



Mills Public Policy Foundation Courses

Essentials of Economics. This course provides an introduction to both microeconomics (the study of individual economic decision-makers) and macroeconomics (the study of how the economy as a whole operates). Within microeconomics, topics include the principles of supply and demand and how their interaction affects the price and quantity of goods; the theory of perfectly competitive markets and the implications of imperfect competition; labor markets and the effects of taxation and public expenditures. Topics related to macroeconomics include the business cycle, growth, inflation, unemployment, the banking system, fiscal and monetary policy, and international trade. (Mills Equivalent: ECON 204; Mills undergraduates may substitute ECON 50)

Public Policy and Economic Analysis. This course introduces students to the professional practice of policy analysis, including the uses and limitations of economics in analyzing public problems in their institutional, political, and social contexts. Students develop an understanding of how markets may not produce socially optimal outcomes. They learn how economic concepts inform the definition of social conditions as public problems, the development of policy instruments for addressing problems, and the evaluation of policy outcomes. (Mills Equivalent: PPOL 210; Mills undergraduates may substitute PPOL 15)

Introduction to Statistics. This course covers the following topics: descriptive statistics, probability, probability distributions, random variables, sampling, estimation, hypothesis, testing, statistical inference and linear regression. Examples used are drawn largely from social science. (Mills Equivalent: ECON 081/PPOL 201)

Ethics. The Mills courses address the application of ethical theory to dilemmas in public policy-making or in the behavior of public actors. (Mills Equivalent: GOVT 139/PPOL 217, PHIL 125/PPOL 207, PHIL 62, or WGSS 94/PPOL 203)

Law and Society. This course examines the dynamic relationship between law and the society it serves and controls, with an emphasis on the judicial and legislative roles in the legal process. Special consideration is given to some of the more difficult social goals and problems confronting the legal system. (Mills Equivalent: SOSC 93/PPOL 205)

Public Sector Economics. Public Sector Economics explores how government can protect our collective well being when markets fail. It examines market failures and explores policies to address the problems they cause, like pollution, congestion, poverty, inequality, and the underprovision of public goods such as public safety and scientific research. It examines who really bears the burden of taxes and analyzes government programs like welfare, Food Stamps, Medicare and Social Security. It specifically addresses issues of fairness. (Mills Equivalent: ECON 134/PPOL 215)

Quantitative Methods of Policy Analysis. This course surveys the principal analytic methods used in public policy, including decision analysis, risk analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and descriptive and econometric analysis of policy-relevant data. Students develop skills in accessing, interpreting, and applying quantitative data and secondary policy research to the analysis and evaluation of public policies and programs. As consumers of research, students are trained to identify the strengths and weaknesses of commonly utilized research designs in the causal analysis of observational data. (Mills Equivalent: PPOL 100/PPOL 200)