“Can Taxes Ever Be Popular?”

Wednesday, May 4th
12:00 - 1:00pm

In light of the community concerns regarding COVID-19, this talk will be given as a webinar. The link will be provided on May 3rd to those that have registered by 5:00 pm on Monday, May 2nd at uccs.ucdavis.edu.

What makes a tax policy popular? It’s a commonplace that majorities of voters often want expensive public goods but rarely want to pay the bill for them—and public officials may be left scratching their heads at how to design a tax policy that can square this circle. California’s experiment with direct democracy provides an unparalleled opportunity to solve this problem because it provides an unprecedented record of thousands of tax policy proposals that have succeeded at the ballot box. This talk reports insights from a research project that uses computational methods to mine this record for evidence-based insights into how to design a tax policy that voters will actually support.

Dr. Isaac Martin is Professor and Chair of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at UC San Diego. He is the author of The Permanent Tax Revolt (Stanford University Press, 2008) and the co-editor, with Jack Citrin, of After the Tax Revolt (Berkeley Public Policy Press, 2009), among many other books and articles about the politics of taxation. His research has been covered on NPR and in the New Yorker and the Washington Post.