![CU School of Public Affairs — UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER]

PUAD 5004: Economics and Public Finance
Fall 2021 Course Syllabus

Instructor Name: Jongeun You
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Office Hours: Mondays 9-10 pm (MT), Thursdays 10-11 am (MT), or by appointment
Class Days/Times: Online

COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome!
This course will provide you with knowledge and tools of public finance that will give you a competitive advantage in achieving your professional goals in the public or nonprofit sector.

University Course Catalog Description
Evaluates the role of government with respect to provision and financing of public goods. Explores five broad topics: 1) welfare & microeconomics 2) expenditure theory 3) resource mobilization (emphasis on taxation) 4) fiscal federalism 5) basic budgeting & analytical tools.

Course Overview
The approach in this course is straightforward to help students build a conversational competency in public finance within a short time period. For eight of the 15 weeks (Section 1), students will read assigned book chapters, watch lecture videos, and submit assignments on what they learned in a given week. For the other seven weeks of the semester (Section 2), students are empowered as researchers and advocates through the use of data to create more equitable communities. This course is in partnership with the Data to Policy (D2P) Project, an initiative to engage students with the needs of their community through data-driven policy proposals for local governments and agencies. Students can learn more about D2P at https://library.auraria.edu/d2pproject.

Teaching Philosophy
Given my background in economics and applied industry experience, I emphasize the real-world applicability of concepts that are covered in this course. Additionally, I present the mechanisms of public finance in a way that is digestible for students who are currently in service or wish to pursue a public or nonprofit career. In teaching this course, I aim to demonstrate, step-by-step, the objective foundations of public finance policy. In addition, I strive to be responsive and supportive of students by providing personalized feedback in a timely manner.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course correspond to the School of Public Affair's MPA Program Competencies as follows:

Learning objective / Target competency	Course activities
To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions	Students will learn to interpret government finance statistics, tables, and figures.
To articulate and apply a public service perspective	Students will understand public finance policies and practices that advance the four pillars of public administration (efficiency, economy, effectiveness, and social equity).
To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	Students will be able to select appropriate financial data and delivery methods to support their opinions.

Course Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites for the course. However, it is recommended that students have a good command of college algebra and arithmetic.

Course Credits

Three (3) credits

Required Textbook

Gruber, Jonathan (2019). *Public Finance and Public Policy* (6th ed.). Worth Publishers.

Supplementary Materials

Lecture slides, assignments, and supplementary readings are available in Canvas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Section 1 (Book Weeks)

Each Monday at 9 am (MT), lecture videos (about 20 minutes x 2 lectures), lecture slides, and assignments will be posted on Canvas. During the book weeks, students need to read two chapters per week and then watch the lectures. Assignments must be submitted by Sunday at 11:59 pm (MT).

Section 2 (D2P Weeks)

Each Monday at 9 am (MT), a recorded lecture (about 20 minutes) and supplementary readings will be posted on Canvas. Assignments are required to complete by each due date at 11:59 pm (MT). Policy memo templates and the D2P presentation format will be provided. Students are highly encouraged to present their D2P presentation slides at the D2P symposium, which will be held on Dec 3.

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignments
Aug 23	PART I Introduction and Background 1) Why Study Public Finance? 4) Budget Analysis and Deficit Financing	Ch. 1, 4 (pp. 1-24, 89-117)	Introduction video (by Aug 29)

Aug 30	2) Theoretical Tools of Public Finance 3) Empirical Tools of Public Finance	Ch. 2-3 (pp. 25-88)	Introductory homework (by Sep 5)
Sep 6	D2P Week 1. How to identify community's public finance issues?		Post two issues (by 9); Comment on two other students' posts (by 12)
Sep 13	PART II Externalities and Public Goods 8) Cost-Benefit Analysis 9) Political Economy	Ch. 8-9 (pp. 215-272)	Homework 1 (by Sep 19)
Sep 20	10) State and Local Government Expenditures PART III Social Insurance and Redistribution 12) Social Insurance: The New Function of Government	Ch. 10, 12 (pp. 273-302, 335-364)	Homework 2 (by Sep 26)
Sep 27	D2P Week 2. How to collect data and propose solutions to the issues?		One-page policy memo (by Oct 3)
Oct 4	14) Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Workers' Compensation 16) Health Insurance II: Medicare, Medicaid, and Health Care Reform	Ch. 14, 16 (pp. 401-431, 471-509)	Homework 3 (by Oct 10)
Oct 11	PART IV Taxation in Theory and Practice 18) Taxation: How It Works and What It Means 19) The Equity Implications of Taxation: Tax Incidence	Ch. 18-19 (pp. 551-616)	Homework 4 (by Oct 17)
Oct 18	21) Taxes on Labor Supply 23) Taxes on Risk Taking and Wealth	Ch. 21, 23 (pp. 655-279, 711-737)	Homework 5 (by Oct 24)
Oct 25	24) Taxation of Business Income 25) Fundamental Tax Reform and Consumption Taxation	Ch. 24-25 (pp. 739-806)	Midterm exam (by Nov 7)
Nov 8	D2P Week 3. How to propose solutions to the community's public finance issues?		Two-page policy memo (by Nov 14)
Nov 15	D2P Week 4. How to design a presentation?		D2P presentation slide (by Nov 21)
(Nov 22-28, Fall Break)			
Nov 29	D2P Week 5. Attend the D2P symposium (Dec 3, in-person or virtually)		Post reflections on the symposium (by Dec 5)
Dec 6	D2P Week 6. How to communicate to the policymakers and the public?		5-minute presentation recording (by Dec 12)
Dec 13	Final week		Three-page final policy memo (by Dec 17)

COURSE EVALUATION

Assignments

<u>Section 1 (Book Weeks):</u> Homework sets (10 problems each) and Midterm exam (20 problems) comprise multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Homework problems will be drawn from the assigned chapters each week. Midterm exam problems will cover the chapters from eight book weeks. All assignments must be submitted electronically directly through Canvas in a Word document. Assignments turned in late will not be accepted.

<u>Section 2 (D2P Weeks):</u> Students need to suggest a public finance policy proposal through a data-based policy memo. A policy memo is a practical, professionally written document that provides analysis and recommendations directed to a predetermined audience, which is local governments and agencies in this course. Moving along each week, students will explore public finance issues in any topic and location of their choosing that satisfies the mission of using public data for public good. Students can learn about previous D2P works at https://library.auraria.edu/d2pproject/gallery.

The Basis for Final Grade

<u>Section 1 (Book Weeks, 60 points):</u> The introduction video and introductory homework will be graded but do not count toward the final grade. 10 points are possible for each homework set (in total, 50 points), and 10 points are possible for the Midterm exam.

<u>Section 2 (D2P Weeks, 40 points):</u> The one-page policy memo, and reflections on the symposium will be graded but do not count toward the final grade. The two-page policy memo, one-page D2P presentation slide, 5-minute presentation recording, and three-page final policy memo will be possible for 10 points each.

The points earned are used to determine the letter grade according to the scale: 100-94 = A; 93-90 = A-; 89-87 = B+; 86-83 = B; 82-80 = B-; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 or less = F.

Grade Dissemination

Graded assignments will be returned through Canvas within three days of the submission deadline. Students can access their scores from Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Students do not get points for attendance but are strongly recommended to log into Canvas every week.

Late Work Policy

Assignments turned in late will not be accepted. However, the late work policy may be waived for students in extreme circumstances with advance notification and the instructor's approval.

Policy on Incomplete Grades

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only when unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course; students have up to one year (three semesters) to complete course requirements. Incomplete work must be finished within the time allowed, or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on the transcript.

Group Work Policy

There are no group assignments in this course. Students can work on assignments together, but each student needs to submit one's own assignment. Submission implies the student is solely responsible for the assignment quality.

Technology and Media

Canvas notifications and university emails will be the primary form of communication. All assignments must be submitted electronically directly through Canvas.

Student Expectations Civility

My commitment is to create a climate for learning characterized by respect for each other and each person's contributions to the course. I ask that students make a similar commitment.

Diversity and Inclusion

You belong here regardless of who you are, where you are from, and any characteristics others might use to define you. As the instructor for this course, I will try hard to ensure you and your classmates feel welcome and valued.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Disability Access

CU Denver is committed to providing reasonable accommodation and access to programs and services to persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who want academic accommodations must register with Disability Resources and Services (DRS). Students can learn more about DRS at https://www.ucdenver.edu/offices/disability-resources-and-services or by calling 303-315-3510.

Academic Integrity

As members of the CU Denver academic community, faculty, staff, and students accept the responsibility to maintain the highest standards of intellectual honesty and ethical conduct in all forms of academic work. Students are expected to know, understand, and comply with the ethical standards of the university, including rules against plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submissions, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Students can learn CU Denver Honor Code at https://www.ucdenver.edu/student/health-wellness/student-conduct/academic-integrity.

Nondiscrimination and Sexual Misconduct
CU Denver is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. University policy and Title IX prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, creed, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, political philosophy, or political affiliation in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. Students can learn CU Denver Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence, & Stalking Policy at https://www1.ucdenver.edu/offices/equity/university-policies-procedures/sexual-misconduct-intimate-partner-violence-stalking.

CU Denver Student and Community Counseling Center
Students feeling overwhelmed or experiencing life stressors that interfere with academic or personal success are encouraged to seek counseling. CU Denver Student and Community Counseling Center provides confidential mental health services to help students manage challenges that impact emotional or academic wellbeing. Students can learn more about the Center at http://www.ucdenver.edu/counseling-center or by calling 303-315-7270.

Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE)
The CARE Team helps students navigate a wide variety of life's challenges. If students face challenges or know someone who is, they are encouraged to submit a concern to the CARE Team. Students can learn more about the CARE at https://www.ucdenver.edu/student/health-wellness/care-team or by calling 303-315-7306.

Auraria Library
The Auraria Library possesses a wealth of pertinent information, including databases to search for the final policy memo. Students can book a Research Consultation Appointment at https://auraria-libcal-com.aurarialibrary.idm.oclc.org/appointments. In addition, students can request Dr. Diane Fritz, the library's student liaison for the D2P Project, for the research consultation. See the D2P website's Contact information at
https://library.auraria.edu/d2pproject/contact-us.

Writing Center
If students need assistance with written works, make an appointment (SPA ONLY Online Dropbox and/or Graduate Drop Box) at https://ucdenver.mywconline.com.

Academic Calendar
Fall 2021 semester begins on August 23, 2021, and ends on December 18, 2021:
https://www.ucdenver.edu/student/registration-planning/academic-calendars/fall-2021.