

# Syllabus

## *Course Description*

<b>Course Title</b>	Public Economics
<b>Course Code</b>	27199
<b>Course Title Additional</b>	
<b>Scientific-Disciplinary Sector</b>	ECON-03/A
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Degree Course</b>	Bachelor in Economics, Politics and Ethics
<b>Other Degree Courses (Loaned)</b>	
<b>Lecturers</b>	Prof. Paolo Roberti, Paolo.Roberti@unibz.it <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> Prof. Steven Eric Stillman, Steven.Stillman@unibz.it <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>
<b>Teaching Assistant</b>	
<b>Semester</b>	First semester
<b>Course Year/s</b>	2nd
<b>CP</b>	7
<b>Teaching Hours</b>	42 (18 lecture hours Prof. Roberti - 30 lecture hours Prof. Stillman)
<b>Lab Hours</b>	21
<b>Individual Study Hours</b>	-
<b>Planned Office Hours</b>	21 (6 office hours Prof. Roberti - 15 office hours Prof. Stillman)
<b>Contents Summary</b>	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

	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>Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>By the end of the training course, students will have acquired the following knowledge and understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysis of the demand and supply of goods and services;</li> <li>- ability to understand the price mechanism in market economies;</li> <li>- ability to apply the concepts of game theory to the economic behaviour of public and private actors;</li> <li>- ability to understand the role of governments in market economies;</li> </ul>

- ability to analyse the behaviour of economic variables in the short, medium and long run;
- ability to historically contextualise economic thinking and to assess the role of technology and social change on the evolution of economic thinking;
- ability to understand complex economic texts in the three languages of instruction;
- 8. ability to analyse human behaviour in the field of economics;
- ability to analyse human behaviour in organisations
- ability to understand organisational decision-making theories;
- ability to understand how political choices are formulated and how these decisions affect the economy;
- recognising and understanding the conditions that are necessary for sustainable economic development taking into consideration the environment and natural resources;
- understanding of the reasons for economic growth and development of countries;
- understanding of the basic principles of functioning of labour markets;
- estimation and interpretation of econometric models for the empirical analysis of the above problems.

#### Applying knowledge and understanding:

- ability to assess the adequacy of monetary and fiscal policies in relation to macroeconomic variables;
- ability to interact fluently and spontaneously with native speakers on economic topics;
- ability to understand the role of the state in relation to different political and economic issues and to consider possible solutions in the political and economic sphere;
- ability to establish goals, objectives, expectations and decisions in public administrations;
- ability to apply economic models to real-world problems that require or result from government intervention (policy/market failure).

#### Autonomy of judgement

Acquisition of the capacity for judgement and of the methodological tools useful for the critical analysis of data, sources, assumptions and implications of scientific practice, of the

	<p>political, ethical and legal context within which economic phenomena are set and with which they interact</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Fluency (oral and written) in Italian, German and English, including translation between these languages. Intercultural competence. Conceptual awareness, synthesis and written expression, in particular in the drafting of scientific or scientifically based documents</p> <p>Learning skills</p> <p>Promotion of critical thinking and analytical skills to focus on complex problems in their long-term dynamics and in the variety of their implications, including ethical ones</p>
<b>Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)</b>	
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>A voluntary midterm and mandatory final exam, both written, as well as a mandatory writing assignment and presentation. 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</p>

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