This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Overview

This course is designed to provide students academic immersion into public budgeting theory and research. Students in the course will analyze public budgeting literature, exploring the scholarly foundations as well as past and current reform efforts, both in the United States and abroad. Students will track the state of the practice in public budgeting for evidence of its intersection with theoretical perspectives. Students should leave this course with a thorough understanding of the normative and descriptive considerations of public budgeting, the scholarly bases behind various orientations to process, and a strong knowledge base regarding the enduring issues surrounding this vital governmental process. The most important learning outcome of this class is student ability to conduct professionally researched critical analysis of public budgeting theory and explain its relationship to budgeting as practiced. And, at the conclusion of this course, students should be able to knowledgeably communicate their interpretations of theoretical perspectives of budgeting, as developed through readings and research, via the written and spoken word.
**Required Class Texts and Readings**

Most of these books are available in Kindle and E-versions. Some are available to check out from the UGA Library and/or available in an E-version from the Library. You will be provided a complementary paperback copy of the Lu and Willoughby text 😊


**Course Assignments**

Students are responsible for completing the following assignments and activities for this course. Assignments and activities carry the following weight in determining the final grade:

- 15% Class Participation [contribute to the discussion each week]
- 30% Discussion Leader [1.25 hour of class] and Theoretical Assessment Paper
- 25% Budget Reform Paper Presentation and Discussion
- 30% Conceptual Framework Paper Presentation and Discussion

Instructions for assignments are below. All work should be prepared in accordance with styles presented by Kate L. Turabian in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 5th edition (Chicago, ILL: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

**Grading of Course Assignments**

Grades are assigned at the end of the semester based on each student’s performance on the course requirements noted above using the following scale:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.99</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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**Course Mechanics**

This is not a lecture-oriented course. Topics will be explored using a discussion format with contributions by all of us to the conversation every week. Students must develop the ability to critically analyze the literature, develop a point of view regarding the topic, and persuasively argue that view. The best arguments are comprehensively constructed and professionally delivered. Public discourse is essential to realizing the learning objectives of this course and required for the development and understanding of public budgeting and finance policy and processes. It is anticipated that we will have spirited albeit friendly debate in the classroom and that you will be challenged to make exacting arguments that are thoroughly researched and effectively persuasive.

**Discussion Leader and Theoretical Assessment Paper Requirements**

Choose a date from September 17 and November 12 below. Complete the required reading(s) for the day and then develop a theoretical assessment paper regarding the topic of the day. Your assessment should add at least two relevant and timely research articles or a book that contributes to knowledge building around the topic. Your assessment should be 4-5 pages, double spaced, 1-inch margins top, bottom, right and left, 10-12 point font only. Come to your class prepared to lead the discussion for the first hour of the class, considering questions of the day, any questions you add, and given your thoughts expressed in the paper. To allow students time to prepare for your class, post your paper to the “Theoretical Assessment Paper” discussion board at the course on eLC by midnight on Wednesday before your Thursday class.

**Budget Reform Paper Requirements**

Choose a budget reform effort that has been attempted in a government and analyze its “success” or “failure” juxtaposed against what the reform literature tells you regarding the reform’s beneficial possibilities. This assignment requires that you become familiar with the government’s attempt to initiate the reform, the implementation process, and any results (good and/or bad) once attempted or implemented. You are welcome but not required to contact past and/or current government officials, managers, and/or analysts or reform experts to gain knowledge about the reform effort. However, you must appropriately reference any such interviews.

You should complete a well-constructed written assessment (6-7 pages, double spaced, 1-inch margins top, bottom, right and left, 10-12 point font only) of the budget reform experience in the government and include the following sections:

- A description of the government and brief summary of its budgeting process and statistics.
- A description of the history of budget reform in the government.
- A description of the reform attempted/implemented; reasons reform was attempted; politics behind the effort; challenges for implementation and ongoing success.
- Some literature review about the budget reform and possibilities for advancing budgeting in governments.
- An objective assessment of areas of success and lack of success of the budget reform effort in the government; you should be able to justify your assessment of success/lack of success.
Your assessment of the future fiscal health of this government, in light of the reform effort and given the effects of COVID-19.

A complete reference and resources section You are welcome but not required to contact past and/or current government officials, managers and/or analysts to gain knowledge about the reform effort. However, you must appropriately reference any such interviews.

**Conceptual Framework Paper**

Elinor Ostrom has developed some very useful distinctions among three different sets of propositions (see Chapter 2 of this volume). (1) In her view, a “conceptual framework” identifies a set of variables and the relationships among them that presumably account for a set of phenomena. The framework can provide anything from a modest set of variables to something as extensive as a paradigm. It need not identify directions among relationships, although more developed frameworks will certainly specify some hypotheses. (2) A “theory” provides a denser and more logically coherent set of relationships. It applies values to some of the variables and usually specifies how relationships may vary depending upon the values of critical variables. Numerous theories may be consistent with the same conceptual framework. (3) A “model” is a representation of a specific situation. It is usually much narrower in scope, and more precise in its assumptions, than the underlying theory. Ideally, it is mathematical. Thus, frameworks, theories, and models can be conceptualized as operating along a continuum involving increasing logical interconnectedness and specificity but decreasing scope.


Complete a research proposal (7-8 pages; double spaced; 1-inch margins top, bottom, right and left; 10-12 point font) and include the following sections:

- description of the budgeting behavior to be studied and the importance of the proposed research to extant theory and research; research questions to be addressed
- thorough literature review
- conceptual framework; explaining relationships among defined dependent and independent variables; a consideration of controls; hypotheses statements regarding the behavior(s) of interest
- schematic model of the framework
- explanation of the research methodology that might be pursued; data requirements, existing data sets to be used and an explanation of how primary data, if needed, will be collected; statistical methodologies to be used
- complete reference and resources section

While it is not necessary to collect data for this project, data collection and analysis are not forbidden! Students completing this assignment should master the literature on a topic in public budgeting and finance, develop a framework for understanding the behavior of interest, and present a reasonable method of analysis to carry out the research.
**Student Learning Objectives**

After completing this course, you should be able to:

✓ Identify, interpret, and compare theories of public budgeting spanning economic, political, organizational, and social conceptions of the process and outcomes
✓ Critically examine and assess theoretical frameworks of public budgeting
✓ Contrast public budgeting theory with practice
✓ Analyze government budgeting systems regarding applications of budget reforms to advance results
✓ Identify public budgeting behaviors, determine appropriate analytical means for examining these behaviors, and apply a framework representative of variable relationships

**Course Policies and Procedures**

**Academic Honesty**

University guidelines on academic honesty are enforced in this course, and you should be familiar with the [UGA Student Code of Conduct and Policies](https://sco.uga.edu). The University Student Honor Code states: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found [here](https://sco.uga.edu).

It is your responsibility to ask questions if you are unclear about what is appropriate. Academic dishonesty violations will result in a minimum penalty of a ‘0’ on the assignment or exam, can escalate to an academic dishonesty charge brought by the Professor, and may result in dismissal from the program of study and the University.

**Accommodation**

Students who wish to request an accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the [University’s Disabilities Resource Center](https://sco.uga.edu/register). Student accommodation necessitates issuance by the Center of approved documentation and a plan. Students are responsible for providing a copy of documents and plans to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is needed. The accommodation plan for this course must be provided to this Professor prior to the second week of class to negotiate the terms of the accommodation.

**Mental Health and Wellness Resources**

Be aware of the following resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit [https://sco.uga.edu](https://sco.uga.edu). They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services ([https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga)) or crisis support ([https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies)).
- If you need help managing stress, anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA ([https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga)) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.
COVID-19 Resources
Both UGA and SPIA have developed resources useful for our community on topics ranging from newly configured bus routes to SPIA Dean Auer’s COVID safety video to students, viewed here. The most comprehensive campus information resource related to COVID is accessible here. Everyone has a critical role to play as we work together to protect the health and safety of every member of the Bulldog Nation. Become familiar with the following regarding how we can all be responsible citizens and navigate the fall semester as safely as possible:

- **Face Coverings**: Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at https://drc.uga.edu/.

- **DawgCheck**: Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/

- **What do I do if I have symptoms?** Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies.

- **What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?** Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

- **How do I get a test?** Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162. **UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.**

- **What do I do if I test positive?** Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

Advice and Assistance
Students are responsible for contacting the Professor when having trouble understanding the material or requirements of the course. Dr. Willoughby is available by appointment on ZOOM or via cell phone call. Please provide your name and telephone number when leaving a message on my cell: 678.642.7248. Students should communicate with the Professor by Email through the course on eLC. If the online course is not functioning, students can Email the Professor at: kwilloughby@uga.edu.

Late Assignments and Incompletes
Late assignments are neither accepted nor graded. Incomplete or “I” grades are permitted in rare circumstances only. The Professor has the right (1) to require documentation and proof of the need for an “I” grade, before agreeing to apply the “I” grade; (2) to the assignment of different and/or additional course requirements to the student to complete the course and/or (3) to impose a grade penalty for an “I” grade in the course. Please let the Professor know as soon as you see a problem developing. Familiarize yourself with the University’s course withdrawal procedures at UGA Withdrawal Policies.
eLC and Student Email
This course uses the eLC course Email to communicate with students. All course related materials, assignments, exams and grades are posted to the course online. Your official UGA student Email address that is available at eLC will be the address used to get in touch with you, if necessary. Please check this account regularly or arrange for it to be automatically forwarded to whatever personal Email account that you check daily. All course correspondence with the Professor should be conducted through eLC, for security and consistency.

Course Evaluation
Your ideas about the rigor and content of this course, the method of teaching and skill building possibilities are important for us to continue to improve our job as University faculty. Please take time at the end of the semester to complete a course evaluation. Let us know what does and does not work. We want our courses to advance your breadth of knowledge and skills!

Schedule of Classes and Topics
Starred (*) material indicates required readings

August 20 Public Budgeting: Complex, Confusing and Chaotic yet Captivating

Questions for the day
Are there enduring concepts of public budgeting? What are they?
Are there tenets of public budgeting in bygone days that are relevant today? How have any of these tenets been turned on their head in the era of COVID-19?

Readings for the day

1 Schedule and readings subject to change at the discretion of the Professor. All changes posted at course on eLC.
August 27 Budgeting Around the World

Questions for the day
How can budgets and budgeting in countries around the world be compared? What are the challenges for budgeting in developing countries? Are these vastly different than those for budgeting in industrialized countries? What are the important components necessary to budget successfully when state-building? Justify your response.

Readings for the day

September 3 Budgetary Process and Real Time Budgeting

Questions for the day
Is public budgeting anything other than a political process? Should public budgeting be more than a political process? What is real-time budgeting? What are the implications for budget reform if real-time budgeting is an accurate model of budgeting as practiced?

Readings for the day

September 10 Allocative Theory of the Public Sector

Questions for the day
What are opposing theoretical approaches to public finance? How do questions of tax policy affect decisions about expenditures?

Readings for the day

September 17 The Nexus between Public Finance and Public Budgeting

Questions for the day
How are public finance and public budgeting related? How do economic factors and policy affect budgetary politics?

Readings for the day
September 24 National Budgeting: Can Broken Systems Be Repaired?

Questions for the day
What are perennial challenges to budgeting well at the national level in any country?
What principal theoretical developments have arisen from national government budgeting as practiced?
Discuss budgetary sustainability, given ongoing budget problems of many governments around the world and now in the era of COVID-19.

Readings for the day

October 1 Sub-National Budget Systems and Conceptual Frameworks

Questions for the day
How is budgeting in sub-national governments different from and similar to that at the national level?
What principal theoretical developments have arisen from sub-national government budgeting as practiced?
Are sustainability issues different for sub-national governments compared with central/national ones?

Readings for the day
*Thurmaier and Willoughby, Policy and Politics in State Budgeting.

October 8 Organization Theories of Budgeting

Questions for the day
What do these theories contribute to our knowledge about how budgeting is conducted?
Given technological advancements, how are the principals of these theories affected or changed?
How might current administrations use these theories to be successful when budgeting in the future?

Readings for the day
October 15 Incrementalism and Budgetary Decision Making

Questions for the day
How has incrementalism contributed to our understanding budgetary decision making?
Is incrementalism all about politics?
Have other considerations of decision making strengthened or weakened incrementalism as a reasonable explanation of description of budgetary decision making?

Readings for the day

October 22 Macro-Budgeting: The Legislative View

Questions for the day
What is meant by “legislative budgeting”?
How does legislative budgeting vary with respect to level of government?
Is it important to consider the political balance between legislative and executive branches of government? Why?
Distinguish among various systems of legislative budgeting.

Readings for the day
October 27 Last day to withdraw from the course and receive a “Withdrawal” day to

October 29 Macro-Budgeting – Net Effects of the Budget Process

Questions for the day
For whom does the budget process matter?
What should be the goal of a budget process?
How does budget process affect budgetary outcomes?
What is the importance of a theory of public budgeting?

Readings for the day

November 5 Micro-Budgeting – Budget Roles and Routines

Questions for the day
How does the executive and agency view of budgeting differ from that of the legislature?
How have relationships between these branches of government changed in the last 20 years?
How have these relationships changed budgeting in the last 20 years?

Readings for the day
*Thurmaier and Willoughby, Policy and Politics in State Budgeting. Review

November 12 Budget Reforms – Focusing on Results

Questions for the day
How have conceptions of performance budgeting changed in the last century?
How does performance budgeting change traditional budgeting, or does it?
Is a focus on results realistic in both up and down economies?

Readings for the day

November 19 Budget Reform Roundtable Discussion

Roundtable discussion of student budget reform papers. Students should have available a 5-slide PowerPoint summary assessment of their budget reform examination. We will meet on Zoom for a relaxed discussion of findings and conclusions. Be prepared to present your slides!

**Budget Reform Paper due to course on eLC by Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 11:30 pm**

December 3 Extending Theory – Presentation of Conceptual Framework Papers

Roundtable discussion of student conceptual framework papers, including readings of the day. Students should have available a 5-slide PowerPoint summary assessment of their conceptual framework. We will meet on Zoom for a relaxed discussion of findings and conclusions. Be prepared to present your slides!

**Conceptual Framework Paper due to course on eLC by Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 11:30 pm**