



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2018

5,262: Public Economics

ECTS credits: 6

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Written examination (40%, 60 mins.)

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[5,262,1.00 Public Economics](#) -- Englisch -- [Hodler Roland](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

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

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, in particular public health and old-age pension schemes
6. Externalities and environmental policies
7. Principles of taxation
8. Theory of taxation
9. Tax avoidance and tax evasion
10. Fiscal federalism
11. Budget deficits and government debt
12. Corruption and favoritism

Qualification: Public Economics is a key course for people interested in economic/public policy. It is particularly useful for students aiming to work on economic policy issues in the private sector, the public sector, international organizations, or NGOs.

Methods: The course is applied in nature, but builds on microeconomic concepts. It includes Oxford-style debates on current economic policy issues in Switzerland and elsewhere. Feedback to the student is an integral part of the course.

Course objectives:

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 the pros or cons of specific economic policy proposals in Oxford-style debates

Thereby this course mainly contributes to the following learning goal of the Major in Economics: "Our students can evaluate the effects of economic policies."



Course structure

The course consists of weekly lectures, which include five Oxford-style debates, a written exam and a written policy evaluation.

Course literature

Textbook: Tresch, R.W., 2008. Public Sector Economics. Palgrave MacMillan.

Journal and newspaper 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 (1/3)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Written examination (40%, 60 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 (2/3)

Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)

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.
- 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. (2015), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (11th ed., 4th printing). Aarau: Sauerländer).

- 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

3. Examination sub part (3/3)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)

Remark

Presentations in Oxford-style debates

Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

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 Oxford-style debates on the 12 topics listed under "Inhalt/Content."

Examination relevant literature

Lecture slides available on StudyNet.

Textbook: Tresch, R.W., 2008. *Public Sector Economics*. Palgrave MacMillan, chapters 1-2, 4-7, 12-13, 15-17, and 21-22.



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 23 August 2018
- Information about decentral examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): after the 4th semester week on 15 October 2018
- Information about central examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): from the start of the enrolment period for the examinations on 05 November 2018

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