Faculty of Science Course Syllabus
Department of Economics
Econ 3345: Public Finance
Fall 2021

Instructor: Casey Warman
E-mail: warmanc.dal.3345@gmail.com (please use your @dal.ca address when emailing me, I will only respond to @dal.ca addresses.)

Lectures: The class will be a mix of in person and distance learning. The course content will be available on Dalhousie’s Brightspace.

Office location: 6214 University Avenue, Room A14 ... Online for now....

Office hours: TBA. I will use Microsoft Teams or Zoom for office hours at the beginning of the semester and then hopefully transition to in person office hours.

Course Description
The course will focus on expenditure decisions (including fiscal debts, 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 Exclusion
None

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.

At the end of the course, students should:
• Have a general understanding of Canada’s governmental structure.
• Be able to understand the fundamentals of welfare economics and cost-benefit analysis.
• Be able to understand of public goods as well as externalities and when there should be public or private response to such externalities.
• Be able to determine the implications of given public expenditure programmes including issues such as externalities, moral hazard, and adverse selection.

**Course Materials**

- **Required Text:**
  For purchase in the bookstore or
  E-book online access at: [https://bookstore.dal.ca/CourseSearch/?course%5b%5d=SUB,WINT21,ECON,ECON3345&](https://bookstore.dal.ca/CourseSearch/?course%5b%5d=SUB,WINT21,ECON,ECON3345&)

**Required:** PUBLIC FINANCE IN CANADA ED: 5

**Choose an Option**

- Buy New (Hardback) $102.43
- Buy (CampuseBookstore.com Access Code) $89.96
- Buy (CampuseBookstore.com Access Code) $59.96

Around 92% of the course will follow the textbook and I highly recommend that you read the sections covered in class. Additional supplementary material and information will make up the remaining 8%, such as issues related to the implications of Covid-19 for public finance.

I will post partial notes and other items on Brightspace.

**Course Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight (% of final grade)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>(2X20%=) 40%</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Scheduled exam period by Registrar’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>(5X4%=) 20%</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
**Assignments:** There will be 5 assignments containing problem-solving questions. Each will have a deadline for submission and will be worth 4% of your grade. They are to test your understanding of the content of the class and readings.

**Midterms:** There will be 2 midterms for the course, each counting for 20% of your grade. It will have multiple choice and problem-solving exercises. The exams are currently scheduled to be in class unless something changes with Covid restrictions.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be cumulative and schedule by the Registrar’s Office.

### Conversion of numerical grades to Final Letter Grades follows the Dalhousie Common Grade Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>(90-100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(85-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(80-84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>(77-79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(73-76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>(70-72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>(65-69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(60-64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>(55-59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(50-54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(&lt;50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Policies

Late assignments will not be accepted.

Missed Exams: The midterms are mandatory and count if written. There is a very strict policy concerning any missed exam. (See notes on **Student Declaration of Absence form**). If an exemption is not granted, a grade of zero will stand. If an exemption is granted, the weight, material and length of the midterm will be allocated to a final exam. If at least one midterm and the final are missed then a grade of **Incomplete** may be given.

If you miss a midterm due to medical reasons, the weight will be placed on the final exam.

You must pass the final to pass the course. To earn an A+ in the course, you must earn at least an A on the final exam.

**Note - Student Declaration of Absence form:**

The Faculty of Science follows the University policy for missed or late academic requirements due to short term student absences. The link to the policy is included in the course syllabus, and can be accessed here [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-late-academic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-late-academic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html) Course sites (Brightspace) will have a link to the **Declaration of Absence form**, and online submission of the forms will be enabled this fall via the widget on Brightspace.

Note that students are not able to obtain medical notes from the Dalhousie Student Health and Wellness Centre for short term absences (3 consecutive days or fewer) during term. Students may
submit a MAXIMUM of 2 separate forms per course per term. Students with recurring absences should be referred to the Assistant Dean Student Affairs. Students with long term absences may need to be referred to the Student Accessibility centre. Please note students with an Accommodation Plan in place do not need to submit Student Declarations of Absence.

The policy does not apply to final coursework or exams scheduled by the Registrar’s Office.

Outline (Order of chapters covers subject to change):

Introduction Ch 1,2,3 (Not covering: Uncertainty on page 52; Games Cost–Benefit Analysts Play on page 53).

Market Failures

Public Goods Ch 4
Externalities Ch 5
Information Asymmetries

Debt
Online chapter

Public Choice Ch 7

Market Shortcoming

Income/Wealth Distribution Ch 6

Programs

Welfare Ch 12


(Un)employment Insurance Ch 10

Education Ch 13

Pensions Ch 11

Health Care Ch 9
Response to Covid-19
Class notes and supplementary material

Tax Analysis
Taxation and Income Distribution Ch 14
Taxation and efficiency Ch 15
Personal Income Tax Ch 17

Other readings may be assigned during the course.

Faculty of Science Course Syllabus

University Policies and Statements

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and by Senate Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of 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.

Information: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility
The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie’s centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (Canada and Nova Scotia). Information: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.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. Code: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-studentconduct.html

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

Statement: http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html

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 (1321 Edward St) (elders@dal.ca).

Information: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)
https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

University Grading Practices
https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practicespolicy.html

Missed or Late Academic Requirements due to Student Absence (policy)
https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/missed-or-lateacademic-requirements-due-to-student-absence.html

Student Resources and Support Advising
General Advising https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html
Science Program Advisors: https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/current-students/academicadvising.html
Indigenous Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html
Black Students Advising Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-studentadvising.html
International Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre/current-students.html

Academic supports
Library: https://libraries.dal.ca/
Writing Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html
Studying for Success: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-andtutoring.html
Copyright Office: https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html

Other supports and services
Student Health & Wellness Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-andwellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html
Student Advocacy: https://dsu.ca/dsas

Safety

Biosafety: https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/biosafety.html
Chemical Safety: https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/chemical-safety.html
Radiation Safety: https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/radiation-safety.html

Scent-Free Program: https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scentfree.html