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ECONOMICS 231 PUBLIC ECONOMICS: GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mon./Wed. 10:30-11:50, Economics 210 http://econ.ucsd.edu/faculty/negordon/econ231.html

This course covers the role of government expenditures in the economy. We will begin with a discussion of optimal government expenditure and the public goods problem. We then cover political economy and public finance. Next, we consider public finance in a system with multiple jurisdictions. We cover cost-benefit analysis and program evaluation, and review empirical research on public education. Each topic in the course will be motivated by the theoretical work in the relevant area, but the emphasis of the course is empirical. A main goal of the course is to teach you how to conduct and evaluate empirical research on government expenditure programs. The most important topics in government expenditures that are *not* included in this course are social insurance, and redistribution (which are covered in Julie Cullen's winter public economics course).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course requires a paper proposal (in two drafts) and a final exam.

The first draft of the **paper proposal** (about 10 pages) will pose a question in public economics, motivate that question, and place it in the context of the existing literature. Each student must meet with me individually before October 29 to discuss the proposal. The second draft must refine the first draft, and, additionally, describe an appropriate data set (that actually exists) and empirical methodology for answering the question. (Theoretical papers are also acceptable, but I expect that most students will choose an empirical topic to prepare for the econometrics writing requirement.) The goal of this assignment is for you to have a "blueprint" for carrying out an original research project. The first draft of the proposal will be due November 5 and counts for 15% of the grade. The final draft of the proposal will be due December 6 and counts for 35% of the grade.

The cumulative **final exam** will be in class on Wednesday, <u>December 1</u>, and counts for 50% of the grade.

Note: there will be no class on Wednesday, November 24.

Class calendar

Monday	Wednesday
Sept. 27	Sept. 29
Introduction to course	Externalities theory
What is public economics?	
*Feldstein	*Laffont Ch. 1
Oct. 4	Oct. 6
Externalities empirical	Public goods theory
*Chay and Greenstone; Dee	*Laffont Ch. 2
Oct. 11	Oct. 13
	Public goods – empirical
No class – Columbus Day holiday	*Andreoni; Fischel; Brunner & Sonstelie
Oct. 18	Oct. 20
Social choice	Empirical estimates of demand for public goods
*Laffont Ch. 4 and 5	Hedonic estimates
	Demand analysis
	*Black; Gyurko & Tracy; Gramlich & Rubinfeld
Oct. 25	Oct. 27
Empirical estimates of demand for public goods	Political economy of government
Flypaper effect	, C
*Gordon; Knight	*Persson & Tabellini
Nov. 1	Nov. 3
Political economy of government	Public finance with multiple jurisdictions
	Tiebout model
*Cutler, Elmendorf, & Zeckhauser; Lee, Moretti, &	Club goods
Butler	*Rubinfeld; Scotchmer
Nov. 8	Nov. 10
Public finance with multiple jurisdictions	Paper proposal draft 1 due
Empirical	Public finance with multiple jurisdictions
•	Intergovernmental grants
*Farnham & Sevak; Alesina, Hoxby, & Baqir	Empirical evidence on grants
•	*Baicker & Staiger; Cullen
Nov. 17	Nov. 17
Elementary and secondary education in the US	Elementary and secondary education in the US
School finance	The production of education
*Fernandez & Rogerson; Hoxby	*Hanushek; Jacob
Nov. 22	Nov. 24
Higher education	No class meeting
Early childhood interventions	
*Dynarski; Blau & Currie	
Nov. 29	Dec. 1
Student research presentations	Final exam
Dec. 6 Paper proposal draft 2 due	

READINGS: Required readings are in bold.

Index of Journal Abbreviations

AER = American Economic Review

EMA = Econometrica

JEL = Journal of Economic Literature

JEP = Journal of Economic Perspectives

JHR = Journal of Human Resources

JOLE = Journal of Labor Economics

JPE = Journal of Political Economy

JPubE = Journal of Public Economics

NTJ = National Tax Journal

QJE = Quarterly Journal of Economic

REStat = Review of Economics and Statistics

REStud = Review of Economic Studies

General References

- A. Atkinson and J. Stiglitz, <u>Lectures in Public Economics</u> (New York: McGraw Hill, 1980).
- A. Auerbach and M. Feldstein, eds., <u>Handbook of Public Economics: Volumes 1 & 2</u> (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1985 and 1987).
- *J. Laffont, <u>Fundamentals of Public Economics</u> (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988). Note: this is an e-book from UCSD library, not in UCSD bookstore, available new and used on Amazon.
- G. Myles, Public Economics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- H. Rosen, Public Finance, 6th edition (New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2002).
- J. Stiglitz, Economics of the Public Sector, 2nd edition (New York: Norton, 1988).

Note: Some papers listed as working papers may now be published in journals and not cited here.

0. Introduction to the Course

*M. Feldstein, "The Transformation of Public Economics Research: 1970-2000," *Journal of Public Economics*, 86.3 (December 2002), 319-26.

http://www.nber.org/feldstein/publiceconomics.html

1. Optimal Expenditure Policy

1.1 Externalities

- J. Andreoni and A. Levinson, "The Simple Analytics of the Environmental Kuznets Curve," *Journal of Public Economics*, v 80, 2001, 269-286.
- A. L. Bovenberg and R. A. de Mooij, "Environmental Levies and Distortionary Taxation," *American Economic Review*, September 1994, 1085--1089.
- *K. Chay and M. Greenstone, "The Impact of Air Pollution on Infant Mortality: Evidence from Geographic Variation in Pollution Shocks Induced by a Recession." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(3) (August 2003).

http://econ-www.mit.edu/faculty/download pdf.php?id=838

- R. Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost," Journal of Law and Economics, 1960, 1--44.
- *T. Dee, "Are There Civic Returns to Education?" *Journal of Public Economics* 88 (9), August 2004, 1697-1720.

http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/tdee1/Research/jpubec04.pdf

- A. Dixit, and M. Olson, "Does Voluntary Participation Undermine the Coase Theorem?" *Journal of Public Economics*, June 2000, 309-336.
- L. Ebrill and S. Slutsky, "Time, Congestion and Public Goods," *Journal of Public Economics*, 1982, 307-335.
- D. Fullerton, "Environmental Levies and Distortionary Taxation: Comment," *American Economic Review*, March 1997, 245--251.
- D. Fullerton and G. Metcalf, "Environmental Controls, Scarcity Rents, and Pre-existing Distortions," Journal of Public Economics, v 80, 2001, 249—67.
- J. Greenwood and R. P. McAfee, "Externalities and Assymetric Information," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, February 1991, 103--122.
- G. Harden, "The Tragedy of the Commons," Science, 1968, December.

Laffont, Chapter 1.

G. Metcalf, "Environmental Levies and Distortionary Taxation," *Journal of Public Economics*, February 2003, 87(2), 313-322.

1.2 Efficient Public Goods Provision

- A. Atkinson and N. Stern, "Pigou, Taxation and Public Goods," REStud 41 (1974), 119-128.
- A. Atkinson and J. Stiglitz, Chapter 16.
- C. Ballard and D. Fullerton, "Distortionary Taxes and the Provision of Public Goods," JEP 6 (1992), 117-131.
- R. Boadway and M. Keen, "Public Goods, Self-selection, and Optimal Income Taxation," *International Economic Review* 34 (1993), 463-78.
- T. Gaube, "When do Distortionary Taxes Reduce the Optimal Supply of Public Goods?," *JPubE* 76 (2000), 151-180.
- L. Kaplow, "The Optimal Supply of Public Goods and the Distortionary Cost of Taxation," *NTJ* 49 (1996), 513-533.
- M. King, "A Pigouvian Rule for the Optimal Provision of Public Goods," JPubE 30 (1986), 273-292.

*J. Laffont, Chapter 2.

- G. Myles, Chapter 9.
- P. Samuelson, "The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure," *REStat* 36 (1954), 387-389.
- J. Wilson, "Optimal Public Good Provision with Limited Lump-Sum Taxation," AER 81 (1991), 153-66.

1.3 Voluntary Private Provision of Public Goods

- J. Andreoni, "Impure Altruism and Donations to Public Goods: A Theory of Warm-Glow Giving?," Economic Journal 100(401) (1990), 464-77.
- *J. Andreoni, "An Experimental Test of the Public Goods Crowding Out Hypothesis," *AER* 83 (December 1993), 1317-27.
- J. Andreoni and T. Bergstrom, "Do Government Subsidies Increase the Private Supply of Public Goods?," *Public Choice* 88 (1996), 295-308.
- T. Bergstrom, L. Blume, and H. Varian, "On the Private Provision of Public Goods," *JPubE* 29 (1986), 25-49
- *E. Brunner and J. Sonstelie, "School Finance Reform and Voluntary Fiscal Federalism," *Journal of Public Economics*, 2003, 87(9-10) 2157-2185.
- C. Clotfelter, <u>Federal Tax Policy and Charitable Giving</u> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), Chapters 1 and 2.
- *W. Fischel, "Did Serrano Cause Proposition 13?," NTJ 42 (December 1989), 465-473.
- L. Kaplow, "A Note on Subsidizing Gifts," JPubE 58 (1995), 469-78.
- B. Kingma, "An Accurate Measurement of the Crowd-Out Effect, Income Effect, and Price Effect for Charitable Contributions," *JPE* 97 (1989), 1197-1207.
- J. Ledyard, "Public Goods: A Survey of Experimental Research," in J. Kagel and A. Roth, eds., <u>The</u>
 Handbook of Experimental Economics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 111-194.
- E. Ley, "On the Private Provision of Public Goods, A Diagrammatic Approach," *Investigaciones Economicas* 20(1) (1996), 691-704.
- J. Morgan, "Financing Public Goods by Means of Lotteries," REStud 67(4) (2000), 761-84.
- R. Roberts, "Financing Public Goods," JPE 95 (1987), 420-437.
- J. Weimann, "Individual Behavior in a Free Riding Experiment," *JPubE* 54 (1994), 185-200.

1.4 Providing Public Goods with Perfect and with Asymmetric Information

- A. Atkinson and J. Stiglitz, Chapter 10.
- R. Barnett, "Preference Revelation and Public Goods" in P. Jackson, ed., <u>Current Issues in Public Sector Economics</u> (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 94-131.
- T. Bergstrom and R. Cornes, "Independence of Allocative Efficiency from Distribution in the Theory of Public Goods," *EMA* 51(6) (1983), 1753-1765.
- Y. Chen and C. Plott, "The Groves Mechanism: An Experimental Study of Institutional Design," *JPubE* 59 (1996), 335-364.
- Y. Chen and F. Tang, "Learning and Incentive-Compatible Mechanisms for Public Goods Provision: An Experimental Study," *JPE* 106 (1998), 633-62.

- E. Clarke, "Multipart Pricing of Public Goods," Public Choice 8 (1971), 19-33.
- T. Groves and J. Ledyard, "Optimal Allocation of Public Goods: A Solution to the `Free-Rider' Problem," *EMA* 45(4) (1977), 783-809.
- E. Lindahl, "Just Taxation A Positive Solution," in R. Musgrave and A. Peacock, eds., <u>Classics in the</u> Theory of Public Finance (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).
- H. Varian, "A Solution to the Problem of Externalities When Agents are Well-Informed," *AER* 84 (December 1994), 1278-1293.

1.5 Social Choice Theory: The Median Voter Model

- K. Arrow, Social Choice and Individual Values (Yale University Press, 1963).
- T. Bergstrom, "When Does Majority Rule Supply Public Goods Efficiently?" *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* (1979), 216-226.
- H. Bowen, "The Interpretation of Voting in the Allocation of Resources," *OJE* 58 (1943), 27-48.
- A. Caplin and B. Nalebuff, "On 64% Majority Rule," EMA 56 (1988), 787-814.
- A. Denzau and R. MacKay, "Benefit Shares and Majority Voting," AER 66 (1976), 69-76.
- T. Feddersen and W. Pesendorfer, "The Swing Voter's Curse," AER 86 (1996), 408-426.
- T. Feddersen and W. Pesendorfer, "Voting Behavior and Information Aggregation in Elections with Private Information," *EMA* 65 (1997), 1029-58.
- A. Gibbard, "Manipulation of Voting Schemes: A General Result," EMA 41 (1973), 587-600.

*J. Laffont, Chapters 4 and 5.

- J. Ledyard, "The Pure Theory of Large Two Candidate Elections," Public Choice 44 (1984), 7-41.
- J. Levin and B. Nalebuff, "An Introduction to Vote-Counting Schemes," JEP 9(1) (1995), 3-26.
- C. Plott, "A Notion of Equilibrium and its Possibility Under Majority Rule," AER 57 (1967), 787-806.
- A. Sen, Collective Choice and Social Welfare (San Francisco: Holden Day, 1970), Chapters 1-3.
- K. Shepsle, "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models," *American Journal of Political Science* 23 (1979), 23-59.
- N. Tideman and G. Tullock, "A New and Superior Process for Making Social Choices," *JPE* 84 (1976), 1145-1159.

1.6 Estimating the Demand for Public Goods

- T. Bergstrom, D. Rubinfeld, and P. Shapiro, "Micro-based Estimates of Demand Functions for Local School Expenditures," *EMA* 50 (September 1982), 1183-1205.
- *S. Black, "Do Better Schools Matter? Parental Valuation of Elementary Education," *QJE* 114(2) (1999), 577-.

- D. Brookshire, M. Thayer, W. Schulze, and R. d'Arge, "Valuing Public Goods: A Comparison of Survey and Hedonic Approaches," *AER* 72(1) (1982), 165-177.
- *J. Gyourko and J. Tracy, "The Structure of Local Public Finance and the Quality of Life," *JPE* 99 (August 1991), 774-806.
- *E. Gramlich and D. Rubinfeld, "Micro Estimates of Public Spending Demand Functions and Tests of the Tiebout and Median Voter Hypotheses," *JPE* 90 (June 1982), 536-560.
- W. Oates, "Estimating the Demand for Public Goods: The Collective Choice and Contingent Valuation Methods," in D. Bjornstad and J. Kahn, eds., <u>The Contingent Valuation of Environmental</u>
 Resources: Methodological Issues and Research Needs (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1996), 211-30.
- C. Randall, "Price Specification and the Demand for Public Goods," JPubE 43 (1990), 93-106.
- J. Roback, "Wages, Rents, and the Quality of Life," JPE (1982), 1257-1276.
- J. Schwab and E. Zampelli, "Disentangling the Demand Function from the Production Function for Local Public Services: The Case for Public Safety," *JPubE* 33 (1987), 245-260.
- V. Smith and Y. Kaoru, "The Hedonic Travel Cost Model: A View from the Trenches," in V. Smith, <u>Estimating Economic Values for Nature: Methods for Non-Market Valuation</u> (Cheltenham, U.K.: Elgar, 1987), pp.214-27.

1.7 Empirical Tests of the Median Voter Model

- J. Cullen, "The Incidence of Special Education Mandates," MIT mimeo (1997).
- R. Fisher, "Income and Grant Effects on Local Expenditure: The Flypaper Effect and Other Difficulties," *Journal of Urban Economics* 12 (1982), 324-345.
- *N. Gordon, "Do Federal Funds Boost School Spending? Evidence from Title I," Harvard mimeo (2001).
- J. Hines and R. Thaler, "Anomalies: The Flypaper Effect," JEP 9 (Fall 1995), 217-226.
- *B. Knight, "Endogenous Federal Grants and Crowd-out of State Government Spending: Theory and Evidence from the Federal Highway Aid Program," *AER* 92(1) (2002), 71-92.
- H. Ladd, "State Responses to TRA86 Revenue Windfalls," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 12 (1993), 82-103.
- K. Strumpf, "A Predictive Index for the Flypaper Effect," JPubE 69(3) (1998), 389-412.

2. The Political Economy of Government

2.1 The Scope and Growth of Government

- D. Bellante and P. Porter, "Public and Private Employment over the Business Cycle: A Ratchet Theory of Government Growth," *Journal of Labor Research* 19 (1998), 613-28.
- T. Borcherding, "The Causes of Government Expenditure Growth: A Survey of the U.S. Evidence," *JPubE* 28 (1985), 359-382.
- D. Feenberg and H. Rosen, "Tax Structure and Public Sector Growth," JPubE 32 (1987), 185-201.

- J. Ferris and E. West, "The Cost Disease and Government Growth: Qualifications to Baumol," *Public Choice* 89 (1996), 35-52.
- C. Holsey and T. Borcherding, "Why Does Government's Share of National Income Grow?: An Assessment of the Recent Literature on the U.S. Experience," in D. Mueller, <u>Perspectives on Public Choice</u> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- J. Matsusaka, "Fiscal Effects of the Voter Initiative: Evidence from the Last 30 Years," *JPE* 103 (June 1995), 587-622.
- S. Peltzman, "The Growth of Government," Journal of Law and Economics 23 (1980), 209-287.
- S. Peltzman, "Voters as Fiscal Conservatives," *QJE* 107 (1992), 327-362.
- T. Persson, G. Roland, and G. Tabellini, "Comparative Politics and Public Finance," *JPE* 108 (2000), 1121-61.
- *T. Persson and G. Tabellini, "Political Economics and Public Finance," NBER Working Paper 7097 (1999).
- K. Shepsle and B. Weingast, "Political Solutions to Market Problems," *American Political Science Review* 78 (1984), 417-434.

2.2 Bureaucrats and Elected Officials

- A. Alesina and D. Rodrik, "Distributive Politics and Economic Growth," QJE 109 (May 1994), 465-490.
- A. Banerjee, "A Theory of Misgovernance," *QJE* 112 (1997), 1289-1332.
- D. Baron and J. Ferejohn, "Bargaining in Legislatures," *American Political Science Review* 83(4) (1989), 1181-1206.
- M. Fiorina and R. Noll, "Voters, Bureaucrats, and Legislators: A Rational Choice Perspective on the Growth of Bureaucracy," *JPubE* 9 (1978), 239-255.
- K. Forbes and E. Zampelli, "Is Leviathan a Mythical Beast?," AER 79 (1989), 568-77.
- J. Heckman, J. Smith, and C. Taber, "What Do Bureaucrats Do? The Effects of Performance Standards and Bureaucratic Preferences on Acceptance into the JTPA Program," in G. Libecap, ed., <u>Reinventing</u> Government and the <u>Problem of Bureaucracy</u> (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1996), 191-217.
- J. Laffont, "Political Economy, Information, and Incentives," European Economic Review 43 (1999), 649-669.
- M. Marlow, "Fiscal Decentralization and Government Size," Public Choice 56(3) (March 1988), 259-69.
- G. Miller, "The Impact of Economics on Contemporary Political Science," JEL 35 (1997): 1173-1204.
- G. Miller and T. Moe, "Bureaucrats, Legislators, and the Size of Government," *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983), 297-308.
- W. Niskanen, "Bureaucrats and Politicians," Journal of Law and Economics 18 (1975), 617-643.
- W. Oates, "Searching for Leviathan: An Empirical Study," AER 75 (1985), 748-758.

- W. Oates, "Searching for Leviathan: A Reply and Further Reflections," AER 79 (1989), 578-83.
- T. Persson, G. Roland, and G. Tabellini, "The Size and Scope of Government: Comparative Politics with Rational Politicians," *European Economic Review* 43 (1999), 699-735.
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- J. Zax, "Is There a Leviathan in Your Neighborhood?," AER, 79(1989), 560-67.

2.3 Fiscal Institutions and Public Choice

- B. Abrams and W. Dougan, "The Effects of Constitutional Constraints on Government Spending," *Public Choice* 49 (1986), 101-116.
- T. Besley and A. Case, "Unnatural Experiments? Estimating the Incidence of Endogenous Policies," *Economic Journal* 110(467) (2000), F672-94.
- T. Besley and A. Case, "Does Electoral Accountability Affect Economic Policy Choices? Evidence from Gubernatorial Term Limits," *QJE* 110 (August 1995), 769-798.
- K. Bradbury, C. Mayer, and K. Case, "Property Tax Limits and Local Fiscal Behavior: Did Massachusetts Cities and Towns Spend Too Little on Town Services Under Proposition 2 ½?," Federal Reserve Bank of Boston mimeo (1997).
- *D. Cutler, D. Elmendorf, and R. Zeckhauser, "Restraining the Leviathan: Property Tax Limitation in Massachusetts," *JPubE* 71(3) (1999), 313-34.
- T. Downes, R. Dye, and T. McGuire, "Do Limits Matter? Evidence on the Effects of Tax Limitations on Student Performance," *Journal of Urban Economics* 43 (1998), 401-17.
- R. Dye and T. McGuire, "The Effect of Property Tax Limitation Measures on Local Government Fiscal Behavior, *JPubE* 66(3) (December 1997), 469-87.
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- D. Holz-Eakin, "The Line Item Veto and Public Sector Budgets: Evidence from the States," *JPubE* 36 (1988), 269-292.
- *D. Lee, E. Moretti, and M. Butler, "Do Voters Affect or Elect Policies? Evidence from the U.S. House" QJE 119(3) (August 2004), 807-859. http://elsa.berkeley.edu/users/dslee/wp/final.pdf
- J. Poterba, "State Responses to Fiscal Crises: The Effects of Budgetary Institutions and Politics," *JPE* 102 (August 1994), 799-821.

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- J. Poterba and K. Rueben, "The Effect of Property-Tax Limits on Wages and Employment in the Local Public Sector," *AER* 85(2) (May 1995), 384-89.
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- J. Vigdor, "Other People's Taxes: Nonresident Voters and Statewide Limitation of Local Government," forthcoming, *Journal of Law and Economics*. http://trinity.aas.duke.edu/~jvigdor/mvnrtlfinal.pdf
- J. von Hagen, "A Note on the Empirical Effectiveness of Formal Fiscal Restraints," *JPubE* 44 (March 1991), 199-210.
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3. Public Finance with Competing Jurisdictions

- 3.1 Jurisdictional Competition: Theory and Evidence
- *A. Alesina, C. Hoxby, and R. Baqir, "Political Jurisdictions in Heterogeneous Communities," *JPE* 112 (April 2004), 348-96.
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