

The University of Texas at Arlington
College of Business
ECON 3335-001
Economics of Public Policies
Fall 2014

Instructor: Todd Gabel

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Office Hours: TR 9:30am-10:30am; 3:30pm-5:00pm, or by appointment

Time and Place of Class Meetings: TR 8:00am-9:20pm COBA 150

Description of Course Content: Economic analysis of issues of general interest. A non technical application of principles of economics to current topics such as abortion, crime, deficit spending, divorce, education, energy, health care, immigration, politics, recycling, risk and safety, Social Security, sports, and tax policy.

Course Prerequisites: ECON 2306

Student Learning Outcomes: The student will learn how to apply principles of microeconomics to a variety of questions on public policy, and in so doing, develop analytical and communication skills that will be valuable in any career endeavor.

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials: *The Economics of Public Issues* By Miller, Benjamin, and North. 18th Edition.

Attendance: The class will be mix of lecture and seminar in format. Attendance and participation in class is mandatory.

Student Evaluation: Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation	25 percent
Midterm	25 percent
Research Paper	15 percent
Final Exam	35 percent

After controlling for distribution, letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale: 90-100% (A) 80-89 (B) 70-79 (C) 60-69 (D) 50-59 (F).

Make-up Exams: Make-up exams are available if you miss an exam for a valid reason. *I reserve the right to determine validity and require proof for the absence. Typically, anything short of a doctor's note [i.e., medical emergency for yourself or immediate family member] will be unacceptable as grounds for a make-up exam.* Please see me to schedule a make-up exam as soon as you return to class.

Exam Dates: These are the tentative dates for your exams, and are subject to change.

Midterm	October 7 th
Final Exam	December 9 th

Course Outline:

Part 1: Review of Economic Principles

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Maximization	1. Death by Bureaucrat
Substitution	2. Supersize It
Diminishing Marginal Value	3. Flying the Friendly Skies?
Law of Demand	4. The Mystery of Wealth
Cost	5. Surf Gangs
	6. The Economic Impact of New Stadiums and Arenas on Cities (1)

Part 2: Supply and Demand

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Production	7. Sex, Booze, and Drugs
Supply and Demand	8. All Fracked Up
	9. Kidneys for Sale
	10. Are We Running Out of Water?
	11. Bankrupt Landlords, from Sea to Shining Sea

Part 3: Labor Markets

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Marginal Product	12. (Why) Are Women Paid Less?
	13. Over \$1 Trillion in College Debt, and Rising
	14. The Effects of the Minimum Wage
	15. Immigration, Superstars, and Poverty
	16. The (Dis)incentives of Higher Taxes
	17. Taxing Hard-up Americans at 95% (2)

Part 4: Market Structures

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Perfection Competition	18. Patent Trolls and Seed Monopolies
Monopoly	19. Contracts, Combinations, and Conspiracies
Oligopoly	20. Coffee, Tea, or Tuition-Free?
	21. Keeping the Competition Out
	22. Wal-Mart: Good or Bad? (3)
	23. Occupational Licensure [in Medicine] (4)
	24. An Economist's Guide to U.S. v. Microsoft (5)

Part 5: Political Economy

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Public Choice Theory	25. The Deception of Green Energy
	26. Save a Turtle, Kill a Person
	27. Raising Less Corn and More Hell
	28. The Pension Crisis
	29. The Graying of America
	30. The Economics of the Affordable Care Act (6)

Part 6: Property Rights and the Environment

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
Externalities	31. Save that Species
The Coase Theorem	32. Greenhouse Economics
Transaction Costs	33. Ethanol Madness
Property Rights	34. The Trashman Cometh

Part 7: Globalization and Economic Prosperity

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
	35. The Economics of the Big Mac
	36. Globalization and the Wealth of America
	37. The \$750,000 Steelworker
	38. Why Should We Restrict Immigration? (7)

Part 8: Economics of the Family

Lecture Topics	Presentations and Discussion:
	39. The Family and The State (8)
	40. An Economic Assessment of Same-Sex Marriage Laws (9)

(1) Garrett Johnson, University of Denver Sports and Entertainment Law Journal (2011).

(2) The Economist (2013).

(3) Richard Vedder and Wendell Cox, American Enterprise Institute (2006).

(4) Milton Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom (1962).

(5) Richard Gilbert and Michael Katz. Journal of Economic Perspectives (2001).

(6) David Cutler. New York Times (2013).

(7) Bryan Caplan. Cato Journal (2012).

(8) Gary Becker and Kevin Murphy, Journal of Law and Economics (1988).

(9) Douglas Allen, Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy (2006).

Policy Paper: At the end of the semester each student is responsible to submit a research paper. The essay should be relatively short (10-15 pages typed, double spaced) on a policy topic that is relevant in today's policy environment.

Midterm and Final Exam: The exams will be short answer in nature. The exams will be based on the lecture material, chapters covered during the semester, as well as the presentations and discussions made during class time. The Final Exam will not be comprehensive.

Blackboard: I will use Blackboard, an electronic learning software platform, for the distribution of course information. Go to <http://elearn.uta.edu/> to log in. Be sure to check our Blackboard site on a regular basis for announcements, exam reviews, and other material related to class.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Academic Integrity: At UT Arlington academic dishonesty is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form, including (but not limited to) "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit for any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2). Suspected violations of academic integrity standards will be referred to the Office of Student conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

University of Texas at Arlington Honor Code

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Student Support Services Available: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and

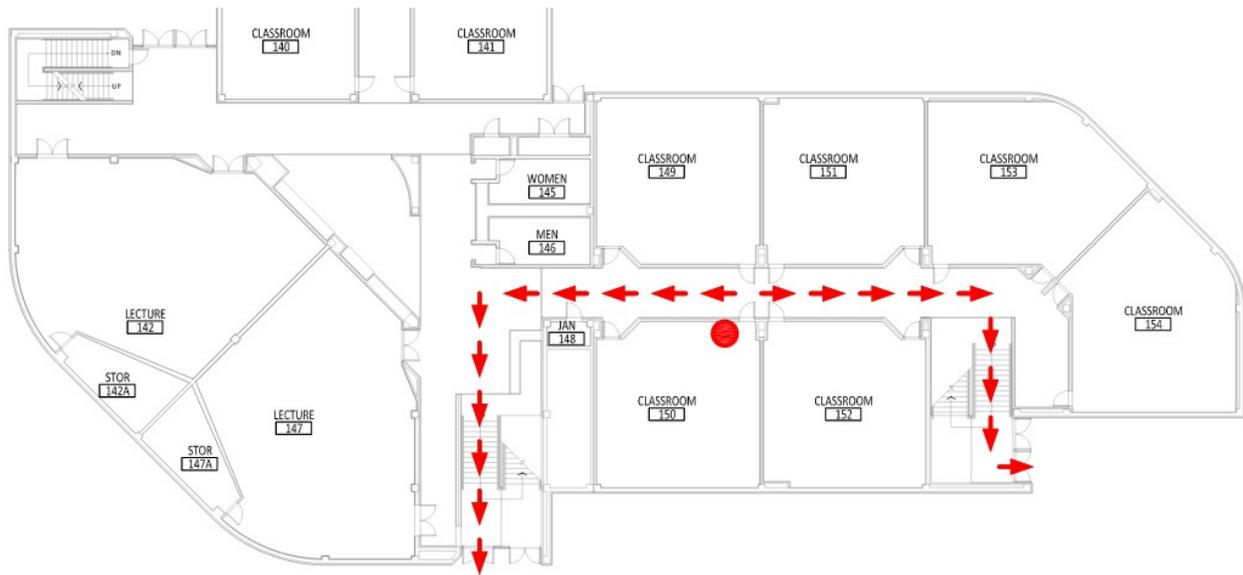
mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, sending a message to resources@uta.edu, or visiting www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication Policy: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as the official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final reviews Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. **In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.**

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit:



When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.