

PS 5310 W01: Public Budgeting and Finance
Spring 2024

Instructor: Dr. Yen-Hsin Chen

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Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 2PM-3PM, Wednesday 9:30AM-12:30PM, Tuesday & Thursday 1 PM-3 PM, or by appointment

Course Description

This course focuses upon the development and the execution of various public budgeting systems with special attention given to the political content of the budgetary process in the public sector. PS5310 will look at both national and local government financial management.

Course Objective

The objective of this course is for the student to master the study of public budgeting through developing the following proficiencies:

- Student Learning Outcomes for PS 5310:
 1. The student will be able to conceptualize major concepts in budgeting, e.g., risk management, reduction management, as assessed in writing assignments.
 2. The student will be able to analyze the issues in public budgeting by relating major theories to the issues as assessed in response narratives to issues in public budgeting.
 3. The student will demonstrate competence in research in public budgeting as assessed by a monograph on a topic significant to public budgeting, e.g., law, agency, budgeting system, that the student will write.
- Program Learning Outcomes: The graduating student will:
 1. Demonstrate the ability to critique significant theoretical approaches of public administration.
 2. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate domestic and international administrative processes.
 3. Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis
- Marketable Skills: Among the marketable skills developed in the Master of Public Administration program are:
 1. Students can organize and execute presentations relevant to public administration.
 2. Students understand and can execute a program evaluation.
 3. Students can conduct statistical analyses that are useful to the work of public administrators.
 4. Students can read and interpret an organization budget.

Assignments and Grading

Homework (20% of your grade, 5% for each of the 4 assignments):

There are 4 homework assignments for students to complete. Assignments may include short essays on topics learned in the course, concept clarification, and your response to a particular issue. Assignments will be given at least one week in advance of the due date. A student who does not turn in an assignment on time will receive a zero for the assignment.

Exams (60% of your grade, 30% for each exam):

Two closed book exams will be given during this course. Exams will include multiple choice questions as well as short essays on topics covered in the course. The midterm exam will be held during the week of **March 4th**. The final exam will be held during the final exam week.

Semester Paper & Presentation (20% of your grade):

Students will have a semester paper to write for the course. In the semester paper students will provide an analysis of a budget that includes answers and responses to important questions and concepts that we are going to discuss this semester. A student's paper will be judged not on the length but on the quality of its argument. More specifically, students should present a reasoned, analytically sound, and empirical valid argument in their paper. Further details will be provided on a separate handout in the future. This paper is required to be at least 8 but less than 10 double-spaced pages in length. It is due on **April 21st**.

Please remember that I do not accept late papers except for very special situations. Also, please do not email your paper to me or leave it in the department office or mailbox except for special situations.

Quiz (Extra credit):

A number (to be determined by the instructor) of unannounced quizzes will be given occasionally. The score of the quizzes will be added to your grade as extra points.

Grade Scale

Your grade will be determined based on the following grading scale:

| Points | Letter Grade |
|--------------|--------------|
| 100- 90.0 | A |
| 89.9-80.0 | B |
| 79.9-70.0 | C |
| 69.9-60.0 | D |
| 59.9 or less | F |

Please keep in mind that in graduate school, a "C" is required to pass the class. In addition, you must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA to remain in good standing. The program faculty evaluates the progress of students in the program at the end of each semester. Just maintaining a "B" average in the program is not enough to be deemed eligible to continue in the program or to complete the comprehensive exam.

Assigned Reading

The required text for this course is:

Lewis, Carol W. and W. Bartley Hildreth. 2012. *Budgeting: Politics and Power*. Oxford University Press: New York
ISBN: 9780199859214

Students are expected to have read the assigned chapters before coming to class. Should class need to be canceled due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, the material scheduled for the missed class will be covered the next time the class meets. All additional readings will be on the Blackboard and through the Library website.

Attendance and Participation

I expect that you watch all lecture recordings. Also, we will be using Discussion Board to discuss important topics.

Tentative Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule of topics and reading assignments for the course. Thus, items on this syllabus are subject to change per the discretion of the instructor. If I deem it necessary to make changes and/or modifications in the schedule, I will make an announcement in class.

Week 1 (1/17):

- Introduction and Course Guidelines

Week 2 (1/22):

- Chapter 1 Follow the Money

Week 3 (1/29):

- Chapter 2 We the People: Power and Participation

Week 4 (2/5):

- Chapter 3 Fairness and Trust in Budgetary Politics

Week 5 (2/12):

- Chapter 4 Process Matters

Week 6 (2/19):

- Chapter 5 Putting the Puzzle Together

Week 7 (2/26):

- Chapter 6 Spending Public Resources

Week 8 (3/4):

- Midterm Exam Week

Week 9 (3/11): Spring Break!

Week 10 (3/18):

- Chapter 7 A Taxing Subject: Rising Public Resources

Week 11 (3/25):

- Chapter 7 A Taxing Subject: Rising Public Resources

Week 12 (4/1):

- Chapter 8 Politics and Capital Budgeting

Week 13 (4/8):

- Chapter 9 How to Read a Local Budget

Week 14 (4/15):

- Chapter 10 The Bottom Line

Week 15 (4/22):

- Semester Paper due on 4/21
- Student Presentation

Final Exam during the Final Exam Week

Other Course Policies & Resources

Academic Integrity

Intellectual development requires hard work. Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. The policy can be found at: <https://www.sulross.edu/about/administration/university-policies/> In addition, please note that plagiarism detection software will be used in this class for written assignments.

Course Blackboard Resources

There are several resources on the course Blackboard page. You are expected to review and familiarize yourself with the items in Blackboard in the first week of class.

SRSU Disability Services

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Rebecca Greathouse Wren, LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email rebecca.wren@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Commitment to Diversity

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Blackboard Technical Support

SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support Online Support Desk Contact Info: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: blackboardsupport@sulross.edu

SUSR Library Services

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website, library.swtjc.edu. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for Inter Library Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.