Instructor: J. Fred Giertz, Professor of Economics

Time and Location: 3:30-5:10 p. m., Tuesday and Thursday, Room 119, David Kinley Hall

Text: Rosen and Gayer, Public Finance, 10th edition and Burman and Slemrod, Taxes in America: What Everyone Needs to Know

Supplementary Reading:
Hindriks and Myles, Intermediate Public Economics, MIT Press (HM) (On Reserve=Business and Economics Library)
Shome, Tax Policy Handbook, IMF (S) Selected contents available on Google books website.
Tax Analysts, The VAT Reader (available on line)

Catalogue Description: Economics of Taxation
Credit: 4 hours.
Theoretical and empirical analysis of the impact of taxation on the economic system; topics include tax equity and excess burden, incentive effects of taxation, tax incidence, structure of major types of taxes (income, consumption, and wealth), normative tax analysis, and taxation in developing economies.
Prerequisite: ECON 302 or ECON 500 or equivalent.

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Office Hours: By appointment

Daily Class Schedule: http://classes.igpa.uiuc.edu/jgiertz/ECON512/Schedule512.htm

Course Outline: (See daily schedule for additional readings)

I. Introduction and Review
Overview, Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 1-3.
HM, Chs. 1, 3

II. Market Failure--Brief Overview
Public Goods, Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 4.
Externalities, Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 5. (Pigouvian taxes, environmental taxes, cap and trade) Nordhaus' Review of Stern Report

III. Principles of Taxation
Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 14-16.
Burman and Slemrod, entire book to be read over the first several weeks.
Shome, pp. 3-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-45, and 59-61. (Shome-Table of Contents)

IV. Income Taxation
Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 17-18.
HM, Ch. 15.
Shome, pp. 50-54, 117-133.
Mankiw, Weinzierl, and Yagan, Journal of Economic Perspective, Fall 2009
Diamond and Saez, The Case for a Progressive Tax: From Basic Research to Policy Recommendations

V. Business Taxes
Corporate Taxation and Business Taxation, Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 19.
Bird, Why Tax Corporations?

VI. Consumption and Wealth Taxes
Consumption, Rosen and Gayer, Ch. 21.
HM, Ch. 14
Shome, pp. 71-74, 75-79, 80-81, 82-86, 86-99, and 169-176.
Viard, Capital Income Taxation: Reframing the Debate
Zodrow, Who Pays the Property Tax?

VII. Special Topics
Avoidance and Evasion, HM, Ch. 16.
Auerbach, Tax Reform in 21st Century
Financial Transaction Taxes, The Tobin Tax: A Review of the Evidence

Examinations:

There will be three examinations in the course including the final exam. Each exam (including the final) will be counted equally. The exams will consist of multiple choice, essay, and problem questions. Study questions will be provided to help prepare for the exams. Plus and minus grade options will be used in the class.

The two midterm exams will be given in early October and early November. (Dates to be determined.) The final examination (8:00--11:00 a.m., Monday, December 16 in the regular classroom) will be non-comprehensive.

Project:

Each student will work on a project dealing with a tax policy topic. The project will consist of a presentation to the class on an approved tax topic near the end of the term.

Grading:

Plus and minus grade options will be used in the class. The course grade will be based on the following:

Exam grades: 75 percent (25 percent for each exam)
Class project: 25 percent