

## Aktuelle Forschungsfragen der Empirischen Finanzwissenschaft / Wirtschaftspolitik

SS 2012

Prüfungsnr.: 107034 / 104046

### Theme: Topics in Empirical Public Economics

The seminar counts for the Master of Public Economics (as “Aktuelle Forschungsfragen der Empirischen Finanzwissenschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik”) and the Master of Economics (as “Aktuelle Forschungsfragen der Wirtschaftspolitik”) programs. Basic knowledge of empirical methods is assumed.

**Content:** The focus of the seminar is on the empirical evaluation of the effects of government policies, in particular fiscal and social policies. Topics include:

- Taxation of labor income and employment
- Distribution and welfare effects of tax reforms
- Incentive effects of social protection (public pensions, unemployment and health insurance, social welfare)
- Economic effects of cash vs. in-kind transfers
- Evaluation of social policy reforms.

A list of selected research topics with basic references will be made available at the **preliminary meeting (Vorbereitung)**. Students may suggest an empirical topic on their own. To get a feeling of the kind of empirical literature you may want to have a look at the following surveys referring to the first topic mentioned above before this meeting (both references are downloadable free of charge from the internet):

OECD (2011), Taxation and Employment, OECD Tax Policy Studies, No. 21, **Chapter 1**  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264120808-en>

Brewer M., E. Saez, A. Shepard (2011): Means testing and tax rates on earnings.  
<http://www.ifs.org.uk/mirrleesreview/dimensions/ch2.pdf>

**Grading:** Each student is expected to prepare and present a short paper (not more than 15 pages). The paper may either be a review of a couple of research papers on a specific topic or, preferably, an own original research paper. In the latter case, the student may also suggest a topic on her/his own, if suitable for the seminar. Joint work of two students is also possible in this case. Both the required paper and the presentation may be in German or English, as preferred by the student. The grade will be made up of the seminar paper, its presentation and the student's participation in the seminar.

**Schedule:** **Tuesday, 10 April, 16.00 – 18.00:** Preliminary meeting with allocation of topics for seminar papers; **Venue:** Boltzmannstr. 20, HS 328

**Friday, 11 Mai: 9 – 14:** Brief presentation of research topic, proposed methodology, data, etc. (venue t.b.a.)

**Friday/Saturday, 22-23 June:** 9 – 16, 9 – 14: Paper presentation and discussion (depending on number of paper presentations; exact time and venue tba)

**10 July:** Submission of final paper.

Dates may be changed on agreement at the first meeting.

If you want to participate in the seminar but cannot attend the preliminary meeting, send an email to [viktor.steiner@fu-berlin.de](mailto:viktor.steiner@fu-berlin.de) stating your preferred topic for the seminar paper.