



## **ECP 3410: Intro to Public Economics**

### **Instructor Information**

- **Name: Ji Gu, PhD**
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- **Office Phone: 305-348-2095**
- **Office Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 1:00-2:30PM at DM 312, or by appointment on Zoom**

### **General Information**

#### **Course Description and Purpose**

This course focuses on the role of the government in the economy. The goal is to understand the reasons for government intervention in the economy, and analyzing the direct and indirect effects of possible government policies. The course covers topics such as externalities, political economy, public goods, social insurance and taxation.

#### **Learning Outcomes and Objectives**

Upon successful completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Explain the basic theories and tools of public economics
- Understand the system of taxation and redistribution
- Understand market failures and externalities
- Understand the government provision of public goods
- Understand how social insurance works

## Expectations of the Course

### *Attendance/Participation*

From my past experience, students who attended classes did well in the end. For that reason, you are expected to attend every lecture. There will be in-class activities that count toward your final grades.

### *Course Communication*

Announcements in this course will be sent via the Canvas Inbox and email. Please check your Canvas Inbox and emails on a regular basis.

### *Course Layout*

We will finish 4 modules. There is a total of 3 exams.

### *Late Work Policy*

No late submissions will be accepted. Please plan on being able to submit with ample time to handle technical glitches.

### *Make-up Policy*

Excused absences include illness, serious family emergencies, military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved. If you miss an exam due to the above reasons, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to schedule a makeup exam.

I reserve the right to ask you to provide valid documentations. Missing excessive days (3 weeks) due to excused absences may lead to failure of the course.

[Course Detail](#)

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Required Textbook

*Public Finance and Public Policy*

Author: Jonathan Gruber

Edition: 7th. Old editions also work.

ISBN-13: 9781319281106

## Homework Assignments

Homework assignments can be accessed through the "Assignments" tab on Canvas course page. Assignments are to be completed and submitted online through Canvas. No late submissions will be accepted. Please plan on being able to submit with ample time to handle technical glitches. I will drop the lowest score to correct for unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from submitting the homework.

## Exams

Exams are not cumulative. Exam 1 covers Module 1 and 2. Exam 2 covers Module 3. Exam 3 covers Module 4. They are to be taken in the classroom.

## In-Class Activities

There will be many in-class activities throughout the semester. They are random. Please bring a blank sheet of paper to write on with you to every lecture. In case you miss a lecture due to unforeseen circumstances, I will drop the lowest two in-class activities.

## Grading

Course Requirements	Weight
Exam 1 (Module 1 and 2)	22%
Exam 2 (Module 3)	22%
Exam 3 (Module 4)	22%

<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Homework Assignments</b>	22%
<b>In-Class Activities</b>	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>
A	89.50 or above	B	79.50 - 83.49	C	64.50 - 69.49
A-	86.50 - 89.49	B-	74.50 - 79.49	D	59.50 - 64.49
B+	83.50 - 86.49	C+	69.50 - 74.49	F	59.49 or less

## Course Calendar

### ***Module 1 Introduction and Background***

*Chapter 1: Why Study Public Finance?*

*Chapter 2: Theoretical Tools of Public Finance*

### ***Module 2 Externalities and Public Goods***

*Chapter 5: Externalities: Problems and Solutions*

*Chapter 7: Public Goods*

*Chapter 9: Political Economy*

***Exam 1 (Module 1 and 2), Wednesday, February 15, classroom, class time***

### **Module 3 Social Insurance and Redistribution**

*Chapter 12: Social Insurance: The New Function of Government*

*Chapter 13: Social Security*

*Chapter 14: Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Workers' Compensation*

*Chapter 15: Health Insurance*

*Chapter 17: Income Distribution and Welfare Programs (if time allows)*

**Exam 2 (Module 3), Wednesday, March 22, classroom, class time**

**Module 4 Taxation in Theory and Practice,**

*Chapter 18: Taxation: How It Works and What It Means*

*Chapter 19: The Equity Implications of Taxation: Tax Incidence*

*Chapter 20: Tax Inefficiencies and Their Implications for Optimal Taxation*

*Chapter 21: Taxes on Labor Supply*

*Chapter 22: Taxes on Savings (if time allows)*

**Exam 3 (Module 4) TBD**

**Key Dates**

January 9, Classes Start

January 16, Martin Luther King Day (No Classes)

January 17, Last Day to Add/Drop

February 27 - March 4, Spring Break (No Classes)

March 20, Last Day to Drop with a DR Grade

April 22, Last Regular Class Day

April 29, End of Term

May 4, Grades Available for Students

## **Academic Misconduct Statement**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## **Classroom Policy**

FIU prides itself as a community of diverse backgrounds: ethnic, racial, religious, cultural, social, political, economic, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ability. The University encourages, supports and appreciates these differences, and discourages all forms of prejudice, bias, bigotry, discrimination, and intimidation in the process of learning.

Disruptive behaviors are prohibited in classroom. They include behaviors that substantially and materially disrupt, disturb, impair, interfere with or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes, and functions of the classroom.

## **Accessibility and Accommodation**

If you have a documented disability and are a client of the FIU Disability Resource Center (DRC), please have the DRC send any pertinent information directly to my FIU email address so any necessary accommodations can be made in a timely fashion. The FIU Disability Resources Center strives to promote student success by working collaboratively with students, faculty and staff to create an inclusive educational environment. The university is committed to advancing students learning and enhancing personal development. Any information provided will be kept confidential. Documentation of your disability will need to be sent to the Disability Resource Center (GC 190).

## **Religious Observance**

Accommodations will be made for students who wish to observe their religious holidays. Please contact me at the beginning of the semester if you need to excuse your absence due to religious holidays.

### **Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with [FIU's Panthers Care website. \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

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