

Econ 452
State and Local Finance
Fall, 2003

Instructor: James Mak
Classroom: KUY 210
Time: TTh 12 – 1:15 p.m.
Office Hours: TTh 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.. and by appointment at Saunders 532
Office Phone: 956-8280
Email: jmak@hawaii.edu (I encourage you to communicate with me by email.)

Course Content: This course examines fiscal institutions, operations, and policy questions within U.S. state and local governments. We shall also focus on the fiscal system in Hawaii as a special case study.

Texts:

Ronald Fisher, State and Local Public Finance (Irwin, 1996). Required

Other: (not required to be purchased)

David Brunori (ed.) The Future of State Taxation (Urban Institute Press, 1998).

Robert Tannenwald, “Fiscal Disparity Among the States Revisited,” New England Economic Review (July/August, 1999).

State of Hawaii, Report of the 2001-2003 Tax Review Commission at http://www.state.hi.us/tax/pubs/2003trc_rpt.pdf.

William Fox, Should the Hawaii’s General Excise Tax Look Like Other States’ Sales Taxes?, Report to the 2001-2003 Hawaii Tax Review Commission (2003) at http://www.state.hi.us/tax/pubs/trc_app_d.pdf

Tax Foundation of Hawaii, Government in Hawaii, 1998 (i.e. the latest available).

Other readings will be assigned and distributed.

Useful Websites:

<http://www.state.hi.us/tax/tax.html> (Hawaii Department of Taxation)

<http://www.census.gov/govs/www/estimate.html> (U.S. Census Bureau source on State and Local government fiscal data for all 50 states and D.C.)

Course Requirements: Students are expected to attend all lectures and read all assigned readings. Attendance will be taken daily and will affect grades at the border-line. A mid-term (essay), a final (essay), two brief papers (about 5 pages each on a current issue.) plus homework assignments comprise the major course requirements. No late assignments are accepted and all assignments are due in class on required dates (not, for instance, in my mailbox at 12 midnight).

Grading: Mid-term, final, and short papers each comprise 25% of the final grade. Homework, etc. will comprise the remaining 25%.

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 16 at 12:00 noon.