

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

September 2019

General Information:

Instructor: E. Rivers
Office: 4080 SSC
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E-mail: erivers5@uwo.ca
Office Hours: Mondays, 10:30-11:30AM and 1:30-2:30PM

Class location: UCC 56
Class times: Monday, 12:30-1:30PM
Wednesday, 12:30-2:30PM

Undergraduate inquiries: 519-661-3507 or SSC Room 4075 or 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:

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

Course Website: <http://owl.uwo.ca>

Grading (dates tentative):

Midterm 1	Wednesday, October 9 during class time	25%
Midterm 2	Wednesday, November 13 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.

Accommodation for Missed Exams:

There will be no make-up midterms exams. Students with an approved absence from a midterm exam will have the weight of the missed midterm exam reallocated to the remaining assessments. Students who miss the final exam will be required to write a make-up final exam. Please see pp. 6-7 of this syllabus for Western University's procedures governing requests for accommodation for a missed exam.

Topics Covered and Readings:

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.

Copyright:

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. Students may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational purposes. Students may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without written consent.

Please Note Department Policies for 2019-2020

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.
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).

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
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.

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 <u>add</u> a first term half course:	Wednesday September 13, 2019
Deadline to <u>drop</u> a first term half course:	Tuesday November 12, 2019
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 on Tests, Final Exams and on Missed Academic Responsibilities

Students who proceed to write a test or examination must be prepared to accept the mark. Rewriting tests or examinations, or retroactive reweighting of marks, is **not** permitted. Students must book travel arrangements AFTER final exam dates have been posted; travel is not an acceptable excuse for absence from a final exam.

Students who are temporarily unable to meet academic requirements due to extenuating circumstances can follow Western University procedures to request academic consideration through the following routes:

- a) Submit a Self-Reported Absence form if the conditions for submission are met (e.g., only for exams or assessments worth 30% or less of the course mark; not applicable to final exams; maximum 2 self-reported absences per academic year; see [link](#) for full list of conditions and info).

If the conditions for submission of a Self-Reported Absence form are not met, then:

- b) For medical absences, submit a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner along with a request for academic consideration to Academic Counselling in the student's home Faculty (see [link](#) for full info) ; or
- c) For non-medical absences (e.g., religious or compassionate), submit appropriate documentation to Academic Counselling in the student's home Faculty (see [link](#) for full info).

It is strongly recommended that students notify their instructors as soon as possible. University policy is that students **must** communicate with their instructors no later than **24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence. Failure to follow University policy and procedures may result in denial of academic accommodation and a grade of zero. Students should also set up an appointment to meet with their instructor as soon as possible. If the instructor is not available, send an email message, copying the Undergraduate Coordinator at econugrd@uwo.ca.

Note: Academic consideration is not normally intended for long-term, recurring absences, an existing disability, or high levels of stress related to academic performance. In such cases, students should consult their academic counsellor. See [link](#) for full information. In all cases, if the documentation submitted to request academic consideration is not acceptable, students will receive a grade of zero for the missed test, exam, or assignment.

For full information about Western University’s policies and procedures for student absences and requests for academic consideration, please visit this [link](#).

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. “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/ for more information and a complete list of resources on how to obtain help.