

SYLLABUS
POLITICAL ECONOMY
ECO 323L First Summer 2020
Unique # 79469

Instructor: Dr. Wayne Hickenbottom

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Office Hours: Sunday 3 -4pm, Tues. 9 – 10am

Textbook

Two required textbooks

Economics of the Public Sector 4th ed. by Joseph Stiglitz and Jay Rosengard. While we will be skipping around and editing quite a bit, we will definitely cover most or all of Chapters 3 – 10, 14, and 17. Parts of other chapters will be covered as well. This book will be used exclusively in the first part of this class and periodically in the second.

Readings in Public Choice Economics, Jac Heckelman editor. This will be the primary text in the second part of the class. Various chapters will be assigned. We will not begin discussing chapters from this book in class until late June.

Overview

Let me start by explaining what this class is not:

1. This is not a class in Public Economics. While the textbook we are using is a common textbook for that class, this class is not meant to be a watered down, writing component version of what our department offers as ECO 321.
2. It is not a class in the government department. It is not a class about the politics of economic issues. It is more a class of economic analysis of issues in the political arena.
3. It is not a class in Macroeconomics. Issues about government policy pertaining to interest rates, unemployment, monetary policy, etc. will not be addressed.

We will be using microeconomic tools to study issues associated with collective decision-making. This will include discussions of the appropriate role for government in a market economy. After this, we will discuss the forces involved in determining and implementing specific policies through a legislative process.

Prerequisites

Some introductory economics class at the college level. I am assuming everyone has taken either some form of Introductory Microeconomics (ECO 304K here at UT) or a 1 semester combined Micro and Macro class (ECO 301 here at UT). However, typically there are a number of students who have taken multiple upper level classes. Those with the minimum pre-requisites must understand that material they may be seeing for the first time will be review material for some of the students in the class.

Obligatory university disclaimors

This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259. Get your accommodation letter to me as soon as you can so we can discuss whatever arrangements you need.

Lectures and schedule

It is my hope that lectures will be recorded on Zoom at 11:30am everyday so you are welcome to watch and participate live. The recordings will be posted and available for viewing shortly after the lectures finish. If there is some reason that the lecture schedule changes, I'll try to notify you in advance. The first item on the Announcement page of Canvas will have informations about readings, content of lectures, etc.

Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on the following work:

6 homeworks - Best 5 will count	25%
Paper	
Rough draft	5%
Final draft	30%
Peer Review	5%
Proposal evaluation	25%
Foe/Ally	5%
Ranking and Evaluation	5%

Note: No exams or final

Homeworks

There will be 6 HW assignments. They will be due June. 8th, 10th, 15th and 17th, July 2nd and 11th.. HW must be turned in **at 11:30am** on that date. On the day HW is due, I will start recording the lecture at the time the HW is due and will go over the HW answers first thing. You will submit the HW through Canvas and the assignment will also close at the time the HW is due so **no late homework assignments will be accepted**. I am **VERY** strict on this point. For all the HW assignments, I suggest you write up the

answers using your favorite editor, then just cut and paste the work into the answer space on Canvas. I will count the best 5 of the 6 HW's for your grade

Paper: Specific policy analysis

Rough draft due June 19th. Final draft June 26th. You will be presented a scenario of a specific change in policy. The paper will ask you to analyse and evaluate multiple questions and issues around this policy change. The size requirement will be somewhere in the 7-12 page range. A portion of your grade for this paper will be based on your rough draft. The rest will be based on the final draft. The specific assignment and grading criteria will be distributed June 10th. Grades on final drafts will be docked 10% for each day late.

Peer Review:

For the paper above, each of you will be assigned the rough draft of another student's paper. You will be graded on the value of the feedback you provide the student. You will receive the rough draft you are evaluating on June 19th and the evaluation will be due June 23rd. If you submit your rough draft late, you will not be able to do a peer review and lose those points.

Assignments associated with being an Economic Consultant.

On Monday June 29th, everyone will be given the outline of a proposed piece of legislation. Then each of you will be assigned a different "client" who will have an interest in that legislation. There will be 3 assignments associated with this information:

1. Proposal evaluation. You will write a 5 – 10 page report to your "client" about how different aspects of the legislation will affect them and your recommendations as an "expert" about how to get the legislation passed, defeated, and/or amended. This assignment is due July 8th at a time to be specified later and is worth 25 points. Shortly after the designated time this is due, you will receive an email from me with that will contain the Proposal Evaluations of 3 other students. They will be used for the next two assignments. If you are late submitting your Proposal Evaluation I will still grade it for full credit, but you will not be able to do the next two assignments and lose all of those points.
2. Foe/Ally. Still acting in your capacity as an economic advisor, you will explain to your client whether the people/groups represented by the 3 Proposal Evaluations you received will be helpful or impediments in your goals about this legislation and how in the legislative process you will deal with that. This will be due at a specified time on Saturday July 11th.
3. Ranking and Evaluation. Now you will return to your roll as a student in this class. Looking at the 3 Proposal Evaluations you have been sent and your own, you will rank these 4 papers from best to worst and provide a some insights as to how you came up with those rankings. This is also due at a specified time on Saturday July 11th.