UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Taxation, Efficiency and Welfare

2324-3-E3301M200

Learning objectives

This course aims at leading the student to analyze and apply the principles of economic efficiency, vertical and horizontal equity to the design and administration of modern tax systems. By the end of the course the student shall know how: a) to describe and analyze critically the main issues associated with the design and administration of personal income taxes and consumption taxes; b) to understand the causes and consequences of tax evasion and of international tax avoidance; c) to critically discuss contents and outomes of the public debate on tax systems and their reform.

Contents

Taxes on personal income, personal wealth and consumption.
Tax evasion in a domestic context.
Profit taxes and international tax avoidance..

Detailed program

First part:

Basic concepts:
a) efficiency, vertical and horizontal equity;
b) the revenue/Gdp ratio;
c) tax progressivity vs flat tax; individual or family taxation
d) the role of consumption taxes.
e) taxation and welfare.

Personal income taxes:
a) which tax base?
comprehensive income tax; treatment of savings; schedular approach;
b) which tax rate?
marginal and average effective tax rates;
behavioural elasticity and the Laffer curve;
propensity for redistribution and progressivity measurement;
optimal taxes
c) taxing personal wealth?

Second part:

Consumption taxes:
a) ad valorem and excise taxes; VAT functioning
b) shifting and incidence;
c) optimal consumption taxes; inverse elasticity rule and optimal variation rule; uniform taxes;
d) environmental taxes.

Tax evasion:
a) the individual choice of evasion;
b) optimal tax administration;
c) evasion of VAT (B2B and B2C)

Taxes on corporate profits and international tax avoidance:
a) efficient profit taxation;
b) issues in multinational taxation

Prerequisites

Surplus calculation for consumers and producers.

Maximization of functions of more than one variable: derivation and interpretation of first and second order conditions.

Interpretation of integral functions.

Teaching methods

Frontal teaching and group work

Lectures will be partly theoretical and partly devoted to the solution of numerical examples and exercises. Active participation to classes and exercise sessione will allow students to obtain additional points for the final evaluation.

Also, students will be offered the possibility to obtain additional points for the completion of essays on arguments indicated by the course instructor.

Assessment methods

Written exam in two parts, corresponding to the first and second parts of the detailed program as specified above. Exam questions will be partly theoretical and partly numerical.

The first part of the exam can be taken in advance (intermediate test) on the 11th april at 14.30 room u7-14. To sign up for the intermediate test a procedure will be activated through the e-learning page.

Students who obtain a positive evaluation in the intermediate text wil be allowed to take, during normal exam sessions, only the second part of the exam. This opportunity will be valid until the exam session of September 2024.

Students who do not obtain a positive evaluation in the intermediate text will take, during normal exam sessions, both parts of the exam.

The final grade wil be given by a weighted sum of grades obtained in each of the two parts and of additional points obtained during the course for a maximum of 4 points.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Theoretical lectures will be based on handouts made available on the e-learning page.

Exercise sessions will be based on the book "Esercizi svolti di economia della tassazione", A. Santoro, Giappichelli editore, Torino (*in press*)

Semester

Second semester

Teaching language

Italian

Sustainable Development Goals

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | CLIMATE ACTION