

PUBLIC FINANCE—REVENUE  
ECONOMICS 2160A-001  
Department of Economics  
Western University

**September 2018**

**Instructor:** E. Rivers  
**Office:** 4080 SSC  
**Phone:** (519) 661-2111 ext. 85276  
**E-mail:** [erivers5@uwo.ca](mailto:erivers5@uwo.ca)  
**Office Hours:** Monday, Tuesday 1:45-2:45PM  
**Class location:** UCC 56  
**Class times:** Monday, 12:30-1:30PM  
Wednesday, 12:30-2:30PM  
**Undergraduate inquiries:** 519-661-3507 SSC Room 4075 or [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca)

**Registration:**

You are responsible for ensuring you are registered in the correct courses. If you are not registered in this course, the Department will not release any of your marks until your registration is corrected. You may check your timetable by using the Login on the Student Services website at <https://student.uwo.ca>. If you notice a problem, please contact your home Faculty Academic Counsellor immediately.

**Prerequisite Note:**

The prerequisites for this course are Economics 1021A/B and 1022A/B; or Economics 2001A/B. The antirequisite for this course is Economics 3329A/B.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites, and that you have not taken any anti-requisite courses. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for appeal. If you are found to be ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed.

If you find that you do not have the course prerequisites, it is in your best interest to drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. Your prompt attention to this matter will not only help protect your academic record, but will ensure that spaces become available for students who require the course in question for graduation.

## Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the theory of taxation and its application. The economic effects of various federal, provincial, and municipal taxes will be studied in a Canadian context.

## Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- identify and explain economic concepts and theories related to basic welfare economics and the role of government.
- combine theoretical knowledge with information about the taxes levied by various levels of government in Canada in order to develop a good understanding of how taxes affect the Canadian economy.
- evaluate the effects of various taxes on the efficiency of the Canadian economy as well as on income distribution.

## Textbook and Course Materials:

Required Textbook: Rosen, Harvey S., Jean-Francois Wen and Tracy Snoddon (2016), *Public Finance in Canada*, 5th Canadian edition, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Toronto.

## Grading (dates tentative):

Midterm 1	Wednesday, October 17 during class time	25%
Midterm 2	Wednesday, November 14 during class time	25%
Final Exam	To be scheduled by the registrar	50%

Exam weight adjustment: Five percentage points will be moved from your exam with the lowest mark to your exam with the highest mark. For example, if you earn your lowest mark on Midterm 2 and your highest mark on the Final Exam, your course mark would be computed as 25% Midterm 1, 20% Midterm 2, 55% Final Exam.

You are required to bring the following to all exams:

- Current UWO student ID
- Pencil
- Non-graphing, non-programmable, non-financial calculator out of its case

*Note:* Cell phones, graphing calculators, programmable calculators, financial calculators, tablets, laptops, or other electronic or Internet-capable devices are not allowed during exams. Any such devices found at a student's desk or on a student's person during an exam or quiz will be viewed as an attempt to cheat and a mark of zero will be assigned for that exam or quiz and academic offense procedures will ensue.

*Note:* Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **Policy Regarding Missed Exams:**

There will be no make-up midterms. Accommodation for missing a midterm exam will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with an exam date, it is your responsibility to discuss it with me within one week of the announcement of the exam date and provide documentation of the conflict. If you miss a midterm due to illness or other unforeseen reason, you must email me and provide documentation of the reason for missing the exam to your Academic Counsellor within 24 hours of the regularly scheduled exam. If you miss a midterm due to illness, I strongly urge you to visit a doctor on the day of the missed exam to obtain documentation of your illness. If your Academic Counsellor and I agree that your reason for missing the exam is legitimate and supported by your documentation, the weight of the missed midterm will be reallocated to the remaining assessments.

Students who miss the Final Exam will be required to write a make-up final exam. Students who miss the Final Exam should follow the notification and documentation rules that apply to missed midterms. See above. Additional documentation or notification procedures for missed final exams may be required by your Academic Counsellor. Therefore, please contact your Academic Counsellor as soon as possible regarding a missed Final Exam. Additional important details on the Department's policy regarding make-up exams are provided on the last page of the syllabus.

### **Tentative Course Topics:**

#### I. Introduction (Ch. 1-3)

- Terms and Definitions
- Expenditures and Revenues in Canada
- Desirable Characteristics of a Taxation System
- Fundamentals of Welfare Economics

#### II. Taxation and Income Distribution (Ch. 14)

#### III. Efficiency and Equity of Taxation (Ch. 15-16)

#### IV. The Personal Income Tax and Its Impact on Behaviour (Ch. 17-18)

#### V. Sales and Excise Taxes (Ch. 19)

#### VI. Wealth and Property Taxes (Ch. 20) – *Time permitting*

#### VII. Corporate Taxes (Ch. 21) – *Time permitting*

*Note:* Any changes to this schedule will be provided in class. Some chapters may not be covered in their entirety.

## **Other Course and Classroom Policies:**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend lectures and tutorials regularly, and will be held responsible for all material and all announcements provided in class. Important announcements, such as times and locations of exams, will also be provided under the Announcements section of the course website (OWL).

**Participation:** I encourage you to participate and ask questions in class. Class discussion is a very useful component of learning, keeps class lively and interesting for all of us, and helps me identify topics that I should go over in more detail (at that time or as we prepare for exams).

**Laptops:** You may use a laptop in class to take notes until the first time you are found to be doing something other than taking notes on it.

**Cell Phones:** Please turn off your cell phones and other communication devices before entering the classroom.

**Video/Photography:** Video recording and photography during class is not permitted, as it may violate the privacy of others in the classroom.

**Emails:** According to FIPPA, I am not allowed to respond to non-UWO email addresses. So please use your UWO email address in all communications. Also, please enter the course number in the subject heading of your email. I will try to respond to all emails within 48 hours, not counting the weekend. I will NOT respond to emails such as the following:

- 1) Any question that is on this syllabus or elsewhere on the course website: such as exam dates, exam times, course material etc. If you have not received a reply to your question, check the syllabus and the course website.
- 2) Requests for extra assignments, reweighting of exams, assignments etc. as these are prohibited under Senate regulations.
- 3) Requests for my lecture notes. I do not provide my lecture notes to students, other than the material which is on the course website.

**Please Note**  
**Department Policies for 2018-2019**

Remember that the University expects all students to take responsibility for their own Academic Programs. Students should also check their registration to ensure they are enrolled in the correct courses.

1. Guidelines and policies for the Faculty of Social Science and the Department of Economics are posted online in the current Western Academic Calendar at:  
<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca>.
2. Students must familiarize themselves with the “Rules of Conduct for Examinations”  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/administration.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/administration.pdf).
3. **Cheating as an academic offence:** Students are responsible for understanding what it means to “cheat”. The Department of Economics treats cheating incidents very seriously and will investigate any suspect behavior. Students found guilty will incur penalties that could include a failing grade or being barred from future registration in other Economics courses or programs. The University may impose further penalties such as a notation on an official academic transcript, suspension or expulsion.
4. **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. When taking an idea/passage from another author, it must be acknowledged with quotation marks where appropriate and referenced with footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is an academic offence (see Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Western Calendar at [http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)).

Western University uses software to check for plagiarism and students may be required to electronically submit their work. Those found guilty will be penalized as noted in point 3.

5. It is a Department of Economics policy that **NO** assignments be dated, stamped or accepted by staff. Students must submit assignments in class or to the instructor during office hours.
6. When appealing a mark, students should refer to the Student Academic Appeals section in the current Western Academic Calendar at:  
[http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14).

Please note the relevant deadlines.

The Department will not consider an appeal unless an attempt has been made to settle the matter with the instructor first. Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome may proceed with a written appeal (e-mails are not acceptable) to the Undergraduate Director in Economics, stating the reasons for their appeal. A checklist is provided at:  
[http://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_counselling/responsibilities\\_policies.html#appeals](http://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_counselling/responsibilities_policies.html#appeals).

7. Systematic adjustments of a class grade distribution (either up or down) can occur in Economics courses. The fact that grades have been adjusted is **not** grounds for an appeal.

8. Note the following add and drop deadlines:

Deadline to add a first term half course:

**Friday September 14, 2018**

Deadline to drop a first term half course:

**Monday November 12, 2018**

9. Faculty of Social Science policy states that oversleeping or misreading an exam schedule is NOT grounds for a makeup. This rule applies to midterm and final exams in the Department of Economics.

### **Policy Regarding Makeup Tests and Final Examinations**

*Academic accommodation will **not** be granted automatically on request. Students **must** demonstrate by documentation that there are **compelling** medical or compassionate grounds before academic accommodation will be considered.*

Students who proceed to write a test or examination must be prepared to accept the mark. Rewriting tests or examinations, or having their value reweighted on a retroactive basis, is **not** permitted. Students must also book travel arrangements AFTER final exam dates have been posted as they must not conflict with test or final exams.

Unless medically incapable of doing so, students must notify their instructor prior to the test date or at least within **24 hours** when requesting a makeup exam. Failure to follow this procedure may result in denial of academic accommodation and a grade of zero. Students should also set up an appointment as soon as possible to meet with their instructor. If the instructor is not available, send an email message, copying the Undergraduate Coordinator at [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca). **Notifying instructors of a missed exam does not automatically entitle students to a makeup.**

Students who seek a makeup exam must also provide supporting medical or other relevant documentation that their absence from a scheduled test or exam is beyond their control. Documentation should be submitted to the Academic Counselling Office of the student's *home* Faculty **as soon as possible (preferably within 24 hours of the scheduled test)**. Failure to follow this procedure may result in denial of academic accommodation and a grade of zero. If the documentation submitted is not acceptable, students will receive a zero for the missed test.

For personal illness, students may consult Student Health Services and request a Student Medical Certificate from the physician. If assessed by an off-campus doctor, students must obtain a certificate from his/her office at the time of the visit. The off-campus medical certificate form must also be used and can be found at:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

Notes stating "For Medical Reasons" are not considered sufficient.

For religious or compassionate circumstances, students should ask their Academic Counsellor what documentation to provide. If documentation is judged sufficient, the Academic Counsellor will issue a Recommendation for a Special Examination (a single form for

midterms or a triple-color form for final exams). Once students have this form, they must contact their instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements. Even if approved by their Academic Counsellor, there is no guarantee that students will be allowed to write the makeup test/exam.

For final examinations, students need to seek permission from their *home* Faculty Counsellor, Instructor, and the Department Undergraduate Director. Failure to follow this procedure may result in a grade of zero. Students must ensure that the Special Examination form has been signed by the Instructor and Department Undergraduate Director and that the form is returned to the Academic Counselling Office for approval without delay. If approved, makeup examinations will be written within one month of the end of the exam period.

### **Policies Regarding Academic Accommodation**

The Faculty of Social Science's policies regarding academic accommodation is found at [http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having\\_problems/index.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having_problems/index.html).

"Academic Rights and Responsibilities" are also outlined in the Western Calendar at <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>. Claiming that "you didn't know what to do" is not an acceptable excuse for not following the stated procedures.

### **Policy Regarding Class Attendance**

If the instructor deems a student's class attendance as unsatisfactory, that student may be prohibited from writing the final examination. If there is intent to make use of this University policy, the student will be notified in writing.

### **Statement on Mental Health and Support Services**

Students under emotional/mental distress should visit [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for more information and a complete list of resources on how to obtain help.