



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2019

6,300: Public Finance

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Central - Written examination (75%, 90 mins.)

Decentral - Group examination paper (all given the same grades) (25%)

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[6,300,1.00 Public Finance](#) -- Englisch -- [Hodler Roland](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

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Course content

Public finance 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, in particular public health and old-age pension schemes
6. Externalities and environmental policies
7. Taxation (multiple lectures)
8. Fiscal federalism
9. Budget deficits and government debt
10. Corruption and favoritism

The course 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.

The course objectives are:

1. To understand the main theoretical arguments relating to government economic policies.
2. To apply microeconomic concepts to evaluate the pros and cons of specific economic policy proposals.
3. To learn to present an economic policy evaluation in a competent and concise manner.



Course structure

The course consists of weekly lectures held on Mondays as well as bi-weekly Wednesday sessions, devoted to problem sets and the discussion of newspaper articles (independent studies).

Course literature

Textbook: Tresch, R.W., 2008. Public Sector Economics. Palgrave MacMillan. Articles become available on StudyNet during the semester.

Additional course information

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Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination time and form

Central - Written examination (75%, 90 mins.)

Remark

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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, PDAs, 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 (2/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Group examination paper (all given the same grades) (25%)

Remark

Form: Voice over slides

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.
- The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with



the APA or MLA standards. The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into the text 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. (2017), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (12th ed., Cornelsen Schweiz).

- For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers both according to the MLA and the APA standard is never optional.
- 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.
- For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B. (2018), *Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende* (6. Auflage), Zürich: Schulthess, or the recommendations of the Law School).

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Relevant for the exam is all the material covered in the lectures and the slides related to 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, in particular public health and old-age pension schemes
6. Externalities and environmental policies
7. Taxation
8. Fiscal federalism
9. Budget deficits and government debt
10. Corruption and favoritism

Also relevant for the exam are the readings for and the discussions in the Wednesday sessions (independent studies).

Examination relevant literature

Textbook: Tresch, R.W., 2008. *Public Sector Economics*. Palgrave MacMillan, chapters 1-2, 4-7, 12-13, 15-16, and 21-22. Newspaper and journal articles for the Wednesday sessions (independent studies); distributed via StudyNet until mid-May.



Please note

We would like to point out to you that this fact sheet has absolute priority over other information such as StudyNet, faculty members' personal databases, information provided in lectures, etc. When will the fact sheets become binding?

- Information about courses and examination time (central/decentral and grading form): from the start of the bidding process on 24 January 2019
- Information about decentral examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): after the 4th semester week on 18 March 2019
- Information about central examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): from the start of the enrolment period for the examinations on 08 April 2019

Please look at the fact sheet once more after these deadlines have expired.