



Module Specification

Debates in Economic Policy

Version: 2027-28, v3.0, Approved

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Debates in Economic Policy

Module code: UMED93-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2027-28

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Business and Law

School: CBL Bristol Business School

Partner institutions: None

Field: Economics

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: The module aims to develop students' capability to understand and analyse major issues relating to the underlying theory, formulation and implementation of economic policies. It engages students with cutting-edge research with impact across a range of contemporary economic policy debates, with an emphasis on sustainability. The first part of the module explores macro-financial policy debates around inflation, (financial) globalisation and monetary/fiscal architectures, and situates these within evolving paradigms of sustainable economic

development. It discusses the theoretical foundations of economic policies and links these to the patterns of integration into the global financial cycle. It discusses both the contemporary debates around rethinking the international financial architecture and the major macroeconomic challenges individual countries are facing, and how policies address these challenges.

The second part of the module examines the theories and policy responses to the ongoing global climate crisis. It aims to critically reflect on various explanations of, and ensuing solutions to, the crisis. The focus will be on the implications of economic policies on net zero pathways and effects in terms of welfare. We will explore the growth/trade-inequality-poverty links, with attention paid to the gender and race implications of economic policies.

Finally, the module explores inequalities and development, encompassing changes in the global division of labour with the consolidation of global value chains, as well as the constraints on development related to the remnants of colonialism and ongoing dependency. Inequalities will be examined intersectionally, addressing its race, gender, and class dimensions.

In particular we are concerned with constraints on policy making in a global economy increasingly marked by geopolitical tensions. In doing so we will be considering a series of factors which affect policy makers' abilities to make decisions, ranging from theoretical issues such as those surrounding economic modelling to international political economy factors, particularly the role of international institutions.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The module aims to provide an analytical perspective of contemporary issues in economic policy debates. It seeks to improve students' awareness and understanding of the problems of designing and implementing economic policies, by strengthening students' ability to critically reflect on policy issues.

This will involve students with examining the process of policy formation and the key concepts relevant to economic policies, with a comparative emphasis on competing

theoretical accounts of policy problems. With this, students will critically reflect on the application of theoretical models and relevant analytical techniques, and improve awareness and understanding of the difficulties involved in defining and implementing policies.

In addition, the educational experience may further develop the ability of the students to communicate effectively and their capacity to work independently

On completing this module, students should also develop several key transferable skills, such as: effective written and oral communication, increased awareness of data and numeracy, creative and critical thinking, synthesis, decision-making, literature searching and evaluation.

Outline syllabus: 1. Macroeconomic Policy Debates

The precise topics to be covered change every year to adjust the module to the most recent literature and the current policy debates, but on the macroeconomic part the following topics tend to be addressed: inflation targeting and globalisation, Phillips curves, shadow banking and macroprudential policies.

2. Climate Change and Economic Policy

As above, the actual topics are chosen every year, but they focus mainly on the interactions between climate policy and economic policies (monetary, fiscal, industrial).

3. Development and Inequalities

The third part of the module focuses on inequalities within countries (including gender and race inequalities) as well as on inequalities across countries, addressing the development prospects of Global South countries and the resurgent interest on industrial policy.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The teaching and learning methods used in this module are a combination of lectures, consolidation sessions, seminars, and private study. A variety of approaches to learning will be used; this will depend on the part of the syllabus being covered, but a deep level of understanding, application and critical evaluation of theory will be stressed consistently, rather than the memorisation of competing theories and technical analysis.

Seminars are a vital part of the teaching programme in which students will be encouraged to participate actively. The content of the lectures will provide the necessary background knowledge for the focus of discussion in tutorials. Analysis presented in the lecture will be augmented through the discussion of journal articles/economic and financial media in the corresponding tutorial.

Tutorials involve a number of different formats including sets of questions for all students to answer, group reporting on case study material, writing exercises, formative tests, debates and the formal discussion of important journal articles. A record of attendance will be kept during the module and any student who, for some appropriate reason, cannot attend a particular tutorial, should inform the tutor at the earliest opportunity.

After a recap of the underlying literature, some tutorials will be based around a recently published journal article. Within each tutorial group, part of the group will be presenting, discussing, and evaluating an article – in a sense, informing other members of the tutorial group of this important piece of literature. The papers discussed will also appear in the exam. The academic staff will be available if students wish to discuss the content of each paper prior to the seminar.

Students in the audience will be expected to ask questions and they will evaluate the students presenting the paper. It is in the interests of the students in the audience to actively participate in the presentations as the exam will consist of questions on the papers presented.

Students are expected to actively advance and enhance their learning journey. To achieve this goal, students will:

Prepare:

Read the required material before the lecture, writing down their questions and doubts

Complete a critical evaluation form

Answer the questions related to the material for each tutorial session.

Participate:

Engage with lectures and tutorial sessions, taking notes, asking questions and contributing to debates in classroom

Present, in a group, a critical engagement with one of the papers around which the module is structured.

Practise:

Review the tutorial questions and the critical evaluation forms after the sessions, revising the information previously included in the form and the answer previously given to the question

Apply the understanding obtained in previous sessions in the critical evaluation of subsequent required readings.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical claims and empirical arguments, contextualising them in the debates in the field.

MO2 Work effectively in teams.

MO3 Apply economic analysis and empirical findings to examine contemporary policy debates.

MO4 Evaluate the political economy factors mediating the relationship between theory and policy design.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/umed93-30-3.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/umed93-30-3.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Assessment:

- Presentation (40%): Group Presentation (25%) + Individual Reflective Report (15%)
- Set Exercises (60%): 2000-word essay (30%) + Set of Questions to be answered in 24 hours (30%)

The assessment elements are carefully integrated and mapped to module outcomes. The presentation engages students with contemporary research in economics, allowing them to develop their ability to critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical claims and empirical arguments, and situate them in the debates in the field. This ability is assessed in a group presentation, which simultaneously allows for assessing their capacity to work in groups. The presentation also includes the submission of an individual reflective report that stimulates them to reflect on their learning journey and the feedback received – both from us and their peers. The Set Exercises, in turn, complement the presentation, asking them to apply the acquired familiarity with different fields reviewed during the module to offer policy alternatives that could address specific contemporary challenges, taking into account the political economy factors that mediate the relationship between theory and policy design. This is done both in an in-depth essay and, to cover a range of policy realms, a set of questions to be answered in 24 hours.

Assessment tasks:

Set Exercise (First Sit)

Description: Two set exercises based on the materials covered in class.

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Presentation (First Sit)

Description: Group Presentation and Individual Reflective Report (1000 words)

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: Yes

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Set Exercise (Resit)

Description: Two set exercises based on the materials covered in class.

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Presentation (Resit)

Description: Group Presentation and Individual Reflective Report (1000 words)

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: Yes

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2023-24

Economics [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BA (Hons) 2024-25

Economics [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Foundation}[Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Dual} [Taylors] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Economics [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Economics [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BA (Hons) 2025-26

Economics [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BSc (Hons) 2025-26

Economics {Dual} [Taylors] WITHDRAWN BA (Hons) 2025-26

Economics [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Economics [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Economics {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2023-24