



PA 3378 - PUBLIC FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

MW, 4:00 - 5:15 pm, GR 2.530

Professor Contact Information

Evgenia Gorina, Ph.D.

Office: GR 2.322

E-mail: egorina@utdallas.edu

Office hours: MW, 2:00-3:00 pm and by appointment

Textbook

Sharp A.M., Register C.A. and P.W. Grimes. (2013). Economics of Social Issues. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin. 20th edition. ISBN: 978-0-07-352324-8.

Course Description

This course focuses on the application of economic theories to understand the role of government in the economy. Topics covered in this course include public expenditure policies, taxation, public goods, externalities, cost-benefit analysis, social security, and regulation.

Course Objectives

Upon a successful completion of the course, students will 1) learn how to use economic concepts to interpret impacts of government policies; 2) understand market mechanisms and policy options for a range of social issues; 3) learn about the U.S. financial system and principles that guide revenue and expenditure decisions at different levels of government.

Course Requirements and Policies

Your grade in this course will be based on two in-class quizzes, three brief papers, your active and thoughtful participation in our class discussions and a comprehensive final exam. Specific guidance for the short papers will be distributed in class and posted on our eLearning site.

Grading

Quiz 1	20%
Quiz 2	20%
Short papers (3)	20%
Class participation (10%) and presentation of three current events (10%)	20%
Final Exam	20%

Students' final grades for the course will be determined as follows:

98-100% = A+;	94-97% = A;	90-93% = A-
87-89% = B+;	83-86% = B;	79-82% = B-
75-78% = C+;	70-74% = C;	60-69% = D

Successful class participation consists of preparing for the day's class session and contributing to the in-class discussion of the assigned material with your classmates. Another form of participation includes linking our readings and course topics to current news items. Class participation requires attendance – your class participation grade is affected beginning with your 3rd absence.

I have a “no-laptop” policy. Unless you have a documented disability that you require a laptop to take class notes, please do not have your laptops or tablets open during class. Please be respectful of your colleagues and remember to keep your cell ringer off during class time.

Over the semester, each of you will bring to our attention in class three current events that relate to the course content. To receive full credit for this assignment, you should post links to your current events on eLearning at least 24 hours before you present them in class.

Over the semester, you will write three short papers. Specific guidance for the short papers will be distributed in class and posted on eLearning. Papers are due in class on their due date. Late papers will not be accepted except in the case of a serious illness or tragedy. I will only accept papers in class handed in to my physical hands.

If you miss a quiz and do not provide me with medical documentation explaining your absence, you will receive zero points for the quiz.

I expect of you a high level of responsibility and academic integrity. If you are unclear about plagiarism, source citation or other acts that may constitute a breach in academic integrity, please ask me or consult the UTD Policies and Procedures at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>. Please note that UTD subjects students who engage in academic dishonesty to disciplinary penalties including dismissal from the University.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Monday, January 12

Introduction to the course and each other

Wednesday, January 14

Poverty, Discrimination, and Economics

SRG chapter 1

Week 2

Monday, January 19 - MLK DAY – No class

Wednesday, January 21

Poverty, Discrimination, and Economics cont'd.
SRG chapter 7

Week 3

Monday, January 26

Economic Systems
SRG chapter 2

Wednesday, January 28

Government Control of Economic Systems
SRG chapter 3

Review for Quiz 1

Week 4

Monday, February 2

Quiz 1

Wednesday, February 4

No class (Read Ehrenreich for February 9 and work on Short Paper 1)

Week 5

Monday, February 9

Discussion of the Ehrenreich reading
Short Paper 1 due

Wednesday, February 11

Pollution and Public Goods
SRG chapter 4

Week 6

Monday, February 16

Pollution and Public Goods cont'd.

Wednesday, February 18

Economics of Crime
SRG chapter 5

Week 7

Monday, February 23

Monopolies

SRG chapter 8, 9

Wednesday, February 25

Global Competition

SRG chapter 10

Week 8

Monday, March 2

Economic Growth

SRG chapter 11

Daly Reading – on eLearning

Wednesday, March 4

Competition and Growth cont'd - "Naked Economics" reading on eLearning

Week 9

Monday, March 9

Development Economics

Sachs reading on eLearning

Wednesday, March 11

Short Paper 2 due

Paper Discussion and Development Economics cont'd.

Quiz Review

Week 10

Monday, March 16 - Wednesday, March 18

Spring Break – NO CLASS

Week 11

Monday, March 23

Quiz 2

Wednesday, March 25

Money and Banking

SRG chapter 12

Week 12

Monday, March 30

"Mortgage Meltdown" reading on eLearning

Movie: "Inside Job"

Wednesday, April 1

"Inside Job" cont'd. and discussion

Week 13

Monday, April 6

Unemployment and Inflation
SRG chapter 13

Wednesday, April 8

Unemployment and Inflation cont'd
Short Paper 3 due

Week 14

Monday, April 13

Spending and Taxation
SRG chapter 14

Wednesday, April 15

Spending and Taxation cont'd

Week 15

Monday, April 20

Deficits, Budgets, and Debt Ceilings
Readings posted on eLearning

Wednesday, April 22

Social Security and Medicare - Debate
SRG chapter 15

Week 16

Monday, April 27

Putting it all together... macro-economic issues
Course Review

Wednesday, April 29

Final Exam in class

Important dates

January 28	Last day to drop w/o a 'W'	March 23	Quiz 2
February 2	Quiz 1	March 30	Last day to drop the course
February 9	Short Paper 1 due	April 8	Short Paper 3 due
March 11	Short Paper 2 due	April 29	Final Exam
March 16-21	Spring Break		

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.