

University of California, San Diego  
Department of Economics  
Fall 2021

Professor Katherine Meckel  
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## **ECONOMICS 151: Public Econ, Expenditures I (Sections A & B)**

Overview of the public sector in the United States and the scope of government intervention in economic life. Theory of public goods and externalities. Discussion of specific policies, such as mandates and taxes, and expenditure programs, such as education and welfare.

**Lectures:** Tuesday and Thursday, on Zoom. **Section A:** 11:00 AM to 12:20 PM. **Section B:** 12:30 PM to 1:50 PM Lectures will also be recorded and posted to Canvas. Please find the Zoom invitation information on Canvas under “Zoom LTI Pro” in the lower left-hand corner of the Course website.

**Textbook:** Jonathan Gruber’s Public Finance and Public Policy, 6th Edition. Earlier versions are OK, but homeworks may reference page numbers and problem numbers that change across editions.

**Website:** Class Materials on Canvas: Syllabus, Problem sets and Answer Keys, Lecture notes, Practice Exams from previous quarter.

**Pre-Requisites:** ECON 100C (Microeconomics C)

**Professor’s Office Hours:** W: 11 AM – 12 PM. Please email me (kmeckel@ucsd.edu) before the start of office hours and I will send you a Zoom link.

### **Teaching Assistants:**

Andre Gray ([adgray@ucsd.edu](mailto:adgray@ucsd.edu)), weeks 1-5  
Hannah Bae ([hbae@ucsd.edu](mailto:hbae@ucsd.edu)), weeks 6-11

### **TA Discussion Section**

W: 1:00-1:50 PM via Zoom. Discussion sections will be recorded and posted to canvas. The Zoom invitation information is available on Canvas under Zoom LTI Pro. The TA section is helpful for understanding how to solve the problem sets due the next day.

### **TA Office Hours:** Tue, 9-10 AM PST

Andre (weeks 1-5): I’ll have my Zoom open but will also be available in my office (Office ECON 123) if you prefer to meet face to face. You can use the same Zoom link as for Discussion

Hannah (weeks 6-11): on Zoom <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/93212936134>, Meeting ID: 932 1293 6134

**Grading:**

Homeworks (best 6/7):	20%
Midterm Exam 1:	20%
Midterm Exam 2:	20%
Final Exam:	40%

**Homework:**

- All homework is due as an Assignment submission on Canvas, by:
  - 11:00 AM on Thursday (**Section A**)
  - 12:30 PM on Thursday (**Section B**)
- Homeworks are graded pass/fail. Pass indicates that “a serious attempt was made to solve all problems.” Note that there is a significant penalty for not turning any homework in.
- Students are encouraged to collaborate on problem sets, but everyone must write up his or her own answers.
- The lowest homework will be dropped

**Exams:**

- Exams include a mixture of conceptual problems and analytical problems. The final is cumulative.
- There will be no make-up exams. Please see UCSD policy regarding missing exams here: <https://senate.ucsd.edu/operating-procedures/educational-policies/courses/epc-policies-on-courses/policy-exams-including-midterms-final-exams-and-religious-accommodations-for-exams/>

**Final Exam:**

**Section A:** Wednesday, December 8, 11:30am to 2:30pm.

**Section B:** Friday, December 10, 11:30am to 2:30pm.

**Administrative Issues:**

- (1) Exams are open book/open notes, but you may not communicate with other classmates. To help maintain the integrity of the midterms and finals, we will require you to show your student ID when turning in your exam.
- (2) Any student found responsible for violating academic integrity will earn a failing grade for the course. In addition to the academic sanction that I impose, the Council of Deans of Student Affairs will impose a disciplinary penalty. For a review of UCSD policy, please see <http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm>.
- (3) If you have a documented disability, please bring your documentation and come to talk to me as soon as possible so that I can make suitable accommodations for you. If you believe that you may have a disability and will desire accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities, Building 202 University Center

**Course Schedule (Preliminary, subject to change)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading (Gruber)</b>	<b>Homework</b>
<b>Week 1</b>			
Thursday, 9/23	Introduction to US Public Sector	Chapter 1	
<b>Week 2</b>			
Tuesday, 9/28	Intro/Theory of Public Finance	Chapter 1/2	
Thursday, 9/30	Theory of Public Finance	Chapter 2	HW 1 due
<b>Week 3</b>			
Tuesday, 10/5	Theory of Public Finance	Chapter 2	
Thursday, 10/7	Empirical Tools	Chapter 3	HW 2 due
<b>Week 4</b>			
Tuesday, 10/12	Empirical Tools	Chapter 3	
Thursday, 10/14	Empirical Tools, Externality Theory	Chapter 3/5	HW 3 due
<b>Week 5</b>			
Tuesday, 10/19	Externality Theory	Chapter 5	
Thursday, 10/21	<b>Midterm #1</b>		
<b>Week 6</b>			
Tuesday, 10/26	Externality Theory	Chapter 5	
Thursday, 10/28	Externalities: Theory/Applications	Chapter 5/6	HW 4 due
<b>Week 7</b>			
Tuesday, 11/2	Externalities: Applications	Chapter 6	
Thursday, 11/4	Externalities: Applications	Chapter 6	HW 5 due
<b>Week 8</b>			
Tuesday, 11/9	Theory of Public Goods	Chapter 7	
Thursday, 11/11	NO CLASS / VETERANS DAY		HW 6 due
<b>Week 9</b>			
Tuesday, 11/16	Theory of Public Goods	Chapter 7	
Thursday, 11/18	<b>Midterm #2</b>		
<b>Week 10</b>			

Tuesday, 11/23	Theory of Public Goods	Chapter 7	
Thursday, 11/25	NO CLASS / THANKSGIVING		
<b>Week 11</b>			
Tuesday, 11/30	Education	Chapter 11	
Thursday, 12/2	Education	Chapter 11	HW 7 due