

Economics 4999 Colorado Economy

Fall 2005

Professor Barry W. Poulson

Office: Econ 10

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-2:00pm and by appointment

Syllabus

Course Objectives:

This course will introduce students to major issues confronting the Colorado economy. The initial part of the course focuses on two current fiscal policy issues: referendum C and D which will ask voters to permit the state to spend surplus revenue and issue new debt; and proposed reforms in Colorado's State Pension System PERA. The second part of the course will focus on Economic Growth, Infrastructure, and the Environment. The final part of the course explores issues in Health, Education, Welfare, and Corrections.

Course requirements:

Students are required to write three essays, one for each section of the course. All students are required to read the required readings under each issue. Students who have selected that issue as the basis for their essay are required to read the assigned readings on that issue. The assigned readings are designed to present different, often competing views on that issue. The assigned readings also include legislation in the form of bills, referendum, and initiative relating to that issue. This legislation should be used to help focus the essay on a specific controversy regarding the issue. Students are required to lay out the arguments for and against a particular proposal, take a position, and then defend that position. These essays should be between 10 and 15 typewritten pages, double spaced. They should include appropriate documentation including both a bibliography and footnotes or endnotes.

In addition to the readings on the syllabus students should develop their own bibliography in writing these essays. Additional source materials can be found in government publications such the State of Colorado. Other organizations that are useful sources of information on these issues include the National Conference of state Legislators, the National Association of State Budget Officers, the American Legislative Exchange Council, etc. National and state think tanks are also useful source for this information.

Class attendance and participation are an important part of this course. All students are required to read the required readings on each issue prior to the class in which the issue will be discussed. Students who have chosen to write essays on that issue will present summaries of their papers in class. They will be expected to discuss and defend the position they have taken on the issue with other class members. Students can miss one class in each section of the course without penalty, additional absences will result in lower grades on the topic. Students will receive three grades representing each section of

the course. Each of those grades will be based upon the essay and class attendance and participation. Each of the three grades will be equally weighted in the final grade.

Disclaimer:

This class will be conducted in conformity to all of the rules and procedures which are provided in publications by the University of Colorado

Topical Outline and Assignments

Introduction

Required Readings

Mike Bird, The Economic Development of Colorado in Historical Perspective
<http://i2i.org/article.aspx?ID=640>

Henry Sobanet, Colorado's Economy and Budget,
http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/govnr_dir/ospb/specialreports/coeconpresentation_june05.pdf

Tom Dunn, How Colorado Compares in State and Local Taxes,
http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05-01IssueBrief_StateLocalTaxes.pdf

Colorado Senate, Budget Issues 2005
http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25budget%25

Colorado Senate, Tax Issues 2005
http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25jobs%25

OSBP, Colorado Permanent Tax Relief Since 1999,
http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/govnr_dir/ospb/budget.html

Colorado Constitution (for reference purposes)
<http://i2i.org/Publications/ColoradoConstitution/iscolocn.htm>

I Fiscal Policy Issues

A. Referendum C and D

Required Reading

Referendum C Proposal, Ballot Analysis, and Fiscal Note

<http://www.leg.state.co.us/lcs/0506initrefr.nsf/89fb842d0401c52087256cbc00650696/deb289c855a0758987256ffc006efc97?OpenDocument>

Referendum D Proposal, Ballot Analysis. And Fiscal Note

<http://www.leg.state.co.us/lcs/0506initrefr.nsf/89fb842d0401c52087256cbc00650696/c72db9b85632a5e487256ffc006f9b53?OpenDocument>

Legislative Staff Discussion on Referendum C and D

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05taxandfinance.htm

Assigned Readings

Henry Sobanet and Bill skewes, Questions Regarding the State Budget,

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/govnr_dir/ospb/specialreports/coperm_taxrelief_05-06.pdf

Legislative Council, Fiscal Legislation 2005,

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05taxandfinance.htm

Bell Policy Center Source Materials Supportive of Referendum C and D

<http://www.thebell.org/index.html>

Bell Policy Center Fiscal Studies

<http://www.thebell.org/index.html>

Bell Policy Center TABOR Studies

<http://thebell.org/TaborFP.html>

Independence Institute Source Materials Critical of Referendum C and D

<http://www.taxincrease.org/>

Independence Institute Fiscal Policy Center

<http://i2i.org/fiscalpolicycenter.aspx>

Bighorn Center, Budget Policy

<http://www.coloradobudget.com/>

Vote Yes on C and D Materials supportive of Referendum C and D

<http://www.voteyesonc-d.com/modules/tinycontent/?id=2>

Vote No on C and D Materials critical of Referendum C and D

<http://www.defeatc.com/>

B. Reforming the State Pension System (PERA)

Required Readings:

Carrie Lips, State and Local Government Retirement Programs: Lessons in Alternatives to Social Security

http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=1626

Jennifer Harris, 2001 Survey of State and Local Government Employee Retirement Systems

<http://ppcc.grsnet.com/>

Publications of the State Treasurer's Commission to Strengthen and Secure the Public Employee's Retirement Association

<http://www.treasurer.state.co.us/PERAComission/>

Assigned Readings:

Gary W. Anderson and Keith Brainard, Profitable Prudence: The Case for Public Employer Defined Benefit Plans

<http://prc.wharton.upenn.edu/prc/prc.html>

George Passantino and Adam B. Summers, The Gathering Pension Storm: How Government Pension Plans are Breaking the Bank and Strategies for Reform,

www.reason.org/privatization

Publications by the Public Employee's Retirement Association (PERA)

<http://www.copera.org/PERA/about/latestnews.stm>

PERA Legislation

<https://www.copera.org/tools/Search.sjsp;jsessionid=3c302865961124201530597>

Peter J. Ferrara, Pension Liberation for Oregon

<http://www.google.com/u/cascadepolicy?q=ferrara&sa=Search+site>

SB 141 White Paper, Senate Finance Committee, Alaska Public Employee's Retirement System and Teacher's Retirement System: Problems and Solutions for the Alaska Public Pension Plans

<http://www.akrepublicans.org/stedman/24/news/sted2005072701p.php>

II Economic Growth, Infrastructure, and the Environment

A. Economic Growth

Required Readings:

Governor's Smart Growth Initiative

<http://www.colorado.gov/.governor/policy/growth.html>

Legislative Staff, Growth and Land Management Legislation 2003

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2003/research/03GROWTHANDLANDMANAGEMENT.htm

Colorado Senate, Growth Legislation 2005

http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25growth%25

Assigned Readings :

Office of Smart Growth, Smart Growth Resources (various papers)

<http://www.dola.state.co.us/smartgrowth/index.htm>

Independence Institute, Growth Policy Studies (various papers)

<http://i2i.org/ResearchAreas/Growth/index.htm>

Bell Policy Center (various papers)

<http://www.thebell.org/index.html>

B. Infrastructure: Transportation

Required Readings:

_____, Transportation Legislation, 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05TransportationandEnergy.htm

Colorado Senate, Transportation Legislation 2005

http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25trans%25

Assigned Readings

Colorado Department of Transportation, North Front Range Transportation Alternative Feasibility Report.

<http://www.dot.state.co.us/NFRTAFS/toppage1.htm>

Independence Institute, Colorado Transportation Center (various papers)

<http://i2i.org/cad.aspx>

C. Infrastructure: Water

Required Reading:

_____, Water Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05Water.htm

Colorado Senate, Water Legislation 2005

http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25water%25

Assigned Reading

Natural Resources Law Center, Water and Growth in Colorado: A Review of Legal and Policy Issues

<http://www.colorado.edu/law/centers/nrlc/publications/waterandgrowth.htm>

_____, Two Decades of Water Law and Policy Reform: A Retrospective and Agenda for the Future

http://www.colorado.edu/law/centers/nrlc/publications/2001_Conference_Report.pdf

Independence Institute, Environmental Policy Studies (various papers on water issues)

<http://i2i.org/environment.aspx>

D. Environmental Issues

Required Readings:

Legislative Staff, Natural Resource Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05NaturalResources.htm

Assigned Readings

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, Environmental Division (various papers)

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/environ.asp>

Independence Institute, Environmental Policy Studies (various papers)

<http://i2i.org/environment.aspx>

Independence Institute, Technology, Energy and Utilities

<http://i2i.org/teu.aspx>

III Health, Education, Welfare, and Corrections

A. Education K-12

Required Reading:

Legislative Staff, School Finance in Colorado, Dec. 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/schfin/cover.htm

_____, How Colorado Compares in K-12 Funding

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/schfin/k-12Funding0100.pdf

Colorado Senate, Education Legislation 2005

http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25school%25

Legislative Staff Education Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05Education.htm

Legislative Staff K-12 Student Assessments

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2000/research/00K-12studentassessment.htm

Assigned Readings

The Bighorn Center, K-12 Education.

<http://www.bighorncenter.org/index.cfm>

Headfirst, Who's Controlling Colorado's Schools?

<http://www.headfirstcolorado.org/index.php>

The Bell Center, Colorado Issues Education (various papers)

http://thebell.org/ed_op.html

Coloradokids, A Call for High School Reform

<http://www.coloradokids.org/PDF%20files/A%20Call%20for%20High%20School%20Reform.pdf>

Independence Institute, Education Policy Center (various papers)

<http://i2i.org/education.aspx>

B. Health Care

Legislative Staff, Health Care Resource Book 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05HealthCareResourceBook.pdf

Legislative Staff, Public Health Care Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05PublicHealth.htm

Legislative Staff, Health Care Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05HealthCare.htm

Colorado Senate Health Care Legislation 2005

http://www.coloradosenate.com/mainlist3.php3?subject_search=%25health%25

Legislative Staff, Health Insurance Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05HealthInsurance.htm

Assigned Readings

Bell Policy Center, Colorado Issues Health (various papers)

<http://www.thebell.org/health.html>

Health Care for All Colorado

<http://www.healthcareforallcolorado.org/>

Independence Institute, Center for Health Care Policy (various papers)

<http://i2i.org/healthcarecenter.aspx>

C. Criminal Justice and Corrections

Required Readings

Senator Marilyn Musgrave, Exploring New Ideas for Prisons

http://www.coloradosenate.com/colorado.php?news_id=135

Legislative Staff, Corrections Legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05Corrections.htm

Legislative Staff, Criminal Justice legislation 2005

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2005/research/05CriminalJustice.htm

Legislative Staff, An Overview of the Colorado Adult Criminal Justice System
res://C:\WINDOWS\System32\shdoclc.dll/http_404.htm#http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/research/01CriminalCorrections.htm

Assigned Readings

Legislative Staff, Criminal Justice Resource Page (various papers)

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/Scrollpages/CrimIssScroll.htm

_____, Criminal Justice Briefs

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/Scrollpages/CrimPubScroll.htm

_____ Criminal Justice Research Memoranda

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/Scrollpages/CrimResearchScroll.htm

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition,

<http://www.ccjrc.org/index.html>

Independence Institute, (Various papers on reforming the criminal justice and penal system)

<http://www.i2i.org/>

D. Welfare

Required Readings:

The Urban Institute, Recent Changes in Colorado Welfare and Work, Child Care, and Child Welfare Systems

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/CO_Update.pdf

Legislative Staff, Welfare Legislation 2002

http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/2002/research/02Welfare.htm

Assigned Readings

Department of Human Resources, Welfare Reform in Colorado (various papers)

http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/Text/cyf/welfare_reform/reform.html

Assigned Readings

Independence Institute, Welfare Reform papers
<http://i2i.org>

Bell Policy Center, Economic Opportunity
http://thebell.org/eco_op.html