Empirical Public Finance: Inequality and Taxation

This course covers topics in income and wealth inequality, mobility and taxation. Lectures will deal with key concepts, empirical estimation approaches and measurement issues. Focus will be on discussion and critical review of facts and findings in the current literature. As part of the course, problem sets will be distributed and the students are expected to present a research article in class.

The course objective is to offer students a solid understanding of the current strands in the research on inequality and taxation, and to stimulate ideas and new research projects. Students are expected to be knowledgeable in core micro- and macroeconomics and first-year graduate econometrics.

1. Course outline

**Monday, March 22**
- Lecture 1, 09:00-12:00: Long-run trends in the distribution of income and wealth
- Lecture 2, 13:00-15:00: Wealth inequality
- Assignments: Data problem sets (Wed.); Article presentations (Thu.-Fri.)

**Tuesday, March 23**
- Lecture 3, 09:00-12:00: Taxation of top incomes
- Lecture 4, 13:00-15:00: Capital taxation

**Wednesday, March 24**
- Workshop 1, 10:00-12:00: Problem set solutions
- Lecture 5, 13:00-16:00: Inheritance and taxation

**Thursday, March 25**
- Lecture 6, 09:00-12:00: Household-distributed national accounts
- Workshop 2, 13:00-15:00: Student presentations of articles

**Friday, March 26**
- Workshop 3, 10:00-12:00: Student presentations of articles
- Lecture 7, 13:00-15:00: Summary and a look to the future

2. Readings (* denotes compulsory)

It is recommendable that students have read all the compulsory readings before the course start.

Lecture 1: Long-run trends in the distribution of income and wealth


Lecture 2: Wealth inequality


Lecture 3: Top income taxation


Lecture 4 : Capital taxation


Lecture 5 : Inheritance and taxation


Lecture 6 : Household-distributed national accounts

OECD, “Understanding National Accounts” (esp. ch 6)
* Zwijnenburg, Jorrit (2017), “Unequal distributions? A study on differences between the compilation of household distributional results according to DINA and EGDNA methodology.” OECD WP.

3. Examination

Classroom participation (article presentations) and written home exam.