

## I. Course & Instructor Information:

**ECON 350-6**

**Class Location: Golisano 205**

**Dr. Lawrence Ogbeifun**

**Office Location: Golisano 248**

\***Additional course costs:** Specify out-of-pocket costs for students (ex.: lab or studio fees, excursions)

## II. Course Description and Procedures

- **Catalog Description:** Provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the subset of public (government) policies that are fiscal in nature. Such policies include government taxation, expenditures, and debt. This course will mainly focus on the federal (national) government, but many of the analyses are also directly applicable to state, regional, and local governments.

- **Learning Outcomes & Assessment:**

1. Understand the economic basis for government activity.
  - ❖ Exams
2. Understand government expenditures and policies in the United States.
  - ❖ Exams, case studies, and homework assignments
3. Explain the financing of government expenditures.
  - ❖ Exams, discussions, and homework assignments
4. Understand taxation theory and structure.
  - ❖ Quizzes and group projects

- **Texts and Other Instructional Materials:**

The materials for the course will be Public Finance: A Contemporary Application of Theory to Policy, 12<sup>th</sup> edition, 2021, by *David N. Hyman*. Cengage Publishing. ISBN 978-0-357-44215-9. I will also provide lecture notes throughout the semester, and students will have access to articles available freely on the web or through the Hartwick College Library's subscriptions and publicly available data.

- **Grading/Evaluation:**

Homework consists of traditional assignments from each chapter. Four problem sets will be distributed and will be due by the time specified on D2L. **There will be no extension.** You should make arrangements to turn in your work early if you expect a conflict to arise at the time the homework is due. **Students can work in small groups and discuss problem sets.** Every student is, however, responsible for their own personal write-up and must upload an individual version of the homework on D2L.

### **In-class task & Debate**

The class will be divided into teams. Each team consists of several students. Students will know their team members from drawing a lot. Once the groups are established at the beginning of the course, it will be very difficult to change teams in the middle of the semester due to continuity. There will be **two (2) debates** throughout the semester.

Students need to review the readings and slides before class, as each chapter will have an in-class task.

Homework	20%
In-class tasks & Debates	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%

<u>Final Exam</u>	30%
TOTAL	100%

- **Attendance:**

Hartwick requires that students attend all classes and that faculty take attendance. Attending class is crucial to your success in this class. Attendance tip: I encourage you to make a friend in class and support each other to attend, be on time, and submit assignments. Of course, if you have a documented illness or there's a death in the family, your absence will be allowed. You are expected to find out what you missed and complete all missed work. Please take advantage of my office hours. If you need to miss a class, please email me **before** you miss the class.

- **Academic Accommodations**

**Hartwick College is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students, and welcomes students with disabilities into all the College's educational programs.** The AccessAbility Services Office is responsible for the determination of appropriate modifications for students who encounter barriers due to a disability. If a student with a disability wishes to request academic accommodations, they should contact Lara Sanford, Director of AccessAbility Services and Academic Inclusivity, at [sanfordl@hartwick.edu](mailto:sanfordl@hartwick.edu) or [AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu](mailto:AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu). To serve you best, requests should be made as early as possible. Please let me know if you have questions or need assistance. **I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design.** I am always happy to consider creative solutions provided they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

Please feel welcome to work with me as your partner in designing a learning experience that best leverages your strengths and meets your needs -- let's communicate as regularly and as often as you feel comfortable doing.

- **Course Schedule:** See the page 3.

- **Inclement Weather Plans:**

Faculty should include "inclement weather" instructions in their syllabi. These instructions should specify either that there will be an asynchronous activity or that class will be held virtually (with the videoconference link provided).

- **AI Statement:**

I expect that many of you will/do use AI (Chat GPT and image generation tools, at minimum). Learning to use AI is an emerging skill. Please be aware of its limitations:

- If you provide minimum effort prompts, you will get low results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes, which will take work.
- Don't trust anything that it says. If it gives you a number or a fact, assume that it is wrong unless you either know the answer or can check it with another source. You will be held responsible for any errors or omissions the tool provides. It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a *tool*, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please footnote its use in writing that explains your use of AI. Please share what you used the tool for and what prompts yielded the best result. Failure to do so is in violation of academic honesty policies and will be considered plagiarism.
- Be thoughtful about when this tool is useful, don't use it if it isn't appropriate for the case or circumstance.

### III. Course & College Policies and Campus Resources

In addition to any of your own, individual course policies about cell phones, recording participants, eating/drinking in class, etc., please provide links to the following College policies on the website (or phone numbers for resources) and indicate that students are expected to be familiar with and abide by these policies:

- **Academic Honesty:** <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/academic-affairs/academic-policies/>
- **Title IX/Sexual Misconduct:** <https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/employment/human-resources/title-ix/>
- **Covid-19:** <https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/covid-19-updates/>
- **Counseling:** <https://www.hartwick.edu/campus-life/health-wellness/counseling-center/>  
Counseling Center Phone: (607) 431-4420; Heart Peer Counselors Phone: (607) 431-5050.

Should you wish to include standardized language about any of these policies, recommended language from OAA is available here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZKioG3e8oR5VT79ni7X4aA2X7doQwKrwHvR5maOqmOM/edit?usp=sharing>.

#### Tentative Schedule

##### 1. **The Economic Basis for Government Activity**

- ❖ Individuals and Government (Chapter 1)
- ❖ Efficiency, Markets, and Government (Chapter 2)
- ❖ Externalities and Government Policy (Chapter 3)
- ❖ Public Goods (Chapter 4)
- ❖ Public Choice and Political Process (Chapter 5)

##### 2. **Financing Government Expenditure**

- ❖ Introduction to Government Finance (Chapter 10)
- ❖ Taxation, Prices, Efficiency (Chapter 11)
- ❖ Budget Balance and Government Debt (Chapter 12)

##### 3. **Taxation: Theory and Structure**

- ❖ Theory of Income Taxation (Chapter 13)
- ❖ Taxation of Personal Income in U.S. (Chapter 14)
- ❖ Taxation of Corporate Income (Chapter 15)
- ❖ Taxes on Consumption and Sales (Chapter 16)
- ❖ Taxes on Wealth, Property, and Estates (Chapter 17)

##### ❖ **DEBATE**

Topic: should the government tax the elite for higher taxes, and why?

Topic: Should President Biden forgive student loans? Materials ([Student debt relief plan explained](#); [Practice 1](#); [Practice 2](#); [Practice 3](#))