Spring 2026 - 63250 - 388K - Advanced Topics in Public Policy

**Introduction to Economic Measurement**

The purpose of this course is to help students understand the key economic measures that tell us about the state of the economy. These include, for example, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and other measures of output and growth; inflation and price changes; employment and unemployment; and earnings, poverty, and the distribution of income. The course will focus on learning to interpret these measures and to assess their implications for public policy.

Policy analysts are often asked to use economic statistics such as GDP, household income measures, poverty measures, and measures of both personal and national wealth for analysis purposes. To make the best use of these data, however, it is important to understand how these measures are derived and how the measurement methods used to compile the data affect their interpretation. This course aims to clarify the policy purposes of such measures and to explain why different measures are needed for different purposes. It will also give students practice in using these measures to explore policy issues through specific writing assignments.