

Public Finance Syllabus

Department of Economics

ECON 3345 Summer 2025

Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.

Course Instructor(s)

Name	Email	Office Hours
Jean-Philippe Bourgeois	Jp.bourgeois@dal.ca	Before class by appointment, Econ A13

Course Description

The course will focus on expenditure decisions (including health care, education, employment insurance, social assistance, and public pensions) and the federal-provincial dimension of the public sector in Canada. It will also cover basic public finance theory and related microeconomics.

Course Prerequisites

Intermediate Microeconomics. Econ 2200 or equivalent with a minimum C grade

Course Exclusions

None

Student Resources

[Onenote](#)

Course Structure

Course Delivery

[In person](#)

Lectures

[T/R 13h35 - 15h55 , LSC C332](#)

Course Materials

[Rosen, H., F Wen, and T Snoddon, \(2016\), Public Finance in Canada \(5th Ed\), Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson For purchase in the bookstore](#)

Assessment

Assignments

quizzes

- 4 quizzes will be given during the course. 1 quiz for each of the first 3 broad topics.
- 15% each, I take best 3 out of 4.
- No makeup quiz

Final

- Similar to the quizzes except that It focuses more on synthesizing the material learned and being able to link concepts together.
- 2hour examination

Presentation

- students will present a social program to the class In the form of a poster or up to 20 minute presentation.

Component	weight (%)	Date
Final	25%	19 June in class
Presentation	30%	See schedule
Quizzes (best 3 out of 4)	45% (15% each)	See schedule

Other course requirements

[Attendance Is mandatory](#)

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the

[Dalhousie Grade Scale](#)

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

Course Policies on Missed or Late Academic Requirements

No make up quiz, final exam, final paper or presentation.

presentation is mandatory

presentations are done individually (possibly in groups)

Course Policies related to Academic Integrity

Examinations and presentations are individual work. final paper is to be your own work.

Learning Objectives

- Students will attain, through lectures, readings and problem sets, knowledge of the building blocks of economic analysis in public finance.
- Students will develop, through lectures, readings and problem sets, some tools to analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
- Problem sets and exams will enable students to apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving and technical proficiency in economics.
- This course will introduce students to expenditure decisions in Canada related to health care, education, employment insurance, social assistance, and public pensions.

Course Content

	Date	topic	chapters	Due dates
Taxation history and Federalism	6 may	Introduction and taxes	Ch. 1 Ch. 17-19-20-21	
	8 may	Fiscal federalism Fed/Prov/Muni responsibilities	Ch. 8	
	13 may	History (Canadian taxation)	Notes	

	15 May	Presenter – Andy Filmore - Mayor		
theory	20 may	Welfare Economics	Ch 2	Quiz 1
	22 may	Public Goods	Ch 4	
	27 may	Externalities	Ch 5	quiz 2
	29 may	Public Choices	Ch 7	
Shortcomings/ issues	3 June	Income and wealth redistribution	Ch 6	Quiz 3
	5 June	Burden of taxation	Ch 14,15	
Programs	10 June	Presenter – Michel Collette – CSAP/Education		Quiz 4
	12 June	Presentations – social programs		
	17 June	Presentations - social programs		
	19 June	Final	cumulative	

University Policies and Statements

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or elders@dal.ca. Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre (https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Fair Dealing Policy

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html

Originality Checking Software

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about/leadership-governance/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/ouriginal-plagiarism-detection.html>

Student Use of Course Materials

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.