

San José State University
Department of Economics
ECON 132 – Public Finance - Section 01, Fall 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Patralekha (Pat) Ukil
Office Location:	DMH 131
Email:	patralekha.ukil@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	MW 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Class Days/Time:	MW 3 – 4:15 PM
Classroom:	Dudley Moorhead Hall 348
Prerequisites:	ECON 1B

Course Description

From the SJSU course catalog: Microeconomics of the public sector, role of government in market systems, cost-benefit analysis, public choice theory, taxation, fiscal federalism, state and local government sector.

The focus of this course is on understanding the microeconomic foundations of public sector involvement in an economy. Essentially, we will start with the question: “why does a market economy need a government?” We will use economic principles to understand the *reasons for* government involvement and intervention in a market economy, and also study the *impacts of* government expenditure programs and tax systems on the citizens’ behavior and welfare. We will be covering a wide range of theoretical issues relating to public finance with a specific focus on practical issues relating to education, social insurance, healthcare, social security and taxation.

Course Format

This course will follow an **in-person** format where there will be regular in-person classes held on Mondays and Wednesdays at the scheduled class time. This course will also utilize the [Canvas Learning Management System](#) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. All students will require a reliable internet connection and an electronic device for access to Canvas LMS. You can borrow laptops and other equipment from the MLK library. Please visit the library or this website: <https://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services>.

Classes will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays in DMH 348 at 3-4:15pm. Lecture materials relevant to the course will also be posted on Canvas and you will also receive weekly notifications from me. ***Please make sure that you check your Canvas notifications regularly.***

Course Web Page and Canvas Messaging

All relevant course materials such as syllabus, additional readings, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through Canvas to learn of any course updates.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Review and understand relevant economic concepts relating to government intervention in market economies and issues relating to government expenditure and revenue systems.
2. Identify and apply relevant microeconomic principles related to government involvement in a market economy to real-life case studies.
3. Understand and analyze public finance topics with a focus on U.S.-based social issues such as insurance, healthcare, taxation and education, etc.

Required Readings

There is a required textbook for this course (name written below). Lecture slides, additional materials, articles and other reading materials will also be posted on Canvas.

Required Textbook: *Public Finance and Public Policy, 7th edition, Jonathan Gruber, Macmillan.*

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practical. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

The course grading/assessment will be based on the following:

1. **Assignments** (homework assignments, quizzes, short answer questions, etc.)
2. **One midterm examination**
3. **One analytical summary (take-home; due: November 9th 2022)**
4. **One final exam** (as per the SJSU Final Exams schedule)
5. **Participation** in class discussions, any questions, surveys, or discussions posted online in Canvas

Assignments will be provided on a regular basis over the course of the semester and the questions can be of two types: multiple-choice questions (i.e., quizzes), and questions which require short/medium-length answers. **The assignments are built so as to help you prepare for the midterm exam and the final exam.**

The expectation from me is that you will attend classes, review the lecture materials and the readings for each week, come and talk to me if you have any issues/doubts and then complete any homework assignments and any quizzes that I might assign.

Examinations may contain a combination of multiple-choice questions and questions that require short/medium-length answers. Details related to the format of the examinations will be announced ahead of time in class and also on Canvas.

The analytical summary will be a 3–4-page detailed literature review of an academic topic of research related to Public Economics (of your choice) using citations and references from Economics literature. **It will be due on Wednesday November 9th 2022.** More details will be announced in class.

In order to make sure you stay on track with this assignment, you must make your topic of choice known to me (by email) by Wednesday October 5th 2022.

Participation grades will be based on your engagement in class discussions, online surveys, or any discussions/questions posted on Canvas.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final evaluation for this course will be a final examination taking place during the Final Examinations week as per the SJSU Fall 2022 schedule, which will be the culminating activity based on the course material covered in the semester. Details regarding the final exam will be announced ahead of time in class and also on Canvas.

Grading Information

Course grades will be as follows: **(Please remember that the final score that shows on your Canvas grades section may not reflect your actual final course grade, which depends on the following information)**

Assignments:	20%
Midterm Exam:	22.5%
Analytical Summary:	22.5%
Final Exam:	30%
Participation:	5%

Grade	Percentage
A plus	98 to 100%
A	94 to 97%
A minus	90 to 93%
B plus	86 to 89 %
B	83 to 85%
B minus	80 to 82%
C plus	76 to 79%
C	73 to 75%
C minus	70 to 72%
D plus	66 to 69%
D	63 to 65%
D minus	60 to 62%

Office hours/emails information

I will hold weekly office hours. If you wish to set up a meeting with me outside of office hours, please send me an email. **I also welcome you to submit any questions or doubts via email if you prefer.** I generally respond to emails/messages within 24-36 hours.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

I will follow the [SJSU policy regarding academic integrity](#) and honesty, and will take it very seriously. Please read and understand what constitutes a violation in this respect and all instances of academic dishonesty will be reported by me.

Please come and talk to me as soon as you can if you are in need of any course changes, adaptations or any accommodations due to a disability. According to the [Presidential Directive 97-03](#) students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center \(AEC\)](#) at <https://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

More guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found from the following university policies:

- [University Syllabus Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>)
- [University Attendance and Participation Policy F15-12](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>)
- [University Grading System Policy F18-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F18-5.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F18-5.pdf>)

You may also find the following information useful:

- [SJSU Cares](#)
- [The SJSU Food Pantry Program](#)
- [SJSU Counseling](#)
 - [SJSU Learn Anywhere](#)

You may also find the following information useful:

- SJSU Cares: <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/>
- The SJSU Food Pantry Program: <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/get-assistance/spartan-food-pantry/index.html>
- SJSU Counseling: <https://www.sjsu.edu/counseling/>
- SJSU Learn Anywhere: <https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/>

ECON 132 – Fall 2022 Course Schedule

This is the **tentative schedule** for the course, and is subject to change.

If any changes have to be made to the syllabus, those changes will be communicated to all students in Canvas. A timely notice and consideration will be provided to all students if any changes need to be made.

Course Schedule

Week	Classes on	Topics	Notes
1	-	Introduction to the course on Canvas	Canvas course will open on Friday 8/19
2	8/22; 8/24	Introduction to Public Economics (The Four Questions of Public Finance)	
3	8/29; 8/31	Introduction to Equilibrium and Social Welfare	
4	9/7	Externality Theory	No class on Monday 9/5 – Labor Day
5	9/12; 9/14	Externality Theory (contd.)	
6	9/19; 9/21	Economics of Addictive Behavior (Health Externalities)	
7	9/26; 9/28	Theory of Public Goods - Part 1	Midterm exam will be assigned this week
8	10/3; 10/5	Public Goods - Part 2: Education in the U.S.	Topic of analytical summary due (by email)
9	10/10; 10/12	Social Insurance Part 1: Basics of Uncertainty and Insurance	
10	10/17; 10/19	Social Insurance & Moral Hazard	
11	10/24; 10/26	Moral Hazard in UI, DI and WC	

Week	Classes on	Topics	Notes
12	10/31; 11/2	Health Insurance Theory and Concepts	
13	11/7; 11/9	Healthcare in the United States	Due: analytical summary
14	11/14; 11/16	Social Security	
15	11/21	Additional Topics in Public Finance & Political Economy	
16	11/28; 11/30	Introduction to Taxation Tax Incidence: Equity Implications	
17	12/5	Taxation (contd.)	

SJSU Land Acknowledgement:

San José State University and Surrounding Region Thámien Ancestral Muwekma Ohlone Territory.

The San José State University community recognizes that the present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, with an enrolled Bureau of Indian Affairs documented membership of over 550, is comprised of all of the known surviving American Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region who trace their ancestry through the Missions Santa Clara, San José, and Dolores, during the advent of the Hispano- European empire into Alta California; and who are the successors and living members of the sovereign, historic, previously Federally Recognized Verona Band of Alameda County.

Furthermore, the San José State University community recognizes that the university is established within the Thámien Ohlone-speaking tribal ethnohistoric territory, which based upon the unratified federal treaties of 1851-1852, includes the unceded ancestral lands of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of the enrolled Muwekma lineages are descended from direct ancestors from the Thámien Ohlone tribal territory whose ancestors had affiliation with Mission Santa Clara.

The San José State University community also recognizes the importance of this land to the indigenous Muwekma Ohlone people of this region, and consistent with our principles of community and diversity strives to be good stewards on behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe whose land we occupy.