

PADP 4630 Politics and Budgeting Process

Department of Public Administration and Policy
School of Public and International Affairs
The University of Georgia

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Office hours: By appointment

Public budgeting is central to governance. To exist and function, governments must secure resources, allocate them among competing claims, and deliver results. Students of governance need knowledge of the budgeting process before entering professional practice to effectively conduct policy analysis and manage public resources. This course accelerates the development of students by guiding them in exercises that provide a mastery of the political, economic, managerial, and legal dimensions that shape public budgeting. The knowledge and skills acquired in this course prepare students for careers in public budgeting and financial management, public policy, public management, economics, law, and as political managers.

The course follows a modular format, with specific learning objectives and skill-development identified for each of the six modules. The general learning objectives for this course emphasize core competencies of the UGA Master of Public Administration program:

- 1) *Leading and managing in public governance.* Students will learn of the unique political and legal environment of the public sector and its implications for the practice of budgeting and financial management.
- 2) *Understanding the public policy process.* Students will learn core theories of the policy process and apply these to understand budgeting systems, events, and issues at each level of government in the United States of America (USA).
- 3) *Thinking analytically and communicating to solve problems and make decisions.* Students will use various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for public policy and management. Their work must be clear, concise, and impartial.
- 4) *Articulating and applying a public service perspective.* Students will understand and appreciate the intellectual history of public budgeting, competing ideological frameworks, and major issues and controversies that have emerged over time.
- 5) *Working with a diverse workforce and citizenry.* Students will recognize, consider, and respect different perspectives in public policy and learn the implications of these different perspectives for public budgeting and financial management in the USA.

Required Materials, Tools, and Skills

Materials

*Willoughby, K. G. (2014). *Public budgeting in context: Structure, law, reform and results*. John Wiley & Sons.

*This book can be accessed in the UGA electronic library. You do not need to purchase it unless you prefer a physical copy.

Other required reading materials and videos will be posted to ELC.

Tools

Microsoft Excel 2016. Calculations **MUST** be performed using Excel. Upon entry, no knowledge of Excel is necessary. The instructor provides training throughout the course, both in the classroom and online, with custom tutorials designed for assignments.

Skills

Reading comprehension, logic, communication, and a basic understanding of American government. The only mathematical requirement upon entry is that you can perform basic arithmetic. The instructor provides aids to calculation for assignments.

Course Content and Format

PADP 4630, Politics and Budgeting Process, examines the past, present, and future of public budgeting. The course consists of six modules on U.S. federal, state, and local budgeting. Each module and its respective exercises (E) and parts (P) are listed below.

- (1) Foundations of Public Budgeting
 - a. E1 P1. Thinking About Public Budgeting
 - b. E1 P2. Intro to Budget Analysis
- (2) The U.S. Federal Budget
 - a. E2 P1. An Historical Analysis of Reform
 - b. E2 P2. Data Analysis: Past, Present, and Future
- (3) Budgeting in the States
 - a. E3 P1. Policy, Process, and Politics
 - b. E3 P2. Analysis of Georgia's Budget
- (4) Budgeting in U.S. Local Governments
 - a. E4 P1. Metropolitan Fiscal Problems
 - b. E4 P2. Analysis of Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
- (5) Budgeting for Results
 - a. E5 P1. Managing Government Performance
 - b. E5 P2. GAO High-Risk Series Report
- (6) Capital Budgeting
 - a. E6. Capital Improvement Project

Office Hours and Communicating with the Instructor

To arrange a meeting, please inform me of your availability via email and I will reply with an outlook meeting request. I prefer that we meet in my office, 203A Baldwin Hall, but, if necessary, may propose or accommodate virtual meetings. If you have a need that is urgent, please text me at 772-473-8736 and I will call you ASAP.

Class Preparation, Attendance, and Participation

To be prepared for class discussions and exercises, students *must* complete assigned readings and videos prior to class. Students are placed into groups and responsible for specific contributions, ranging from 2-4 minute lightning talks to in-depth panel discussions. For panel discussions, groups will meet with the instructor, who serves as moderator, to prepare.

Attendance is mandatory and students must be seated in Baldwin Hall, Room 301, no later than 10:59 AM.

Your attendance is expected. Therefore, points for attendance are not awarded in this class. However, students are penalized for unexcused absences. One unexcused absence leads to a warning, two results in a reduction of your final letter grade, and three results in an additional reduction of your final letter grade.

Participation in this class is critical for the realization of your individual learning objectives and those of your classmates and group members. Participation will be evaluated based on your contributions to classroom and online discussions and evaluations conducted by your group members.

Public discourse is essential to realizing the learning objectives of this course. Students must be prepared to defend their positions and critique those of their peers and instructor in a respectful manner.

Students are penalized for negative participation. Examples of negative participation include, but are not limited to excessive tardiness, use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes, insufficient preparation, low contribution to class discussions and/or group assignments, and uncivilized public discourse.

Academic Honesty

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and abiding by the [UGA Academic Honesty Policy](#). **ANY** violation results in, at minimum, an F for this course and potentially much more severe consequences for your academic status and professional career. Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards and consequences before performing or submitting work.

Access and Accommodations

Students with disabilities must register with the UGA Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that proper accommodations can be arranged for. If you are not registered with the DRC and experience barriers during the semester, please let me know ASAP and we will discuss potential options.

Grading

(1) Your final grade is calculated based on a total of 100 points:

1	Foundations of Public Budgeting	15
2	The U.S. Federal Budget	15
3	Budgeting in the States	15
4	Budgeting in U.S. Local Governments	15
5	Budgeting for Results	15
6	Capital Budgeting	25
		100

(2) Scale:

A 100-94; A- 93-90
B + 89-88; B 87-84; B- 83-80
C + 79-78; C 77-75; C- 74-73
D 72-70
F 69-0

(3) Late assignments are **NOT** accepted. Assignments are due at 11 PM on their specified due dates. Due dates in this syllabus are subject to change based on progression of the course.

(4) All assignments for this class will be submitted electronically via ELC using Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint documents. Do not submit PDFs.

(5) When submitting your work, upload your files as "Last Name, First Name. MX", with X indicating the module you are submitting (ex, Module 1=M1).

(6) Students are required to participate in online discussions following specific protocol. For full credit, students must respond to the instructor's prompt and the responses of their classmates in a timely fashion as directed in each discussion.

Module 0. Organizing Session

The course begins with an organizing session to review the syllabus, form groups, and assign responsibility to groups for module specific contributions. Students complete a survey which informs the instructor of their academic background, learning objectives for the course, and career goals.

Deliverable

- (1) Qualtrics Student Survey (**due January 9**)

Module 1. Foundations of Public Budgeting

The introductory module emphasizes generic concepts applicable to U.S. federal, state, and local budgeting. It first establishes the purposes of public budgeting and explains different phases of the budgeting process. Special attention is then given to normative perspectives on the role and size of government, core theoretical concepts, and key budgeting practices. To ensure students have the requisite foundational knowledge and skills to succeed in the remaining modules, course time is dedicated to Exercise 1.

- (1) Required readings
 - a. Willoughby: Preface, Ch. 1 & 2 (25-37), Ch. 9 (281-295), 10 (304-321), 11 (342-351)
- (2) Videos
 - a. Participatory Budgeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2nhVXX3nVU>
- (3) Discussion 1. Participatory Budgeting
- (4) Exercise 1. Foundations of Public Budgeting
 - a. Part 1. Thinking About Public Budgeting
 - b. Part 2. Intro to Budget Analysis

Deliverables

- (1) Discussion 1. Participatory Budgeting (**due January 22**)
- (2) Exercise 1. Foundations of Public Budgeting (**due January 25**)

Module 2. U.S. Federal Budget

An historical analysis of the U.S. federal budget is structured to tap into political, economic, managerial, and legal dimensions of society which have shaped federal budgeting in the U.S. to become what it is today. Students then conduct data analysis on revenue and expenditure data from 1968-2017. With the historical analysis complete, the focus shifts to The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to facilitate a class discussion on that legislation and a more general one on the state and future of federal budgeting.

(1) Required readings

- a. Willoughby: Ch. 3, Ch. 6 (162-167), & Ch. 7 (210-14) and/or Lee, Johnson and Joyce. *Public Budgeting Systems*, Chapter 10, p. 303-326

(2) Optional readings

- i. Schick, A. (1966). The road to PPB: The stages of budget reform. *Public Administration Review*, 26(4), 243-258.
- ii. Joyce, P. G. (1993). The reiterative nature of budget reform: Is there anything new in federal budgeting? *Public Budgeting & Finance*, 13(3), 36-48.
- iii. Rubin, I. (2007). The great unraveling: Federal budgeting, 1998–2006. *Public Administration Review*, 67(4), 608-617.

(3) Videos

- a. Paul Ryan, “Path to Prosperity” (Episodes 1-3) & Rand Paul
 - i. Ryan, 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xwv5EbxXSME&t=63s>
 - ii. Ryan, 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJIC7kEq6kw&t=33s>
 - iii. Ryan, 3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Aewj_IndN4&t=42s
 - iv. Paul, 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEB_vAzYIQ8&t=119s

(4) Discussion 2. The U.S. Federal Budget

(5) Exercise 2. The U.S. Federal Budget

- a. Part 1. An Historical Analysis of Reform
- b. Part 2. Data Analysis: Past, Present, and Future

Deliverables

(1) Discussion 2. The U.S. Federal Budget (**due February 14**)

(2) Exercise 2. The U.S. Federal Budget (**due February 15**)

Module 3. Budgeting in the States

Module 3 begins by exploring policy, politics, and processes central to budgeting in the states. Fundamentals of tax policy, revenue structure, balanced budget requirements, debt management, and budget reserve management are reviewed. Budget systems in select states are used to illustrate variations in legislative and executive budgetary powers. Students conduct an analysis of Georgia's budget and are then responsible for holding a discussion on it within the context of the recent gubernatorial election.

(1) Required readings

- a. Willoughby: Ch. 4, Ch. 6 (169-182), Ch. 7 (214-225)
- b. Lauth, "Georgia: Shared Power and Fiscal Conservatism", Chapter 3 in *Budgeting in the States*, Eds. Clynych and Lauth 2006

(2) Optional readings

- a. Lauth, T. P. (1987). Exploring the budgetary base in Georgia. *Public Budgeting & Finance*, 7(4), 72-82.
- b. Huckaby, H. M., & Lauth, T. P. (1998). Budget redirection in Georgia state government. *Public Budgeting & Finance*, 18(4), 36-44

(3) Discussion 3. Georgia's Budget

(4) Exercise 3. Budgeting in the States

- a. Part 1. Policy, Process, and Politics
- b. Part 2. Analysis of Georgia's Budget

Deliverables

- (1) Discussion 3. Georgia's Budget (**due March 7**)
- (2) Exercise 3. Budgeting in the States (**due March 7**)

Module 4. Budgeting in U.S. Local Governments

The coverage of budgeting in U.S. local governments begins by discussing the types of public services that general and special purpose governments provide and how they are funded. Policy, processes, and politics are illustrated via contemporary cases. A discussion on metropolitan fiscal problems takes place prior to introducing basic concepts of financial condition analysis with special attention to the operating environment, management and governance, financial statement analysis, potential changes to the operating environment, and summary analysis.

- (1) Required readings
 - a. Willoughby: Ch. 5, 6 (182-190)
- (2) Various news articles posted on ELC and selected by students
- (3) Discussion 4. Metropolitan Fiscal Problems in the Wild
- (4) Exercise 4. Budgeting in U.S. Local Governments
 - a. Part 1. Metropolitan Fiscal Problems
 - b. Part 2. Analysis of Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

Deliverables

- 1) Discussion 4. Metropolitan Fiscal Problems in the Wild (**due March 27**)
- 2) Exercise 4. Budgeting in U.S. Local Governments (**due March 28**)

Module 5. Budgeting for Results

This module introduces students to managing performance in the public sector via the budget. It begins by identifying dimensions of public service performance and clarifying how performance information is used in budget process as evidenced by reforms and contemporary practices. The 2019 Getzen Lecture on Government Accountability, delivered by the Comptroller General of the United States, is used to facilitate a class discussion.

- (1) Required Readings
 - a. Willoughby: Ch. 12
- (2) Optional Readings
 - a. Moynihan, D. P. (2008). *The dynamics of performance management: Constructing information and reform*. Georgetown University Press.
 - i. 1-12, 26-37, 75-93, 96-103, 118-136, 163-178, 189-207
- (3) Videos
 - a. 2019 Getzen Lecture on Government Accountability
 - i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INUk8Ppilho&t=68s>
 - b. Government as Risk-Taker
 - i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3r1IPsldbBg>
- (4) Discussion 5. Budgeting for Results
- (5) Exercise 5. Budgeting for Results
 - a. Part 1. Managing Government Performance
 - b. Part 2. GAO High-Risk Series

Deliverables

- (1) Discussion 5. Budgeting for Results (**due April 10**)
- (2) Exercise 5. Budgeting for Results (**due April 11**)

Module 6. Capital Budgeting

Module 6 covers basic concepts of capital budgeting. Building on module 4, students learn more about capital improvement plans and how local governments develop them. The focus then shifts to understanding how capital assets are financed in the debt markets, with a brief overview of financial instruments, debt management policy, and financial intermediaries. Students are responsible for developing a capital improvement plan funded by projected revenues from a tax-increment finance district and must justify their recommendations using knowledge acquired in the course.

- (1) Required readings
 - a. Bland: Ch. 11
 - b. News articles posted on ELC
- (2) Discussion 6. Capital Budgeting
- (3) Exercise 6. Capital Budgeting
- (4) Preparation for oral exam

Deliverables

- (1) Exercise 6. Capital Budgeting (**due May 3**)
- (2) Group Oral Exam (**May 5**)