

COURSE INFORMATION

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jason R. Davis  
Office: CPS 414  
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Email: jdavis@uwsp.edu

**CLASS MEETINGS:** Class will meet in CCC 214 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 to 12:15. Any changes will be announced in advance, when possible, or posted on the classroom door.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Office hours will be held from 10:00 to 11:00 and 2:00 to 3:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Additional office hours are available by appointment.

**TEXTS:** The primary text for this course is Public Finance and Public Policy, fourth edition, by Jonathan Gruber. Additional readings may be assigned throughout the course. Any additional required reading will be announced in class.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides an introduction to Public Economics topics. In broad terms, Public Economics is a microeconomic field concerned with government taxation, spending, and regulation. Specifically, we will address: 1) positive government actions which can enhance efficiency; 2) positive government actions which can enhance equity; and 3) optimal taxation policies designed to minimize efficiency losses and/or improve equity.

**HOMEWORK AND PARTICIPATION:** There will be a number of homework assignments and group discussion assignments throughout the term. Active participation and completion of the homework assignments will collectively count for 25% of your final grade. Assignments will be announced in class at least one class meeting in advance.

**EXAMINATIONS:** There will be three exams in the class, including the final exam. Each exam will count for 25% of your final grade. The exams will be held on the following dates:

Exam 1: Tuesday, October 9

Exam 2: Tuesday, November 13

Final: Tuesday, December 18, 2:45 – 4:45

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Any evidence of academic misconduct will be aggressively pursued following University procedures.

**MISSED ASSIGNMENTS/EXAMS:** Generally, I will not allow any make-ups for missed assignments, discussions, and/or exams. If you have a verifiable emergency which prevents you from turning in an assignment, participating in a discussion, or taking an exam, these will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If possible, you must notify me of such an emergency 24 hours in advance.

**FINAL GRADES:** There will be a total of 400 points possible during the course:

Homework & Participation	100 points
Exams (3 at 100 points each)	<u>300 points</u>
Total	400 points

I expect the grading scale to be as follows, though I may choose to use a more generous curve, based on the performance of the class.

A	93-100%	372-400 points
A-	90-92.99%	360-371 points
B+	86-89.99%	344-359 points
B	82-85.99%	328-343 points
B-	79-81.99%	316-327 points
C+	76-78.99%	304-315 points
C	72-75.99%	288-303 points
C-	69-71.99%	276-287 points
D+	66-69.99%	264-275 points
D	60-65.99%	240-263 points
F	0-59.99%	0-239 points

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:** The planned schedule of topics and reading assignments for the course is listed below.

**I Government Policy: Enhancing Efficiency**

1. Introduction: Chapters 1-2, 4
2. Externalities: Chapters 5
3. Public Goods: Chapter 7
4. Political Economy: Chapter 9
5. State and Local Government Expenditures: Chapter 10

**II Government Policy: Enhancing Equity**

1. Social Insurance: the New Function of Government: Chapter 12
2. Social Security: Chapter 13
3. Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Workers' Compensation: Chapter 14
4. Income Distribution and Welfare Programs: Chapter 17

**III Taxation**

1. Taxation Introduction: Chapter 18
2. Tax Incidence and Equity: Chapter 19
3. Taxation and Efficiency: Chapter 20
4. Taxes on Labor: Chapter 21
5. Corporate Taxation: Chapter 24
6. Fundamental Tax Reform: Chapter 25