

# Syllabus

## *Course Description*

Course Title	Public Economics
Course Code	27199
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	ECON-03/A
Language	English
Degree Course	Bachelor in Economics, Politics and Ethics
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	<p>Prof. Paolo Roberti,  <a href="mailto:Paolo.Roberti@unibz.it">Paolo.Roberti@unibz.it</a>  <a href="https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/41969">https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/41969</a></p> <p>Prof. Steven Eric Stillman,  <a href="mailto:Steven.Stillman@unibz.it">Steven.Stillman@unibz.it</a>  <a href="https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/36390">https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/36390</a></p>
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2nd
CP	7
Teaching Hours	42 (18 lecture hours Prof. Roberti - 30 lecture hours Prof. Stillman)
Lab Hours	21
Individual Study Hours	-
Planned Office Hours	21 (6 office hours Prof. Roberti - 15 office hours Prof. Stillman)
Contents Summary	<p>The course gives a general overview of public economics including topics related to government provision of education, social insurance, pensions, unemployment, disability and injury insurance, health care and welfare programs. It also discusses theories of optimal taxation, externalities, public goods and political economy. Students will develop the capacity to understand economic, social, cultural, and policy issues related to the public</p>

	economics. They will learn about how to apply economic concepts in the field and how to relate their knowledge to real world economic issues.
<b>Course Topics</b>	<p>Prof. Roberti</p> <p>Introduction to Public Economics</p> <p>Theoretical Tools in Public Economics</p> <p>Public Goods and their Provision</p> <p>Externality Problems</p> <p>Externalities: Problems and Solutions</p> <p>Prof. Stillman</p> <p>Cost Benefit Analysis</p> <p>Empirical Tools in Public Economics</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Social Insurance</p> <p>Social Security</p> <p>Unemployment, Disability and Injury Insurance</p> <p>Income Distribution and Welfare Programs</p> <p>Taxation and Tax Incidence</p> <p>Taxes on Labor Supply / Savings</p> <p>Taxes on Wealth / Consumption</p> <p>Taxes on Businesses</p> <p>Political Economy</p>
<b>Keywords</b>	externalities, taxation, cost-benefit analysis, public goods
<b>Recommended Prerequisites</b>	
<b>Propaedeutic Courses</b>	Previous attendance of an introductory course in microeconomics is strongly suggested, to properly follow the lectures.
<b>Teaching Format</b>	lectures and exercises
<b>Mandatory Attendance</b>	Highly Recommended, but not required.
<b>Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>ILO (Intended Learning Outcomes)</p> <p>ILO 1 Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>ILO 1.1 ability to understand the role of governments in market economies;</p> <p>ILO 1.2 ability to understand complex economic texts in the three teaching languages;</p>

	<p>ILO 2 Applying knowledge and understanding:</p> <p>ILO 2.1 ability to assess the appropriateness of monetary and fiscal policies with respect to macroeconomic variables;</p> <p>ILO 2.2 ability to interact with native speakers in a fluent and spontaneous manner on economic topics;</p> <p>ILO 2.3 ability to produce texts on topics of scientific interest;</p> <p>ILO 2.4 ability to understand the role of the state in relation to different political-economic issues and to weigh up possible solutions in the political-economic field;</p> <p>ILO 2.5 ability to establish goals, objectives, expectations and decisions in public administration;</p> <p>ILO 2.6 ability to apply economic models to real problems that require or result from government intervention (political/market failure)</p> <p>ILO 3 Making judgements</p> <p>ILO 3.1 Acquisition of the capacity for judgement and methodological tools useful for the critical analysis of data, sources, assumptions and implications of scientific practice, the political, ethical and legal context within which economic phenomena are embedded and with which they interact</p> <p>ILO 4 Communication skills</p> <p>ILO 4.1 Fluency (oral and written) in Italian, German and English, including translation between these languages. Intercultural competence. Conceptual awareness, synthesis and written expression, particularly in the drafting of scientific or science-based documents</p> <p>ILO 5 Learning skills</p> <p>ILO 5.1 Promotion of critical thinking and analytical skills to focus on complex problems in their long-term dynamics and the variety of their implications, including ethical ones</p>
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	

<b>Assessment</b>	<p>A voluntary midterm and mandatory final exam, both written (ILO 1, ILO 2.1), as well as a mandatory writing assignment (ILOs 2.3-2.6) and presentation (ILOs 2.2, 3, 4, 5). Non-attendees are allowed to take the midterm exam and are encouraged to do the presentation. The midterm grade can be rejected in which case the student will take a longer final exam covering all of the material in the course.</p> <p>For attending students, the course project is done in groups of 2 students and it includes a written project report (about 10 pages) and short 10-minute presentation of the main ideas developed.</p> <p>Non-attending students can do a course project in groups of 2 students if they prefer but must sign-up when this is offered, i.e. agree on a topic with the instructors at the least 2 months before the exam that they wish to take. Non-attending students can also do instead so a written 10-page project on their own.</p> <p>For the exams neither textbooks, nor other teaching materials, nor any electronic devices are allowed in the examination room. Dictionaries without notes and simple calculators are permitted.</p>
<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<p>The final grade will be a weighted average of the writing assignment (25%), presentation (5%), midterm exam (35%) and final exam (35%). Students that do not take the midterm or reject their midterm grade will be given a longer final that will count for 70% of the final grade. For non-attending students who choose not to do the presentation, the writing assignment will count for 30% of the final grade.</p> <p>The textbook, "Public Economics" by Jonathan Gruber, additional reading materials made available to the class and the in-class slides of the instructors will form the basis for the material covered in the exams and will be made available to the students online.</p> <p>Relevant for assessing the written exam is the clarity of answers, mastery of the teaching language, and the ability to summarize, evaluate, and establish relationships between topics and to solve formal problems. Relevant for assessing the course project is the ability to work on a specified topic, creativity, critical thinking, ability to structure and summarize ideas in your own words, teamwork and an effective presentation.</p>

<b>Required Readings</b>	Gruber, J. 2013. Public Finance and Public Policy. 4th Edition. Worth Publishers. Older editions of the book are also OK.
<b>Supplementary Readings</b>	
<b>Further Information</b>	
<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Good health and well-being, Gender equality, Responsible consumption and production, Sustainable cities and communities, Reduced inequalities