

JSGS 805 – Economics for Public Policy Analysis

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA CAMPUS	
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OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment only
OFFICE LOCATION:	Physical office: College Building room 332.5
TERM:	Spring 2021
ROOM:	Remote
DATE AND TIME:	9am to 1pm, May 3 to May 14

This is a tentative version of the syllabus. The final version will be posted on UR courses one week before the start of classes.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Saskatchewan campus of the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy is situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis, while the University of Regina campus is situated on Treaty 4 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another. As we engage in Remote Teaching and Learning, we would also like to recognize that some may be attending this course from other traditional Indigenous lands. I ask that you take a moment to make your own Land Acknowledgement to the peoples of those lands. In doing so, we are actively participating in reconciliation as we navigate our time in this course, learning and supporting each other.

HONOUR CODE

At the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS), we believe honesty and integrity are fundamental in a community dedicated to learning, personal development, and a search for understanding. We revere these values and hold them essential in promoting personal responsibility, moral and intellectual leadership, and pride in ourselves and our University.

As JSGS students, we will represent ourselves truthfully, claim only work that is our own, and engage honestly in all academic assignments.

Since articulated standards and expectations can influence attitudes, and because each of us shares the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity (see below for details on academic integrity at the JSGS), we are committed to upholding the Academic Honor Code.

Academic Honour Pledge

As a member of the JSGS community, I pledge to live by and to support the letter and spirit of JSGS's Academic Honour Code.

REMOTE LEARNING CONTEXT

We acknowledge the complex circumstances – i.e., a worldwide pandemic – in which this course is taking place. Since remote teaching and learning context is new to both instructors and students, all participations should interact with empathy, patience and care. Links to online learning resources are provided below.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide an economic framework for the analysis of public policy. The course equips students with microeconomic concepts to analyze and evaluate 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 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.

COURSE APPROACH

JSGS 805 will be delivered remotely, by blending both synchronous and asynchronous modalities. Asynchronous pieces will be posted on UR courses, while synchronous sessions will be scheduled via Zoom. **The course is structured around 10 topics, synchronous Zoom sessions, one discussion forum, 2 quizzes, and one written assignment.** Quizzes will be administered online during a set time.

COURSE TEXTBOOK

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

1. **Principles of Microeconomics** by Douglas Curtis and Ian Irvine (2017 edition) 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.

May 3: The value of economics and economic thinking

May 4: Decision making by consumers and consumer's demand

May 5: Decision making by the firm and producer's supply

May 6: Market Equilibrium and price responsiveness

May 7: Market Power

May 10: Market Failure and Interventions

May 11: Fairness and Efficiency

May 12: Application of microeconomic principles

May 13: Quiz #1

May 14: Quiz #2

EVALUATION

20% Class Participation: Active engagement in learning is expected from all JSGS students. Engaging does not mean just attending. It is contributing, it is taking initiative, it is demonstrating motivation. Engagement in an online course will be different than participation in an in-person class. You will have an opportunity to engage by asking questions and offering topic-related comments during Zoom sessions and also participating in-class group discussions.

10% Forum Discussion: Students will offer their thoughts and reflective feedback on a topic posted for discussion by the instructor. Due date: May 12.

15% Quiz #1: This open-book quiz will be held during regular class time on Thursday, May 13. There will be no Zoom session on this day.

15% Quiz #2: This open-book quiz will be held during regular class time on Friday, May 14. There will be no Zoom session on this day.

40% Written Assignment: The format for this assignment will be the briefing note. It will be posted on UR courses on May 14 at 1pm, and it will be due on May 21 at 1pm. Details will follow.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignment will be assigned a penalty of 5% for each day after the due date; assignments more than a week late will lose a full grade; special circumstances may be considered upon application by the student.

JSGS GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

85+ excellent

A superior performance with consistent strong evidence of:

- a comprehensive, incisive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make insightful critical evaluation of the material given;
- an exceptional capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently; and
- an excellent ability to apply theories to real-world problems and intersect with related disciplines.

80-85 very good

An *excellent performance* with strong evidence of:

- a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make sound critical evaluation of the material given;
- a very good capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently; and
- a strong ability to apply theories to real-world problems and intersect with related disciplines.

75-80 good

A *good performance* with evidence of:

- a substantial knowledge of the subject matter;
- a good understanding of the relevant issues and a good familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- some capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- a good ability to organize, to analyze, and to examine the subject material in a critical and constructive manner; and
- some ability to apply theories to real-world problems and intersect with related disciplines.

70-75 satisfactory

A *generally satisfactory and intellectually adequate performance* with evidence of:

- an acceptable basic grasp of the subject material;
- a fair understanding of the relevant issues;
- a general familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- an ability to develop solutions to moderately difficult problems related to the subject material; and
- a moderate ability to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to attend all the synchronous sessions. If you are unable to attend (e.g., Internet problems), you must let the instructor know.

Active participation in class discussion is expected by all students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

Understanding and following the principles of academic integrity and conduct 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. The JSGS has developed an Honour Code (see above) that encapsulates these values.

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. For more information, please see:

Academic Integrity – <https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-students/academic-integrity/index.html>

COPYRIGHT

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University of Regina Copyright information: <https://www.uregina.ca/copyright/guidelines/fair-dealing.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES

Remote learning information page for students. This resource engages students in learning about the skills associated with remote learning success.

<https://www.uregina.ca/remote-learning/>

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

<https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-students/Rights%20/index.html>ights & Responsibilities of graduate students

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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 one of the following:

Centre for Student Accessibility – accessibility@uregina.ca or 306-585-4631.
<https://www.uregina.ca/student/accessibility/students/index.html>

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING STRESS

Counselling Services – <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.

USE OF VIDEO AND RECORDING OF THE COURSE

Video conference sessions in this course, including your participation, will be recorded and made available only to students in the course for viewing via Canvas after each session. This is done, in part, to ensure that students unable to join the session (due to, for example, issues with their Internet connection) can view the session later. This will also provide students with the opportunity to review any material discussed. Students may also record sessions for their own use, but they are not permitted to distribute the recordings (see below).

Please remember that course recordings belong to the instructor, the University, and/or others (like a guest lecturer) depending on the circumstance of each session, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share recordings without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about recording and use of sessions in which you have participated, including any concerns related to your privacy, please contact your instructor. More information on class recordings can be found in the Academic Courses Policy at <https://policies.usask.ca/policies/academic-affairs/academic-courses.php#5ClassRecordings>.

ADDITIONAL EVALUATION INFORMATION

More information on the Academic Courses Policy on course delivery, examinations and assessment of student learning can be found at: <http://policies.usask.ca/policies/academic-affairs/academic-courses.php>

The University of Saskatchewan Learning Charter is intended to define aspirations about the learning experience that the University aims to provide, and the roles to be played in realizing these aspirations by students, instructors and the institution. A copy of the Learning Charter can be found at: <http://teaching.usask.ca/about/policies/learning-charter.php>.