

JSGS 805 – Economics for Public Policy Analysis

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA CAMPUS	
INSTRUCTORS:	Dr. Iryna Khovrenkov
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OFFICE HOURS:	Thursdays 1-2pm: September 17 to December 3; No office hours on November 12
OFFICE LOCATION:	CB 332.5
TERM:	Fall 2020
COURSE DELIVERY:	Remote: synchronous and asynchronous blend
DATE AND TIME:	September 8 to December 8; No class on November 10 Tuesdays: 1pm to 3:45pm

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Regina campus of the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy is situated on Treaty 4 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. The University of Saskatchewan campus is situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis.

COURSE CONTENT

This course identifies key economic tools and examines economic concepts which are fundamental for evaluating government policies. This course focuses on the following topics in microeconomics: resource scarcity, opportunity cost, theory of the consumer, theory of the firm, consumer and producer surplus, market equilibrium, market power and welfare economics. It also defines intended and unintended consequences of policy interventions. The course pays particular attention to how people respond to policy initiatives. It is intended for students who have had limited prior exposure to economics and is geared towards preparing them for more advanced and/or more specialized topics in economic analysis of public policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

JSGS 805 specific readings, assignments and activities will allow you to achieve the following learning objectives:

- Acquire tools for interpreting how economic factors influence policy
- Think critically and analytically about policy problems from an economics perspective
- Analyze policy problems using economic theory
- Communicate information and analyses effectively

JSGS COMPETENCIES FOR 805

JSGS 805 will assist in developing the following competencies:

1. **Communication and Social Skills:** Quizzes, a writing assignment and discussion forums are designed to develop students' writing and persuasive skills.
2. **Systems Thinking and Creative Analysis:** The lesson approach adopted in 805 is intended to equip students with economic tools for solving practical problems and for developing an analytical approach to decision making.
3. **Public Policy Knowledge:** While this is not a course that sets out to study any particular issue area or policy problem in detail, examples will range widely over a number of different contemporary issues, developing the skills that combine evidence and argument in a policy process.

COURSE FORMAT

JSGS 805 will be delivered remotely, by blending both synchronous and asynchronous modalities. Asynchronous pieces will be delivered on UR courses, while synchronous sessions will be scheduled via Zoom. The course is structured around 13 lessons, synchronous Zoom sessions, 4 quizzes, and one written assignment. The students will also actively participate in discussion forums on UR courses. Quizzes will be administered online during scheduled class time.

CLASS INFORMATION

- JSGS 805 *Economics for Public Policy Analysis* will run over the Fall Semester: **September 8 – December 8**. Please note that there is no class on November 10 due to a Fall Reading Week.
- Class material for JSGS 805 will be provided on UR courses.
- The students will receive access to a new lesson every Thursday at 9am prior to the scheduled class on Tuesday. For example, material for class on September 8 will be made available on Thursday, September 3.

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR

- While JSGS 805 is delivered online, it is very important that you get the best out of this course. This will depend on our open communication and opportunity to connect and ask questions despite the course being online.
- This course will have **nine 'live' sessions** via ZOOM. These sessions are an opportunity for students to discuss their learning and for me to explain puzzling concepts. The link to the ZOOM sessions will be posted on UR courses on the day the session is scheduled.
- The course will also have virtual office hours every Thursday. These will be held either via Zoom or via a chat function on UR courses. The final format will be confirmed on the first day of class.
- You can also reach me by email (directly at iryana.khovrenkov@uregina.ca or via UR courses)

EVALUATION

5% Class Participation: Participation is an important function of learning. It is not just attending, it is engaging with a purpose, it is taking initiative, it is demonstrating motivation. Participation in an online course will be different than participation in an in-person class. I encourage students to connect with fellow students and the instructor by attending ZOOM sessions, asking questions/providing comments, and sharing their learning experience.

15% Forum Discussion: Students will offer their thoughts and reflective feedback on the topics posted for discussion by the instructor. Refer to Forum Discussion Guidelines below for details associated with forum discussions.

20% Written Assignment: This will be a take-home assignment, which will be posted on UR courses on December 9 and will be due on December 15. Details will follow. The assignment must be submitted by the due date. Exceptions can only be made when there are documented medical reasons and extraordinary circumstances.

60% Quizzes (4 at 15% each): Students will complete short quizzes during class time every fourth class.

FORUM DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

The discussion forum is an opportunity for the students to engage in the discussion with their peers. Each class session will have an associated discussion forum. The instructor will provide a new posting for discussion on class day every week. Being active on the discussion board is a relatively easy way to participate in class.

Responding

- Students are encouraged to check forums daily. Students are expected to read the instructor's posting and other students' postings to learn what their fellow classmates have to say.
- It is fine to agree with someone but responding "I agree" is not sufficient and additional thoughts should be expressed.
- If you disagree with an idea, interpretation, or comment, you are encouraged to address that in your reply, but only if you are respectful in doing so.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks assigned for this course are all open access. The two textbooks are:

1. **Principles of Microeconomics** by Douglas Curtis and Ian Irvine, Creative Commons License (CC BY-NC-SA) – Canadian-based textbook
2. **Economics, Society and Public Policy**, Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) – Internationally-based textbook

Students will be directed to review specific chapters when class material is posted on UR courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

This outline provides only a list of topics that will be covered during the semester. All class material (readings, activities, etc.) associated with each lesson will be posted on UR courses.

Lesson 1: The value of economics and economic thinking

Lesson 2: Decision making by consumers

Lesson 3: Consumer's demand

Lesson 4: Decision making by the firm

Lesson 5: Producer's supply

Lesson 6: Market Equilibrium

Lesson 7: Price responsiveness and public policy

Lesson 8: Market Power

Lesson 9: Market Failure and Interventions

Lesson 10: Fairness and Efficiency

Lesson 11: Application of microeconomic principles 1

Lesson 12: Application of microeconomic principles 2

Lesson 13: A peek into macroeconomics

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

University of Regina (U of R): Students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for accommodations are encouraged to discuss this need with the instructor and to contact the Coordinator of Special Needs Services at (306) 585-4631.

U OF S: Students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for accommodations are encouraged to discuss this need with the instructor and to contact Disability Services for Students (DSS) at 966-7273.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING STRESS

University of Regina (U of R): Students in this course who are experiencing stress can seek assistance from the University of Regina Counselling Services. For more information, please visit this website: <http://www.uregina.ca/student/counselling/contact.html>, or call (306) 585-4491 between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saskatchewan time Monday to Friday.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

U of R: Ensuring that you understand and follow the principles of academic integrity and conduct as laid out by the University of Regina (available at <http://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/grad-calendar/policy-univ.html>) is vital to your success in graduate school. Ensuring that your work is your own and reflects both your own ideas and those of others incorporated in your work is important: ensuring that you acknowledge the ideas, words, and phrases of others that you use is a vital part of the scholarly endeavour. If you have any questions at all about academic integrity in general or about specific issues, contact your course instructor to discuss your questions.

U OF S: Understanding and following the principles of academic integrity and conduct as laid out in the University of Saskatchewan's Guidelines for Academic Conduct is vital to your success in graduate school (available at www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/reports_forms/reports/guide_conduct.php). Ensuring that your work is your own and reflects both your own ideas and those of others incorporated in your work is important: ensuring that you acknowledge the ideas, words, and phrases of others that you use is a vital part of the scholarly endeavour. If you have any questions at all about academic integrity in general or about specific issues, contact any faculty member and we can discuss your questions.