University of Colorado at Boulder Department of Economics

Prof. Jeffrey S.Zax zax@colorado.edu 303-492-8268 http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/Zax Economics 4231 Syllabus and Schedule 4 January 2018

Welcome. I am Pof. Jeffrey S. Zar. This is Economics 4231, Apliced Economic Analysis and Public Policy.

Course description:

This course applies economic analysis to current issues by bublic policy in the State of Colorado. It begins with an expaination of the theoretical foundations for government economic activity. It then provides a description of the structure and procedures of the Colorado General Assembly (the official name of the Colorado State legislature). It continues with detailed discussions of the basic principles of public finance, the economic justifications for government ation and the contents of specific Assembly bills. Throughout the semester, students individually choose current Assembly bills, review relevant economic treature and apply the implications of that literature and our economic principles through briefing papers, in-dass presentations and testimony at Assembly hearings. In addition, we paticipate in a cooperative project in which we rate the economic content of the bills considered during the first half of the Assembly session, and distribute these ratings to the Assembly and the public.

This course explores the challenges of integrating informed economic analysis into the legislative process. It allows students who are interested in issuesof public policy to learn both about the economicanalysis that is relevant to those issues and to apply what is relevant to the process of determining public policy. Although issuesof public policy are addressed in many courses in the Economic Department, there is no other course in the Department that engages the public policy process directly. That engagement will be valuable to the many among our students who will be caive in public policy subsequent to graduation, either through their employment or as dizens. This course should also be of benefit to the State of Colorado, because it should improve the quality and consistency of economic analysis available to the General Assembly.

This course will meet on Thusdays from 3:30 p.m. until 100 p.m. throughout the semester in Economics 205. Casseswill consist of lectures, discussions of assignments, discussions of Assembly procedures and individual presentations. You shuld expect to attend every tass. I will drop any student who is enrifted at the beginning of the semesternal who misses the first

class, 18 ahuary, without first obtaining an excuse from me. I will hold regular office hours between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Tuesola and between 200p.m. and 300p.m. on Thursdays in Eonomics 111, my office. Appointments may be made for meetings at other times, if these are inconvenient. Course information will be posted regularly on Desie2Lean. Notifications will be posted there as well, and sent via ampus email. It is your responsibility to monitor both.

Course prerequisites

This course requires previous completion of Economics 3070, Internediate Microeconomic Theory and Economics 3818, Introduction to Statistics, or their equivalents. These prerequisites willordinarily be enforced. If you have questions in this egard, contact me at the email address above.

Course requirements

Performance in this ourse will be judged on the bais of six instruments. For 80 points, or 80% of the course, each student will be responsible for choosing four bills before the Colorado General Assembly during the course of the smester. Each bill can be chosen by no more that one student. The basic assignment for each of these bills will be worth 15 points, of 15% of the course. Each assignment will consist of three components.

The first component will be a briefing paper consisting of no more than five pages with additional pages only for reference lists. The paper will summarize the relevant literaure and present an original economic analysis in language and figures that would convey the essence of the material to a general audience. Each of these papers will be worth 8 points, or 8% of the final grade.

Each paper may be submitted in up to bur drafts. The deadlines forthe find drafts are 15 February, 8 March, 5 April and 26 April, at 11:59p.m. The mousement draft as of each of these dates will be gaded. If no daft has been submitted as of these dates, the grade will be zero. Papers can be submitted prior to these dates and may have to be, depending on the Aembly schedules for the bills in question.

These papers must be type-written, double-spaced, and have conventional magins. Papers that exceed the maximum lengths, either in physical length or because of compressed format, will be penalized. They must be submitted to me electronially at the email address above in the Addbe pd format. The computers in the computer lab in the basement of the Economics Building can create pd files from Word files. Make sure that you arrange to convert your papers to .pd format before the deadline for submission. Speak with mein advance if you anticipate difficulty with this requirement. Only pdf files will be accepted.

The second and third components of the asignment for each bill can be undertaken only if the final draft of the paper attains a grade of at least 6 points out of 8. If the final draft does not attain this standard, the grades for the second and third components will both be zero.

The second component of each bill assignment will consist of confirmed dstribution of the briefing paper to appropriate members of the General Assembly. I must aprove each paper for distribution. Distribution should occur via email, with myself as one of the ecipients. Papers must be distributed after the receipt of approval, and within five days of that receipt in order to receive cedit. Each distribution will be worth 2 points, o2% of the final grade.

The third component of each bill assignment will consist of a testimony presentation. This presentation will condense the associated briefing paper into athree-minute oral presentation. This presentation will take place in class. Each of these presentations will be worth 5 points, or 5% of the final grade. Pesentations bould ordinarily follow the submission of final paper drafts. If the General Assembly schedules for the bills in question demands otherwise, yournust receive permission from me in advance.

In addition to the basic assignment associated with each bill, students will be required to present verblatestimony in perso to the Geneal Assembly. As aconsequence of the difficulty of coordinating Assembly and student schedules, this requirement will apply to any two of the four bills analyzed by each student. The accomplishment of each instance of verbal testimony will be worth 10 points, of 0% of the fial grade.

Students must receive explict approval from me before they may testify for course credit. Ordinarily, approval is ganted only if the sociated briefing paper has already been accepted, the associated oral presentation has occurred in class and has attained a grade of at least 3.5 out of 5 points. Any exerctions to this poicy must be granted by me in dvance of testimony.

The ffth graded instrument will be amid-term legislative report card, to which all students will contribute. Each student will be assigned ashare of the current Assembly bills for the purpose of evaluating their sutability as objects of government action. We will compile the evaluations of all students into a single document for distribution. Each student's contribution will be worth 10 points, or 10% of the fial grade. The legislative report card will be due on 15 March.

The sixth graded instrument is the final examination. It will examine the material in the formal lectures and readings, as well as the experience of interacting with the Assembly. It will be worth 10 points, or 10% of the final grade. It is sheduled to take place on Saurday, 5 May from 1:30p.m.-4:00p.m...

¹ University policies regarding multiple final examinations on the same day are available at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/final-examination-policy.

Excuses for course requirements will be granted only underextraordinary droumstances. If granted, the excused points will be reallocated to subsequent requirements. The our

1 February Principles of writing, externalities, job creation

University policies:

The University adheres to the standards for student privacy rights and requirements as stipulated in the FederaRights and Privacy Ad (FERPA) of 974. Campus policy regarding disabilities requires that faculty adhere to the recommendations of Disability Services. In addition, campus policy regarding religious observances equires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly accommodate all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled examinations, assignments or required attendance. Any student eligible for and needing cademic adjustments or accommodations because of disabilities should immediately submit a letter from Disability Services describing appropriate adjustments or accommodations.³

Students and faculty share responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment All are subject to the University's policies on Sexal Harassment and Amorous Relationships⁴ Students who still to adhere to appropriate behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in white students expressopinions⁵ I am happy to discussary issues of individual or group treatment in office hours or by appointment.

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to this institution's policy regarding academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, lying, bribery, threatening behavior and assistance to acts of academic dishonesty are

² A description is available at http://www.colorado.edu/registrar/resources/family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa.

³ University polices regarding religious practice are available at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absencesdassesandor-exams. University policies regarding disabilities are available at http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu. Disability Services can be contacted by telephone to 303-492-8671, orin person at Wilard 322.

⁴ University policies regarding Sexual Harassment and Amorous Relationalips are available at http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/policies. The Offce of Institutional Equity and Compliance can be reached by telephone at 303492-2127 or a http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/. The Offce of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution can be reached by telephone at 303492-5550 or a http://www.colorado.edu/oscr/.

⁵ University policies regarding dassroom behavior are available at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior.

examples of behaviors that violate this policy. Ordnarily, a student engaged in any act of academic dishonest will be reported to the Gourse. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Office. Depending on itsindings, students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to non-academic sanctions, including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion.⁶

⁶ The Honor Code website is tahttp://honorcode.cdorado.edu/. The Offce of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution can be contacted by email at studentconduct@colorado.edu or by telephone a 303-492-5550. Adaional information regarding the Student Honor Code Policy is available at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-honor-code-policy.