

ECONOMICS 4221
Political and Public Choice Economics
Spring 2012

Professor:

Web: <http://spot.colorado.edu/~mertens>

Office Hours: T,R 10:45am-12:10pm; T 3:15-5:00pm; and by appointment

Course Overview:

Political and public choice economics can be defined as the analysis of decision-making in non-traditional market settings, specifically political market settings, using economic models. Essentially, the individual utility-maximizing agent that acts in economic markets also acts in the political arena. Therefore, any policy outcomes are the product of interactions among individuals in political markets. In this framework, it is apparent that governmental decisions are the result of rational optimizing

Grading:

Class participation and attendance	15%
Article critique and presentation	11%
Semester project presentation	5%
Semester project paper	15%
Exam 1	21%
Exam 2	11%
Final exam	22%

I adhere strictly to the University guidelines on Incompletes (“An I is given only when students, *beyond their control*, have been unable to complete course requirements. A substantial amount of work must have been *satisfactorily completed* before approval.”). Bad grades, unsatisfactory performance, too many credit hours, work conflicts, etc. are not reasons for an incomplete.

Term Projects:

Students will be required to work in small groups (or possibly individually*) and choose a topic and examine it in a political economics or public choice setting. This leaves open a broad range of subject matter from which to choose, so you must submit a first-choice and second-choice topic to me by the beginning of the fourth week (2/7) and you must have an approved topic by the end of the fifth week (2/16). Your paper must emphasize the political economy or public choice aspects of the situation you are analyzing, and should most importantly be an analytical (NOT narrative) study. No paper should be longer than 8 pages (double spaced). More details on the paper are posted on the course website. Feel free to meet with me on a regular basis to discuss your paper.

Plagiarism is an academic offense and any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be sanctioned. If you are unsure or uncertain about what constitutes either cheating or plagiarism, please consult me or the University of Colorado Catalog. To insure a level playing field on this front, all papers will be submitted to turnitin.com.

Article Presentations and Critiques, and Class Participation*:

For most of the course, I will lecture and present papers, but in the last few weeks you will divide into small groups for the presentation

Exam Schedule:

Exam I: Tuesday, February 21st

Exam II: Thursday, March 22nd

Final exam: Saturday, May 5th 7:30-10pm in our usual room.

If you have three or more final exams scheduled on the same day, you are entitled to arrange an alternative exam time for the **last** exam or exams scheduled on that day. To qualify for rescheduling final exam times, you must provide evidence that you have three or more exams on the same day, and arrangements must be made with your instructor no later than the end of the sixth week of the semester (Friday, February 24th, 2012).

Grading Scale:

<u>Your score</u>	<u>Grade</u>
92% to 100%	A
90% to 91%	A-
88% to 89%	B+
82% to 87%	B
80% to 81%	B-
78% to 79%	C+
72% to 77%	C
70% to 71%	C-
68% to 69%	D+
62% to 67%	D
60% to 61%	D-
Below 59.5%	F

Additional Notes:*Honor Code*

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Additional information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode>

Religious holidays

A comprehensive calendar of the religious holidays most commonly observed by CU-Boulder students can be found at <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/> Review this list and the class syllabus. After reviewing the syllabus, please see the instructor if you believe that you need an accommodation for religious reasons. The instructor should be notified within the first two weeks of classes. Campus policy regarding religious observances states that faculty must make *reasonable* accommodation for them and in so doing, be careful not to inhibit or penalize those students who are exercising their rights to religious observance. For more information at

Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Center for Community N200, and