



Summer 2023, 3 Credits

ECON331/PUBLIC ECONOMICS

Bridgewater State University

Getting Started

This course focuses on the theory and application of the following: national income analysis and determination, fiscal policy, monetary theory and policy and the Federal Reserve System.

Instructor	Professor Subhendu Roy PhD
Office Hours	By Appointment using Zoom
Office Location	Virtual
Office Phone	3392233798
E-Mail	sroy@bridgew.edu I will respond within 1-2 business days. This is my preferred communication method.
Tech Support	Contact the IT Service Center for technical assistance.
Peer Forum	Within our Blackboard course site, students can pose course-related questions to classmates and the instructor in the Peer Forum discussion board located in the Getting Started section.
Technical Skills Required	Ability to use the Blackboard Learning Management System for accessing course resources, conducting assignments, and reviewing course grades.
Software Required	You will need a web browser for accessing our Blackboard course site. Use Blackboard's Browser Checker feature to ensure that your browser meets Blackboard standards.
Course Site	Blackboardhttp://comm298.wordpress.com/
Required Textbook	Public Finance and Public Policy. 7th edition. By Jonathan Gruber Worth Publishers eText ISBN: 9781319399030 Print ISBN: 9781319281106
Course Meeting Dates/Times	Asynchronous Online
Classroom Location	Online

Course Goals



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Government intervention changes opportunities and incentives for individuals, families, businesses, and state and local governments. This course will provide students with an understanding of the reasons for and consequences of government intervention and policies. It combines public finance, which is how the government allocates resources, and public choice, which reflects the political decisions of voters and their elected representatives. We will apply economic tools to analyze publicpolicy issues such as government intervention in combating environmental pollution, the introduction of education vouchers, the contours of health care and social security reforms, among others.

Course Enrollment

We are using Blackboard as the Learning Management System for this course. You have beenenrolled in our [Blackboard course site](#), so no further action is required by you.

The Geography of our Blackboard Course Site

Visit the *Getting Started & Syllabus* section of our Blackboard course site for a copy of the course syllabus, tutorials on course technologies we will be using, contact information for the IT Service Center, and other helpful resources.

Grading

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
WEEKLY QUIZ	25%
WEEKLY HOMEWORK	25%
WEEKLY PARTICIPATION	25%
FINAL EXAM	25%

Final Grading Scale

Using your numeric Final Grade value in Blackboard (based on a 100-point scale), review the tablebelow to determine the corresponding letter value. Numeric Final Grade values are rounded up or down to the nearest zero decimal value (ex. 92.5 becomes an “A”; 92.2 remains an “A-“).



GRADE	DESCRIPTION	4-POINT EQUIVALENT	100-POINT
A	Superior	4.0	93-100
A-	Superior	3.7	90-92
B+	Good	3.3	87-89
B	Good	3.0	83-86
B-	Good	2.7	80-82
C+	Satisfactory	2.3	77-79
C	Satisfactory	2.0	73-76
C-	Satisfactory	1.7	70-72
D	Poor	1.0	65-69
F	Failure	0.0	0-64

Course Assignments

Weekly Quiz (25%)

There will be quizzes every week based on the material covered during the week. The quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions with 4 options in each question.

Weekly Homework (25%)

There will be homework every week based on the material covered during the week. Details for completing the homework will be provided in class

Weekly Participation (25%)

You have to make at least three substantive posts in each of the two discussion question threads spread over 3 days in a week for attendance and participation for the four weeks. So, you have to make postings on at least 3 different days of the week to get full participation points. 25% of your final grade is based on class participation.

Final Exam (25%)

The final exam will be online during the last week and will be based on all the chapters in the book we will be discussing. Exam will have only multiple choice questions, but will be a timed exam.

The questions will come from lectures, handouts, the textbook, and supplemental readings.

Course Weeks	Topics	Student Responsibilities
Week 1	PART I Introduction and Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Why Study Public Finance? 2 Theoretical Tools of Public Finance 3 Empirical Tools of Public Finance 4 Budget Analysis and Deficit Financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapters 1-4: Respond to Discussion Questions Respond to the Homework Submit Quiz response
Week 2	PART II Externalities and Public Goods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Externalities: Problems and Solutions 6 Externalities in Action: Environmental and Health Externalities 7 Public Goods 8 Cost-Benefit Analysis 9 Political Economy 10 State and Local Government Expenditures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapter 5-10: Respond to Discussion Questions Respond to the Homework Submit Quiz response
Week 3	PART III Social Insurance and Redistribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 Social Insurance: The New Function of Government 13 Social Security 14 Unemployment Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Workers' Compensation 15 Health Insurance I: Health Economics and Private Health Insurance 16 Health Insurance II: Medicare, Medicaid, and Health Care Reform 17 Income Distribution and Welfare Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapters 12-17 Respond to Discussion Questions Respond to the Homework Submit Quiz response
Week 4	PART IV Taxation in Theory and Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 Taxation: How It Works and What It Means 19 The Equity Implications of Taxation: Tax Incidence 20 Tax Inefficiencies and Their Implications for Optimal Taxation 21 Taxes on Labor Supply 22 Taxes on Savings 23 Taxes on Risk Taking and Wealth 24 Taxation of Business Income 25 Fundamental Tax Reform and Consumption Taxation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapters 18-25: Respond to Discussion Questions Respond to the Homework Submit Quiz response Final Exam

Course Schedule

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change the dates and topics to be covered at any time.

Course Policies

Participation – You have to make at least three substantive posts in each of the two discussion question threads spread over 3 days in a week for attendance and participation for the 4 weeks. So, you have to make postings on at least 3 different days of the week to get full participation points. 25% of your final grade is based on class participation. For a posting to be considered substantive for participation purposes, the following requirements have to be met:

One original posting in each of the two posted discussion questions that should be relevant



to the discussion covered under that learning activity and must be made using at least 100 words.

At least two subsequent response to original postings made by other students in each of the two discussion questions. These postings should be made using at least 50 words and not simply be “I agree” type with a repeat of the earlier posting but should include additional perspectives or examples that adds substance to the discussion.

I expect students to be respectful of others' opinions. Furthermore, it is my job to make the learning environment safe for all. Therefore, what is said in the class stays in the class! Fortunately, we are all members of a wonderfully diverse world. We will honor all people regardless of culture, race, ethnicity, religion, age, social class, sexual orientation, and/or physical/mental abilities. It is hoped that we will learn more about our similarities while still appreciating our differences..

E-mail – Each class email is important. You are responsible for all e-mail communications sent by your instructor and your classmates to your BSU e-mail account. It is important that you check your BSU e-mail at least every other day so that you do not miss important communications from your instructor and classmates.

Accommodations – Bridgewater State University is committed to providing equal access to students with documented disabilities. To ensure your access to this course and the BSU community, students with disabilities are encouraged to collaborate with [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#). Through SAS, you may initiate the confidential process of requesting reasonable accommodations. You can contact SAS at Disability_Resources@bridgew.edu or 508.531.2194. If you are granted accommodations, please meet with me confidentially to review how we will apply them in this course.

Our course Learning Management System, Blackboard, was “designed and developed in accordance with the internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility (WCAG) Guidelines 2.0 Level AA as well as the Section 508 standards in the United States” according to the [Blackboard Accessibility web site](#).

Change of Grade – “If a student believes that a mistake was made in the original grade recorded for a course, the student may petition the instructor for a change of grade no later than the last day of final exams in the academic semester following that in which the grade was recorded. A change of grade will not be considered after this time.” – excerpt from the [Credit Hour and Grading System policy](#).

Preferred Name on BSU Records

Did you know that students can indicate their preferred first names on university records? Review the instructions in the [BSU Student Handbook](#).

Academic Integrity – “Students are admitted to Bridgewater State University with the



expectation that they will accept and abide by the standards of conduct and scholarship established by the faculty, administration and student governing boards. The university reserves the right to require students to withdraw who do not maintain acceptable academic standing. The university also reserves the right to dismiss, with due process, students who do not meet the requirements of conduct and order or whose behavior is inconsistent with the standards of the university.” – excerpted from the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Technical Issues – Back up course work often, for you are responsible for course work lost to technical difficulties. When contributing to Blackboard discussion assignments or lengthy essay exam questions, consider composing your work in Microsoft Word and then copying and pasting the text into Blackboard.

If there are system-wide issues with Blackboard or BSU email, the instructor will contact you via email to provide you with an alternative means of completing course assignments or due date extensions. If you experience technical issues, please [contact the IT Service Center](#) and provide as many details as possible, including screenshots, so that the IT Service Center can best assist you.

Netiquette – Before posting to a course discussion forum, please consider the following guidelines for appropriate web-based communications:

- Passion is great; positivity and politeness should also be in step with your passion when communicating with peers and the instructor.
- To err is human; to forgive is divine. Be gracious when others make spelling or grammatical errors.
- Even with emoticons, tone and context can often be lost in text-based communications. Keep that in mind when sharing a post that is comical or satirical.
- Respect the privacy of others. If you are sharing information of a personal nature that affects a classmate, check with that classmate before posting.
- Proofread your responses before submitting. Maintain the mindset that anything posted on the web is permanent.
- Let your instructor know if something that has been posted in our discussion forum is inappropriate or offensive to you.