

PSC 5183

**Public Budgeting
And
Finance**

MPA
**MASTER OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION**

Instructor: Dr. Jamie Smith
Class Time: Weekends
Class Location: 224 Learning Center

Email: jamiesmith@ou.edu
Office: 1J30
Phone: 918-660-3381

Course Description

This course introduces students to budgeting, financial management, and fiscal analysis. The course will cover the role of the government in a mixed economy; the challenges of federalism for fiscal management; entry level budget analysis; major revenue streams and credit policies; concepts and terminology in financial reporting; and capital budgeting, debt issuance, debt management, and trends and challenges in intergovernmental fiscal relations.

This class will rely on the use of Microsoft Excel. While many of the skills will be covered in class, it would be helpful if students have a basic proficiency before class started. Additionally, OU offers free office 365 to all students. To obtain a copy of the Microsoft Office Suite, if necessary see downloads.ou.edu.

It is further recommended that students, if possible, bring a device with excel to class to work through exercises in class.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students who have fully participated and read all course material should be able to demonstrate:

1. the ability to analyze fiscal and governance challenges of state/local/nonprofit organization through discussion and assignments
2. the ability to analyze the impact of political, economic, and organizational facts on budgetary decision-making through discussion, assignments, and final projects
3. the ability to utilize spreadsheet software to conduct budgetary and financial statement analysis
4. an understanding of professional and ethical values in discussion
5. an understanding of the relationship between the global financial market and US fiscal policies through discussion and assignments.

In addition to course material, we will concentrate on three other essential skills for those working (or, planning to work) in public and nonprofit organizations: teamwork, oral presentation skills, and written presentation skills.

Textbook and Course Readings

There is one required texts for the course:

1. Mieksell, John L. 2014. *Fiscal Administration: Analysis and Application for the Public Sector. 9th Edition*. Wadsworth: Boston, MA.

Additional required reading material(s) may be indicated in the Course Schedule (below). All required reading material (with the exception of textbook material) is available on the course Canvas site.

Assignments

Lynda Excel Course

BEFORE THE START OF THE COURSE, complete the **Excel 2016 Tips and Tricks**. This course is an interactive video course offered through lynda.ou.edu. This is free to all students (in fact it is paid for by the numerous fees you pay to take classes). All students must complete this course and provide proof of completion through the Lynda course completion certificate. This course is, in total, 5h51m long. However, most of the videos are fewer than 10 minutes long, making it possible to complete the course in small chunks.

The course focuses on quick entry tools and shortcuts. This class will make heavy use of Excel. Requiring this Lynda course will ensure that every has a baseline in Excel. Even if you are already quite familiar with excel, there many tips and tricks based on the new version of Excel so you will still get something out of it. This completing this course will be with 5% of your final grade.

If you are an Excel beginner and want are more in-depth primer to the program, I will accept **Excel 2016 Essentials** course in lieu of the one described above. This Essentials course is a few hours longer and designed for those who have rarely used Excel.

Individual Participation

Active participation is one of the best and most reliable ways to demonstrate your understanding of ideas and concepts discussed in the readings and presented in class. My role (as the instructor for this course) is to provide you with a conceptual framework and to facilitate your learning. My role is not merely to deliver factual material to passive learners. The exercises and discussions in this course are intended to provide you with

an opportunity to test your knowledge, formulate ideas and strategies, respond to strategic management dilemmas, and get feedback from peers. Therefore, weekly class attendance is necessary, but not sufficient for an excellent class participation grade.

Questions and Exercises

There will be a series of questions and/or exercises to reinforce material covered in class or readings. The purpose of these assignments is to build in the muscle memory of completing tasks often required during by jobs in public budgeting and finance. These may require written narratives, spreadsheet exercises, data visualization, and etc.

The assigned questions are noted in the course schedule. While it is recommended that students complete the questions before the day the chapter is to be covered in class, the questions assigned in a given weekend are not due until 11:59 pm on the Friday immediately following a weekend class session.

Budget Advocacy

During the course of the class, students will have the opportunity to hear from both a democratic and republican member of the State House. Working in groups of 3-4 people, students will pick a department, agency, or program they wish to see protected from the coming round of budget cuts. Groups are free to chose any department, agency, or program that interests them, but groups will not be allowed to cover the same topic as another group.

The budget advocacy will be comprised of two parts written and video. The project will be evaluated both how well each component is completed and how well the pieces fit together.

Written

The first part of this final two-part assignment is to write a clear, concise executive summary that will persuade a decision maker on the issue to see the issue your way and then to take concrete action on the topic. You may approach it as a legislative staffer, a policy analyst, or an advocate for a public interest group. The decision maker has only a limited time to make a decision so your brief should be no more than five (5) single-spaced pages long. Your analysis should include a summary of the problem you are addressing, your assessment of the policy responses you propose, the theoretical basis for your position, any questions that remain unanswered, and finally, the action you recommend. Remember to consider the impact not only on the decision maker, but other stakeholders as well.

Video

The second part is to prepare a three (3) minute video to sell your position in your executive summary. The video can take whatever format is most appropriate using any

personality or resources available to you. However, the final project must be appropriately professional—which is to say uses appropriate grammar, any group member who appears on camera is professionally dressed, etc. These videos will not be published anywhere so in this case only students do not have to worry about fair use. However, any statistics, images, or music used in the video must be appropriately sourced at the end of the video. The video must clearly and concisely present your issue, analysis, recommendations, and effectively conclude.

On the last day of class videos will be shown and discussed. Groups must be prepared to answer questions on their video and issue during this class session. The paper will be due

Summary of Graded Assignments*

Outcome/Deliverable	Type	Description	Value
Lynda Excel Course	Individual	Online Excel Skills Course	5%
Participation	Individual		10%
Questions and Exercises	Individual	Written Responses to Assigned Questions and Exercises	45%
Budget Analysis	Group**	Written Assignment	30%
Budget Analysis Presentation	Group**		10%
*The instructor reserves the right to add, remove, or reorder these assignments at her discretion and in accordance with university policy **As a substantial part of the final grade for this course relies on group work, students will be given the opportunity to individual evaluate each group member's contribution to the final product after each assignment.			

Information and Reminders

Accommodation Policy

The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations in this course are requested to speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course.

Religious Observance Policy

It is the policy of the University of Oklahoma to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. If

class conflicts with a religious observance, please notify me at least 24 hours before the class in question so we may schedule appropriate make up assignments.

Internet Information

This course will make use of Canvas. Internet access and access to this platform are required for success in the course. Slides, revisions to the syllabus, readings, announcements, changes to this syllabus, etc. can all be found in the appropriate folder on the Canvas page for this course.

The primary means of communication for this course will be email. Be sure to check your OU-issued email regularly.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

All assignments are due in the Canvas at the specified time. Late assignments will be accepted for four days after the due date with a late penalty of 10 percent assessed for each day, class or otherwise, that it is late. Illness, schedule conflicts, family problems, computer issues are not valid reasons for late assignments—plan/work ahead and back up your work!

Make-up exams will be given only in extraordinary circumstances. Students are permitted to take a make-up exam/presentation only in the case of documented illness, death in the family, and approved university activity. Notification of missed exams must be received prior to the due date.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Professors have to obey rules of honest scholarship, and so do students. For more information about academic integrity, including a statement of what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism, see OU's "A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity" at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/>. When writing about, paraphrasing, or quoting the work of others, you must give proper attribution in the form of parenthetical citations and quotation marks around directly quoted phrases or sentences. Using work in this class that you have completed for another class is plagiarism. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism. Any work not resulting from the student's own efforts will result in a grade of 0 and be turned in to the property authorities. This includes plagiarized papers, copied assignments, cheating on exams, or any other dishonest activity.

Course Schedule*

Date	Time	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
3/10	5:30 - 8:30 pm	Course Introduction and Fundamental Principles of Public finance	Mikesell Chapter 1	<u>Chapter 1</u> : Qs 1
3/11	9am - 5 pm	The logic and Institutions of Budgeting Guest Speaker: Rep. Earl Sears-R	Mikesell Chapters 2, 3, and 4	<u>Chapter 2</u> : Qs 2, 4 , and 7 <u>Chapter 3</u> : Qs 2 <u>Chapter 4</u> : Qs 2 and 3
3/12	1 pm - 4 pm	Budgeting Methods and Practice	Mikesell Chapter 5	<u>Chapter 5</u> : 3, 9, 11 , and 12
3/24	5:30 - 8:30 pm	Systems and Reform	Mikesell Chapter 6	<u>Chapter 6</u> : Qs 5, and 6
3/25	9am - 5 pm	Capital Budgeting, Taxation, and Income Tax	Mikesell Chapter 7, 8, and 9	<u>Chapter 7</u> : Qs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 , and 11 <u>Chapter 8</u> : Qs 1 and 2 <u>Chapter 9</u> : Qs 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
3/26	1 pm - 4 pm	Taxes on Goods and Services Guest: Eli Potts, MPA	Mikesell Chapter 10	<u>Chapter 10</u> : Qs 1, 3, 4 , 6, and 7
4/7	5:30 - 8:30 pm	Property Taxes	Mikesell Chapter 11	<u>Chapter 11</u> : 1, 3, 4 , and 10
4/8	9am - 5 pm	Public Monopolies, Revenue, and IGR Relations	Mikesell Chapter 12, 13, and 14	<u>Chapter 12</u> : Qs 3 and 5 <u>Chapter 13</u> : Qs 1 , 2, 4, 5, and 7 <u>Chapter 14</u> : Qs 1 and 3
4/9	1 pm - 4 pm	Debt Administration	Mikesell Chapter 15	<u>Chapter 15</u> : Qs 1, 3, 4 , and 8 Presentation
4/23				Final Budget Analysis Paper Due on Canvas

*The Instructor reserves the right to add to, remove, or reorder these assignments as she sees fit and in accordance with university policy.

**The Friday following the weekend of class by 11:59PM

Questions: Bolded and red question numbers indicate questions that require excel/computational analysis.