

San Jose State University  
Department of Economics

Dr. Tom Means  
Spring 2019

## Economics 133 Public Choice Economics

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Faculty

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Office

Hours: MW 12:00 – 1:15pm and by appointment

Add/

Drops: You are responsible for all University and Department guidelines regarding the adding and dropping of a class. Please consult the SCHEDULE OF CLASSES.

Student

Learning

Objectives:

- Learn basics of collective/political decision making
- Learn basics of rent seeking and special interest groups
- Learn basic economic analysis of local government policies

Course

Info: This is an introductory upper division course in Public Choice Theory. The course will focus on political institutions, voting, rent seeking, special interests, legislative and judicial decisionmaking, bureaucracy, and the provision of government services. Public Choice Theory approaches decisionmaking similar to the approach of decisionmaking in the private sector. Politicians and Government Bureaucrats are motivated by self-interest or purposeful behavior. A prerequisite for this course is a

principles course in microeconomics. You must be able to ~~apply~~ economic tools to analyze policies promoted by government bureaucrats and special interest groups.

I served in local government for the city of Mountain View for over 15 years. I served two 4 year terms on the City Council (Mayor in 2008), six years as a Parks and Recreation Commissioner, and served ~~on~~ the Rental Housing Commission.

As a result of my local government experience, Economics 133 will cover basic public choice theory with special emphasis on local government.

Attendance in class is highly recommended since lecture ~~material~~ will go into more depth than the text. Lecture material will also be emphasized on ~~these~~ and some lecture material is not in the text. If you are having problems with the course material, please see me early on in the course. I might be able to help you achieve better results if I know of your problem soon enough.

This is a four unit course. This syllabus has learning objectives, rigor, class meeting times, and assignments commensurate with the expectation of 12 hours of work per week across ~~5~~ weeks in a semester. For reference, under a traditional ~~three~~ unit course, you were expected to complete 9 hours of work per week inclusive.

Disability: Any student with a disability requiring an accommodation should make this need known to the instructor during the first class period. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs.

#### Exams, Lab and

Homework: There will be two exams of equal weight, equally spaced throughout the course. The exams will be closed book complete grades ~~it~~ will only be considered if you have a grade of C or better. Grading will be done on a curve.

Exam #1	35%
Exam #2(Final)	35%
<u>Homework/Classroom</u> Work	30%
	100%

#### Classroom Protocol:

Turn off cell phones. You are late to class when I close the front door to the classroom. If you are late, enter thru the rear door. If you need to leave class early, sit in the rear of the classroom

#### Course Outline:

01/28(M) The Public Sector (1)  
01/30(W) Principles for Analyzing Government (2)

02/04(M) Property Rights and Economic Efficiency (3)  
02/06(W) Zoning Laws

02/11(M) Externalities (4)  
02/13(W) Local Smoking Ordinances

02/18(M) Public Goods (5)  
02/20(W) Public ParksPublic Gardens

02/25(M) Economic Role of Government (6)  
02/27(W) Local Land Development

03/04(M) Collective Action (7)  
03/06(W) Local Mariju (4 h0 (a(4 h02/-8(ol)-246 (je 3 0 4 (r)3 0035lu>>BDC -14.5

05/13(M) Local Government Budgeting Review

05/16(R) Final Exam 12:15 -2:30 pm