

York University

Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

**Department of Economics
Winter 2015**

Course # and Title:

Public Economics I – ECON 5300

Course Webpage:

We used to have a working server at our department, now we don't.

Course Instructor/Contact:

Name: Mat Brzozowski
Office: 1086 Vari Hall
Phone: 416-736-2100 Ext. 20152
Office Hours: Thursday 3:00 – 4:30 PM
Email: brzozows@yorku.ca

NOTE :(the instructor reserves a right not to be disturbed under ANY circumstances during the half hour immediately preceding the lecture time – this applies especially to the days the tests are held)

LectureTime and Location:

Lecture: Thursday: 11:30AM-2:30PM
Location: CC 211

Course Description:

The theory of taxation, including; tax incidence; the effects of taxation on saving; investment and labour supply; optimal taxation; fiscal federalism; the choice of tax base; economic effects of some specific taxes.

Weighting of Course:

Course grades will be determined by performance on a term test, an in class presentation of a chosen article, and written literature review, weighted as follows¹:

¹ These weights will not be adjusted in order to benefit any single student or any group of students – do not even ask the instructor for that.

Term test	30%	March 2nd
Presentation	30%	These will be held during the March 9th to March 30th class hours – exact dates will be drawn in class on February 9th .
Literature Review	40%	<u>Electronic Copy Due: April 6th</u>

Missed exams/Tests:

There will be no make-up for the term test. If you are unable to take a term test for a valid reason ONLY, your grade will be determined by the remaining two components. Students missing a term test must provide detailed documentation in the manner required by York. The documentation must be provided in either hard copy or over e-mail directly to the instructor and not to administrators with a hope they will forward it to the instructor. It is your responsibility to assure that the doctor's notes are legible. Students missing the term test who do not provide such documentation will receive a grade of zero for the term test.

Students who choose to write the test in pencil are advised that the instructor may choose to photocopy their work for future verification.

Articles presented by students in class during the **March 9th to March 30th** classes will be chosen by students and submitted for approval by the instructor by the beginning of the lecture on **February 9th**. Apart for medical reasons, **late submissions will be penalized. The penalty is 5% per day on the presentation grade.**

Student **attendance** during the **March 9th to March 30th** presentation sessions is **mandatory**, attendance will be taken and students will see marks deducted for missing presentations of their peers. Marks will be awarded to students actively participating in the discussion of presented articles.

Grading

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

Course Text / Readings:

Required Text

The course text is Leach John., A Course in Public Economics. This text provides many practical applications. Additional material will be covered in class for which students will be responsible at exam time. Hardcover edition of this book is in print and is relatively

expensive. Soft cover edition is easily available on internet typically for a fraction of the hardcover price.

Organization of the Course (Topics):

Topics and Readings²

- General Equilibrium theory
- Consumer and producer surplus
- Externalities
- Permit trading
- Renewable common property resources
- Co-ordination failures
- Natural monopoly and pricing rules under imperfect competition
- Taxation and efficiency
- The welfare cost of tax interactions
- The theory of the second best
- The distribution of income
- The limits of income distribution
- Tagging and targeting
- Health care and health insurance

Important Course Information for Students:

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage; <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/index-policies.html/>

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

² This list of topics is indicative only; changes may be made to the sequence, additional material may be added.