



蘇州大學  
Soochow University

## ECO 277 Public Finance

Winter 2024

**Course Credits:** 4

**Contact Hours:** 56 hours

**Instructor:** TBA

**Email:** TBA

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

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Public Finance is a comprehensive course that explores the principles, theories, and practices related to the management of public funds and resources. It examines the role of governments in the allocation and distribution of financial resources, the economic impact of public expenditure and taxation policies, and the tools and techniques used in public finance management. This course provides students with a solid foundation in understanding and analyzing the financial operations of governments at various levels, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions and recommendations in the field of public finance.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the main classes of public expenditure and public revenue, their differing characteristics and their interaction with public policy development;
2. Discuss taxation theory, identify the main taxation systems and evaluate their impact on public sector financing and responsibilities;
3. Analyze the relationship between public finance and other areas of economics and policy, such as public sector economics, welfare economics, and environmental economics;
4. Critically evaluate and discuss current issues, debates, and reforms in public finance at the national and international levels.

### PREREQUISITES

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ECO 220 Intermediate Microeconomics



## GRADING

Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
2 Assignments	20 Points
2 Quizzes	20 Points
Midterm	25 Points
Final Exam	35 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F.$$

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### **Required Texts:**

Jonathan Gruber, *Public Finance and Public Policy* (4th edition), Worth Publishers.

### **Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:**

None.

## COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 1: Introduction to Public Finance Topic 2: Public Sector Reforms and the Role of Public Finance Topic 3: The Role of Budgeting in Managing Public Sector organizations Topic 4: Budgeting Framework <b>Assessments:</b> Assignment #1



Module 2	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 5: Externalities Topic 6: Government Interventions Topic 7: Application: Environmental Externalities Topic 8: Public Goods <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz #1
Module 3	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 9: Cost-Benefit Analysis Topic 10: Political Economy Topic 11: State and Local Government Expenditures Topic 12: Education <b>Assessments:</b> Midterm Exam
Module 4	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 13: Theoretical Foundations of Insurance Topic 14: Social Security Topic 15: Unemployment Insurance (UI), Disability Insurance (DI) and Workers Compensation (WC) Topic 16: Health Insurance <b>Assessments:</b> Assignment #2
Module 5	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 17: Taxation: How it Works and What it Means Topic 18: Tax Incidence Topic 19: Tax Inefficiencies Topic 20: Taxes on Labor Supply <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz #2
Module 5	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 21: Taxes on Risk Taking and Wealth Topic 22: Taxation of Business Income Topic 23: Fundamental Tax Reform and Consumption Taxation Topic 24: Final Exam Review <b>Assessments:</b> Final Exam

## ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to



decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

## **LEARNING REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

## **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (eg., note taking, reading course documents).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the



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academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

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Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.