Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2020

5,262: Public Economics

ECTS credits: 6

Overview examination/s
(binding regulations see below)
Central - Written examination (40%, 60 mins.)
Examination time: inter-term break
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)
Examination time: term time
Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)
Examination time: term time

Attached courses
Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer
5,262,1.00 Public Economics -- Englisch -- Lopes da Fonseca Mariana

Course information

Course prerequisites
Knowledge in intermediate microeconomics (at the level of Microeconomics II) is recommended.

Learning objectives

- To understand the main theoretical arguments relating to government policies
- To apply microeconomic concepts to evaluate the pros and cons of specific economic policy proposals
- To present the main insights from an economic policy evaluation in a competent and concise manner

Course content

Public economics is the study of government economic policies. It mainly focuses on efficiency and equity arguments for (and against) government interventions, on important categories of government expenditures, and on how governments should design their tax system in order to finance their expenditures in an efficient and "fair" manner. It covers the following topics:

1. Introduction and motivation
2. Social welfare and the objectives of government
3. Markets, market failures and government interventions
4. Inequality and redistribution
5. Social insurance
6. Externalities and environmental policies
7. Principles of taxation
8. Theory of taxation
9. Tax avoidance and tax evasion
10. Fiscal federalism
11. Behavioral public economics

The course is applied in nature, but builds on microeconomic concepts. It is based on the textbook by Richard Tresch and complemented by discussions on current economic policy issues in Switzerland and elsewhere. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in these discussions.
Course structure
Up to 27 students: in classroom teaching with recording available on Canvas. More than 27 students: partial in classroom teaching with alternating groups, live and with recordings available on Canvas. Students will receive more detailed information on StudyNet once the bidding has ended.

Course literature
Journal and newspaper articles available on Canvas during the semester.

Additional course information
In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in AS2020, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted online via the platform ZOOM;
- The recordings of the course are available for 30 days;
- The lecturer informs via Canvas on the changed implementation modalities of the course.

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The presentation and policy evaluation are conducted online;
- There are no changes necessary to the written examination information.

Examination information

1. Examination sub part/s

Examination time and form
Central - Written examination (40%, 60 mins.)
Examination time: inter-term break

Remark
Central exam (60 minutes).

Examination-aid rule
Extended Closed Book
The use of aids is limited; any additional aids permitted are exhaustively listed under "Supplementary aids". Basically, the following is applicable:

- At such examinations, all the pocket calculators of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and mono- or bilingual dictionaries (no subject-specific dictionaries) without hand-written notes are admissible. Any other pocket calculator models and any electronic dictionaries are inadmissible.
- In addition, any type of communication, as well as any electronic devices that can be programmed and are capable of communication such as notebooks, tablets, mobile telephones and others, are inadmissible.
- Students are themselves responsible for the procurement of examination aids.

Supplementary aids
None.

Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English
2. Examination sub part (2/3)

Examination time and form
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
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Examination-aid rule
Presentations
In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Supplementary aids
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Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English

3. Examination sub part (3/3)

Examination time and form
Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Policy evaluation (Time available: 180 minutes)

Examination-aid rule
Term papers

Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship which is a published template in StudentWeb.

The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the chosen citation standard such as APA or MLA.

For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGREK R. et SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende, newest edition respectively, or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into texts in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien, newest edition respectively.

For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers is mandatory independent of the chosen citation standard. Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.

Supplementary aids
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Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English
Relevant for the exam is all the material covered in the lectures, the slides and the textbook chapters related to the topics listed under "Inhalt/Content."

**Examination relevant literature**

**Please note**
Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers’ websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 are relevant for testing.

**Binding nature of the fact sheets:**
- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 34 (Thursday, 20 August 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 12 October 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 12 October 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 44 (Thursday, 29 October 2020).