



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Economics

Syllabus

Public Economics and Politics

Course Code:	NEGC28
Course Title:	Public Economics and Politics <i>Offentlig ekonomi och politik</i>
Credits:	7.5
Degree Level:	Undergraduate level
Progressive Specialisation:	First cycle, has at least 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements (G2F)

Major Field of Study:
NAA (Economics)

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2025-02-21, and is valid from the Spring semester 2026 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

Economics, 60 ECTS credits, or equivalent

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

1. give an account of the meaning of the concept of economic efficiency and how the state can improve economic efficiency in case of market failure,
2. give an account of the logic of political behaviour, that is, politicians' attempts to maximize the probability of being elected, which can mean that politics may diverge from what would be optimal from the perspective of society,
3. explain the motives and driving forces of redistribution to vulnerable groups,
4. explain the motives of political interest groups, and
5. apply the principles of public economics to a problem in public finance and politics and present the result orally and in writing.

Content

The course deals with the subject of public economics and politics. It starts with a discussion of economic efficiency and motives for public intervention in the market economy, for instance in relation to market failure such as public goods and external effects. Motives for income redistribution via taxation and subsidies and their consequences for economic efficiency are discussed in relation to economic efficiency. The structure of the tax system is studied from the perspectives of efficiency and politics. Theories of the motives of interest groups and those of political parties and politicians are examined. Different perspectives are combined and compared in order to explain the growth of the public sector. The course is concluded by student group reports on a current issue in the field, which are presented and discussed in peer-reviewed seminars.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is individual and based on a written exam and a written assignment.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to Targeted Study Support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

Quality Assurance

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

Course Certificate

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

Additional information

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.