘F’ in the course.

C. Exams:

There will be two exams for this course, one midterm and one final. The final exam will *not* be a cumulative exam. Each of the exams will count for 30% of your total grade. Please note that exam questions may cover any and all material covered in class *or* in the assigned reading.

Midterm Friday, June 8th
Final.....Friday, June 29th

Make-up Exams will be given if: (1) Student notifies the instructor one week in advance with a legitimate reason for absence. (2) Student provides proof of an emergency. (3) The absence is a result of an authorized University activity.

If none of the above conditions are met, the missed exam will be graded as zero. You need to take all tests and if with above conditions you miss an exam you will take the make-up test on an arranged date and time.

eCAMPUS is the main tool for students to see announcements, grades and related materials. Please make sure you know how to use it and also check it frequently during the semester.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE*:

WEEK	TOPIC	CHAPTERS
Week I 0	Introduction; The Public Sector; Principles for Analyzing Government; Property Rights and Economic Efficiency	1-3
Week II 0	<i>No Class on Monday 28th (Memorial Day)</i> Externalities; Public Goods; Economic Role of the State	4-6
MM/DD : Paper 1 due		
Week III 0	Economic Role of the State; Theory of Collective Action; Public Sector Demand	6-8
MM/DD : Midterm Exam		
Week IV 0	Public Sector Demand; Supply and Demand in Political Markets; Principles of Taxation	8-11
MM/DD : Paper 2 due		
Week V 0	Taxes on Economic Transactions; Taxation of Income; Personal Income Taxation in the U.S.; Taxes on Business Income and Wealth; Tax System in the U.	12-16
MM/DD : Paper 3 due		
Week VI 0	Taxation and Redistribution;; Social Security; Education ; Health Care ; Federal System of Government	18, 20, 21, 22, 24
MM/DD : FINAL EXAM		

**The instructor reserves the right to modify—all changes will be announced in class*

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is not required but is strongly encouraged. As noted above, exams will cover material presented in the lectures that may not be covered in the text. Further, in class examples are likely an essential part of full understanding of the course content. If you choose to miss class, it is strongly recommended that you get a copy of the notes from a classmate; no notes will be provided by the instructor.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

"The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter."

STATEMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (phone: 293-6700; website: <http://www.wvu.edu/~socjust/disability/>).

DAYS OF SPECIAL CONCERN:

WVU recognizes the diversity of its students and the needs of those who wish to be absent from class to participate in Days of Special Concern, which are listed in the Schedule of Courses. You should notify me by email by the end of the second week of classes or prior to the first Day of Special Concern, whichever is earlier, regarding Day of Special Concern observances that will affect your attendance. I will make reasonable accommodations for tests that you may miss as a result of observing a Day of Special Concern.

I have read and understand the format of this course and the policies described in the syllabus. I acknowledge that failure to comply with the terms of the syllabus may affect my success in this class.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____