The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Political Management Fall 2016 08/29/16 - 12/12/16

Budget Politics

PMGT 6418.10 Sect 10 3 Credits

Thursday 7:10 - 9:40pm Monroe 251

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Virginia Ainslie

Contact Information

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Communication

Please contact me by e-mail. I will respond within 24 hours to all student e-mail. In an emergency, you may reach me at my cell phone number. Best time for a cell phone call is 3-5 PM. I am available to meet before/after class and by appointment.

Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary venue for outside classroom communications between the instructors and the students. Students can access the course site at https://blackboard.gwu.edu. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or helpdesk.gwu.edu.

Academic Integrity

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as "cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

Support for Students with Disabilities

GW's Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities.

Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class

If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave our classroom, unless other specific directions are given, we will meet outside the front entrance to Lisner Auditorium in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University's operating status: <u>http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/</u>.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation in class is expected. Please make arrangements in advance if you know you will not be able to attend a class.

Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

Dr. Lara Brown Director, Political Management Program e-mail | phone

Dr. Jack Prostko Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development College of Professional Studies jackp@gwu.edu | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand Director of Academic Administration, GSPM <u>sfarrand@gwu.edu</u> | 202-994-9309

THE COURSE

Political Management Program Objectives

- 1. Assess a political environment, develop an appropriate strategy to achieve specified goals, and execute that strategy.
- 2. Draw upon a repertoire of effective communication skills and techniques for use in a political environment.
- 3. Collect, evaluate, and incorporate relevant empirical evidence to shape, optimize, and continuously inform the developed strategy.
- 4. Find, engage, and motivate the essential and appropriate leaders, professionals, and citizens to achieve the developed strategy.

5. Recognize and work through recurring political dilemmas in a manner that upholds ethical standards in the profession and exhibits principled leadership.

Course Description and Overview

Various aspects of federal Executive and Legislative budgets will be discussed, with emphasis on why budget legislation has gained importance in a deeply divided Congress.

Topics will include: deficits and the national debt; procedures for Executive Branch budget development, federal agency budget politics, and the role of OMB; procedures for development and consideration of Congressional budget and reconciliation bills; the roles of Budget Committees, Congressional party leaders, and CBO; political and economic forces affecting passage and implementation of federal budgets; Executive and Congressional budget enforcement mechanisms; budget messaging strategies; smoke and mirror tricks of budgeting; a brief history of recent budget agreements; effective presidential budget strategies; the "reality" budget – finding and using detailed information on how federal funds are spent; the role and impact of outside interest groups; other budget-related topics of interest to class participants.

Certain completed assignments will be shared among class participants to build a multi-sourced master file for students use as a future reference.

Course Learning Objectives

- 1. An understanding of forces shaping federal Executive and Legislative Branch budgets, as well as the procedures and processes which determine their effectiveness.
- 2. A working knowledge of budget terms, definitions, and jargon.
- 3. An understanding of how budgets can be used to achieve political and legislative objectives, e.g., supporting economic growth and job creation, strengthening defense, enacting entitlement reform, or reducing deficits and the national debt.
- 4. Development of a federal budget and deficit management strategy, together with a communication and advocacy plan to sell it to the White House, Congress, the media, and voters. These proposals will be refined by the class and shared with presidential candidates and the Presidential Transition Team.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to participate in class discussions, exchange views and insights related to current and budget events, and complete all assignments on time. All political and fiscal viewpoints are welcome. Independent thinking and innovative approaches are encouraged. Civility in the exchange of ideas and respect for a wide range of opinion are expected.

Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due Date	Weight
Assignment /Test1		9/8/2016	5%

House, Congress, media, and voters. Attendance and Participation Total	within the constraints imposed by Congressional rules. Experience in developing effective fiscal communication and advocacy strategies to advance this proposed federal budget.		20%
	within the constraints imposed by Congressional rules. Experience in developing effective fiscal communication and advocacy strategies to advance this proposed		
Development of a proposed federal budget and deficit reduction plan, together with communication and advocacy strategies to sell it to the White	Experience in developing a federal budget proposal designed to achieve policy and deficit reduction objectives	11,17,2010	3370
Assignment /Test 3 Quizzes on specific budget topics scheduled for class discussion. Assignment /Test 4	Timely preparation for class presentations and discussions based on study of assigned concepts and familiarity with budget terminology.	TBD 11/17/2016	35%
Exercise demonstrating the difference between a billion vs. a trillion. Assignment/Test 2 Research paper on the views, priorities, and political style of at least three key Congressional budget players. These will be assigned in the second class scheduled for 9/8/2016. This information will be collected and shared with class participants for their future reference.	Increased appreciation for the immense size of federal spending, revenues, and the national debt. Increased understanding of the people and personalities driving the Congressional budget process, as well as an improved ability to predict Congressional budget strategies and outcomes. Appreciation for how to use such predictions to advance legislative and fiscal objectives.	10/6/2016	25%

Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:

Grade* Grading Standard		Grading Standard
А	94-100	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional
		environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate

		superior work.
A-	90-93	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+	87-89	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
В	83-86	Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a "B" is viewed as unacceptable.
B-	80-82	You've completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.
C+	77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
С	73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C-	70-72 (lowest	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with
	grade to pass)	accuracy, etc.
F	Below 70	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

*Please note that you may be penalized for late submission of assignment(s).

Required Text and Learning Materials

The Federal Budget Process, Capitol.Net, Inc., 2012. Available in softcover, and in electronic format from Google Editions, B&N Nook, and Amazon Kindle.

Woodward, Bob, *The Price of Politics*, Simon & Shuster, 2013. Available in paperback, in electronic format from Amazon Kindle, and as an audio CD.

Steuerle, Eugene C., Dead Men Ruling, Century Foundation Press, 2014.

Peter G. Peterson Foundation, <u>www.pgpf.org</u> charts and information on the federal budget and proposed solutions to the debt problem.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB), <u>www.omb.gov</u> - Mission Statement, Table of Organization, and President Obama's FY 2017 budget documents.

Congressional Budget Office, <u>www.cbo.gov</u> - Various reports and updates to be assigned.

Congressional Budget Resolutions and Reconciliation Bills, to be assigned.

Online games featuring a wide array of actions and options to balance the budget:

Budget Hero developed by educational gamers for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and American Public Media;

Fiscalship.org developed by educational gamers for and through the Hitchens Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy at the Brookings Institution;

Stabilize the Debt, developed by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget;

Federal Budget Challenge, developed by the Concord Coalition.

Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials

David Wessel, *The \$13 Trillion Question*, Brookings Institution Press, 2016. A discussion of the various debt instruments sold by the U.S. Treasury and options for how these can be managed to minimize long and short term interest costs.

Irene S. Rubin, *The Politics of Public Budgeting*, 7th Edition, CQ Press, 2008.

Tentative Course Calendar*

*The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

Class 1 9/1/2016

Topic/Content: Why Budgets Matter Mandatory vs Discretionary Spending The \$19 Trillion Quagmire and How We Got There Voter Misconceptions About Federal Revenue and Spending Patterns Introduction to the "Big Three" Budgets and the Annual Federal Budget Calendar		
Learning Objective:	Introduction to the three major federal budgets, the current deficit/debt problem, and the function of budget law in a dysfunctional Congress	
Class 2 9/8/2016		
Topic/Content:	Budget Arithmetic vs. the Forces of Political Self-Interest Evolution of Federal Budget Law The Role of Economic Assumptions, Forecasts, Estimates, and Baselines How Federal Budget Conflict Helped Give Birth to the Tea Party Deficits and Debt As Presidential and Congressional Election Issues	
Learning Objective:	Increased understanding of how and why budget laws have been enacted, forces driving the current budget debate, and the growing importance of budgets in shaping our domestic political landscape.	

Class 3 9/15/2016

Topic /Content:	Executive Branch Budgets: Procedure, Timeline, Strategies, and Politics Role of OMB and the Council of Economic Advisors Tensions Between OMB and Federal Agencies "Budget Creep" in the Executive Budgeting Process Effective Presidential Budget Styles Executive Branch Responsibility for Budget Enforcement
Learning Objective:	Enhanced knowledge of the Executive Branch budget development process, forces that shape presidential budget proposals, and successful presidential budget strategies

Class 4 9/22/2016

Topic/Content:The Congressional Budget ProcessHouse and Senate Rules Governing Budget LegislationKey Congressional Budget PlayersDebt Limit Legislation and the Potential for Default	
Learning Objective(s) Addressed:	Better insight into how the Congressional budget process works, how it impacts appropriations, authorizing, and revenue committees, and the politics of debt limits

Class 5 9/29/2016

Topic /Content:	Congressional Budget Process Continued
	Recent Budget Conflicts between Congress and the President
	Recent Budget Clashes between the House and Senate
	Government Shutdowns and Their Consequences
	Budget Constraints as a Factor in U.S. Foreign Policy

Learning Objective(s) Addressed	: Increased understanding of the role of budget conflict in determining Executive vs. Legislative Branch dominance, and the effect of budget fights on voter and world views of the U.S.
Class 6 10/6/2016	
	Budget Reconciliation – What It Is, How It Works, Why It's Difficult Advantages and Disadvantages of the Reconciliation Process The Byrd Reconciliation Rule - The Firing of a Senate Parliamentarian Increased Reliance on Reconciliation Bills in a Dysfunctional Congress
Learning Objective(s) Addressed	: Enhanced knowledge of the reconciliation process and why it has become the legislative vehicle of choice in a deeply divided and dysfunctional Congress.

Class 7 10/13/02016

For Hov Pro Gro	The Appropriations Process Forces and Personalities That Dominate Spending Choices How Appropriators Get Around Budget Caps Procedural Points of Order As Budget Enforcement Mechanisms Growing Tension Between Defense and Non-Defense Spending Increased Use and Importance of Continuing Resolutions	
Learning Objective(s) Addressed:	Greater understanding of the role the appropriations process plays in determining deficits and enforcing budget discipline. The growing importance of continuing resolutions.	

Class 8 10/20/2016

Topic/Content:	Authorizing Committees - Cradle of Federal Entitlements &
	Key to Controlling the Federal Debt
	Relationships Between Budget and Authorizing Committees
	Why Authorizing Panels Often Eschew Reconciliation
	How the Loss of Earmarks Has Complicated Deficit Reduction

Learning Objective(s) Addressed	d: Enhanced understanding of the tension between authorizing and budget panels, and the unique role authorizers play in shaping and controlling deficits and the national debt.
Class 9 10/27/2016	
Topic/Content:	The Ultimate Reality Budget – Details on How Federal Funds Are Spent How this Data Is Used for Legislative Advocacy, Winning Competitive Federal Grants, and Advancing Interest Group Causes
Learning Objective(s) Addressed	d: Greater insight into how the realities of federal spending differ from budget assumptions and expectations of Congress, and how detailed spending information can be an effective tool for securing federal grants and improving the effectiveness of federal programs.
Class 10 11/3/2016	
Topic/Content:	Federal Revenue - Where It Really Comes From Tax Expenditures – What They Are and What They Cost Dynamic Scoring – What It Is & Why It Is Controversial How Tax Hikes and Tax Cuts Affect the Economy Tax Increases vs. User Fees The Grover Norquist "No Tax Increase" Phenomenon Why Comprehensive Tax Reform Is So Elusive
Learning Objective(s) Addressed	d: Increased understanding of: how revenue is generated; the political context for tax cuts, tax increases, and tax reform; Congressional revenue committee procedures; and the importance of messaging in framing and selling changes in tax law
Class 11 11/10/2016	
Topic/Content:	How Budget Games Are Played Offense and Defense on the Budget Playing Field Famous and Infamous Budget Maneuvers How to Spot and Use Smoke, Mirrors, and Spin

Learning Objective(s) Addressec	I: Increased understanding of the nuances of budget chicanery, as well as an increased appreciation for how language shapes voter perceptions about competing deficit reduction strategies
Class 12 11/17/2016	
Topic/Content:	Conflict Resolution in Budgeting Budget Summits - How They Work and Why They Fail Effective Federal Budget Negotiation Strategies Outlook for Deficit Reduction and Tax Reform In the New Administration
Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Increased understanding of budget negotiation dynamics, and tools useful in negotiating effective budget, spending, and tax reform agreements Discussion of opportunities and challenges facing the new Administration as it develops its own budget proposal and works with Congress to reduce deficits and debt.
Class 13 12/1/2016	
Topic/Content:	Improving the Effectiveness of Federal Programs VP AI Gore's Reinventing Government Initiative Oversight and Feedback: Inspectors General, OMB, GAO, and Congressional Committees
Learning Objective(s) Addressec	I: Enhanced understanding of the oversight responsibilities of Executive and Legislative Branches, and why both have trouble getting rid of programs that are obsolete or don't work.
	Class discussion of targets of opportunity for improving program performance evaluation and enhancing feedback for budgeteers, appropriators, authorizers, tax committees, OMB, and federal agencies.
	Discussion of budget actions likely in the new Congress

Class 14

12/8/2016

Topic/Content: Class Discussion of Student Budget Plan Proposals and Advocacy Strategies

Learning Objective(s) Addressed: Students will present, explain, and defend their budget plans and supporting advocacy strategies. Best ideas will be shared with Congress and the presidential transition team.

Copyright Statement

Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.