

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Legislative Affairs

Fall 2017

31 August – 7 December 2017

Budgetary Politics

LGAF 6260 / Fall 2017

Credits: 3

Thursday / 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Hall of States, 400 North Capitol Street, N.W.

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor:

John Leggieri

Adjunct Professor

Phone (202) 448-9547 / Mobile (202) 731-4869

JLeggieri@gwu.edu

Communication

The best way to contact me is via e-mail. You can normally expect a response within 24 hours or less. I am available to meet with you by appointment – send an e-mail to request a meeting.

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 instructor 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>.

Graduate School Expectations

Students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Utilize effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments on their required due dates and times.
2. Have attained a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
3. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

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 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 here, we will meet at **The Dubliner** 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: <http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to attend **all** the classes. If you are unable to make it, let me know via email.

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. Steven Billet
Director, Legislative Affairs Program
sbillet@gwu.edu | 202-994-1149

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
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

THE COURSE

“No Money Shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law”

Article I, Section 9, The Constitution of the United States

Legislative Affairs Program Objectives

Upon completion of the Master’s degree in Legislative Affairs, students will:

1. Gain both theoretical and practical knowledge related to the U.S. Congress, general issues in the legislative arena, and how to effectively advance legislation;
2. Hone their oral and written communication skills in both theoretical and technical aspects of legislative affairs;
3. Be able to conduct cutting-edge research and engage in effective problem solving by learning critical thinking skills;
4. Learn how to work effectively with others, the value of collaborative work, and will understand ethical issues involved in the legislative arena.

Course Description and Overview

This course will examine the current national debate over federal budget policy. Given the primacy of the fiscal discussion in today’s Washington, special attention will be paid to the current budget and appropriations battles over sequestration, continuing resolutions, OMNIBUS spending bills and other fiscal challenges faced by the nation.

Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the budget and appropriations process including: budget development by the Administration, the President’s budget submission; the Congressional budget process; the Congressional Appropriations process; the Congressional Authorization process; the role of advocacy groups and lobbyists in the process; the impact of sequestration; the effect of continuing resolutions & OMNIBUS appropriations bills; and tax policy implications. Students will explore potential solutions to today’s most acute fiscal challenges.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Gain a detailed understanding of the federal budget and Congressional Appropriations processes.
2. Explore solutions to the country’s most demanding fiscal challenges.
3. Sharpen research, writing and oral communication skills.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance.** You are expected to attend **all** classes. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. A reduction of one half letter grade will be taken for students missing more than **two** (2) classes and additional one half letter grade reductions will be imposed for missing each class after that (exceptions will apply to emergencies situations only).

2. **Participation: (5% of grade).** Any graduate seminar discussion is enlivened by the thoughtful contributions of all the students in class. You are expected to be prepared and participate in class discussions. Our discussions will be keyed, in large part, off of the readings that students are required to read prior to each class period. Organization, clarity and precision in written and oral communication are expected in this class.

3. **Current Events** - at the beginning of each class period we will review current events & issues related to our course subject matter. Keep up with current events as they pertain to the topics of this course.

4. **Critical Analysis Paper (15% of grade)** **DUE: 14 September 2017**

Prepare a critical analysis of a President's Budget Message. Your analysis should identify and explain in detail a major initiative called for by the President. The paper will outline how the initiative fared over the course of time, and more importantly, provide analysis of why you believe it succeeded or failed. The paper will be no more than 4 double spaced pages.

5. **Policy Memo (10% of grade)** **DUE: 28 September 2017**

Prepare a memorandum that summarizes, analyzes & scrutinizes the President's proposed tax plan and the counter proposals made by either Republicans or Democrats in Congress. The memo will make a recommendation about supporting or not supporting the President's plan. The memo will be no longer than 2 pages double spaced, plus will include a full page chart that compares the plans (3 pages total).

6. **Hearing Packet (15% of grade)** **DUE: 12 October 2017**

Prepare for an appropriations subcommittee (HAC/SAC) FY18 Budget Hearing by creating a hearing packet for an agency of your choosing. The hearing packet should include: the Chairman's or Ranking Member's Opening Statement, a brief summary of the agency's budget request highlighting funding levels and pointing out key programs, biographies of witnesses, a committee face chart, and a set of detailed hearing questions related to the agency's budget request. Please submit your selected HAC/SAC subcommittee and agency **NLT 21 September**.

7. **Position / White Paper: (10% of grade)** **DUE: 2 November 2017**

You are an advocate or lobbyist for an organization or company. Write a one (1) page position /white paper that advocates for a program your organization/company is interested in. Your paper should clearly identify the program, budgetary detail and clearly state your request. Your goal is to advocate for the program: make a strong case. Make a recommendation to Congress for a FY2018 funding level.

8. **Opinion Paper (15% of grade)** **DUE: 16 November 2017**

Write an opinion paper (no more than 3 pages) which either supports continuing sequestration or advocates ending sequestration (Budget Control Act of 2011). Use the course readings as well as outside sources of your choosing to support and defend your position.

9. **Budget Project Paper and Presentation (30% of grade)** **DUE: Noon, 29 November 2017**

Select a program or policy issue of interest to you to research through the entire budget and appropriations process. Write an in-depth paper (no more than 8 pages) which includes the following: Outlines the program or policy, identifies the federal agency it belongs to, details the FY18 funding request, outlines action taken by Congress, identifies political equities involved and states interested Members of Congress, shows any industry, state government, or organization's connection, explains advocacy or lobbying efforts, recaps relevant press, and makes a recommendation to support or oppose the program or policy. The **presentation** will cover all of the above points and last 7 to 10 minutes.

Submit your final paper/presentation topic NLT 5 October 2017.

Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due Date	Weight
Assignment 1 – Analysis Paper	Objectives 1 - 3	14 Sep	15%
Assignment 2 – Policy Memo	Objectives 1-3	28 Sep	10%
Assignment 3 – Hearing Packet	Objectives 1 - 3	12 Oct	15%
Assignment 4 – Position Paper	Objectives 1-3	2 Nov	10%
Assignment 5 – Opinion Paper	Objectives 1-3	16 Nov	15%
Assignment 6 – Budget Project and Presentation	Objectives 1 - 3	29 Nov Noon	30% 20% paper & 10% presentation
Participation	Objectives 1 - 3		5%
Total	Objectives 1 - 3		100%

Assignments: It is expected that ALL assignments be submitted on the due date. Penalties apply as follows: For assignments not turned in on time, five (5) points will be subtracted for each day it is late. For example a “95” paper turned in 2 days late will receive a grade of “85”. Submit your work **ON TIME**.

Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:

Grade*	Grading Standard
A 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.
B 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.
C 73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- 70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F Below 70	Unacceptable performance or inability to submit the assignment.

Required Text and Learning Materials

Books:

Schick, Allen. *The Federal Budget: Politics, Policy and Process*. 3rd Edition. Brookings Institution Press. 2007.

Wessel, David. *Red Ink – Inside the High-Stakes Politics of the Federal Budget*. Crown Business. 2012.

Additional Readings:

The readings for each class will often include articles which are listed below each class date and posted on the class Blackboard site.

Learning Objectives: All of the below classes will focus on class Learning Objectives 1-3.

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.

WEEK 1: Thursday, 31 August 2017 – Introduction: Budget and Appropriations Process and Politics

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 1-2

“Policy Basics – Introduction to the Federal Budget Process.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. January 3, 2011. Website: www.cbpp.org.

Assignment Due BEFORE 1st Class: Provide 1 page bio w/ photo (due NLT Thursday, August 24, 2017)

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 2: Thursday, 7 September 2017 – The President’s Budget: Putting It All Together

Reading Due Today:

Wessel, Chapter 1-2

Schick, Chapter 4, pages 52-59 only

Tolchin, “Paradox of Reagan Budgets: Austere Talk vs. Record Debts.” The New York Times. February 16, 1988.

Bennet, “THE CLINTON BUDGET: THE OVERVIEW; President Offers the First Budget to Balance in Nearly 30 Years.” The New York Times. February 3, 1998.

Christensen, “The Executive Budget Process: An Overview.” Congressional Research Service. July 27, 2012.

Donovan, “Requirements for the FY 2018 Budget Process.” OMB Memorandum. April 29, 2016. Website with FY2018 Budget Materials: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget> (skim only)

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 3: Thursday, 14 September 2017 – President’s Budget Submission to Congress

Reading Due Today:

Wessel, Chapter 3

Schick, Chapter 5

Saturno, “The Congressional Budget Process: A Brief Overview.” Congressional Research Service. August 22, 2011.

POLITICO Pro Staff, “POLITICO Pro’s State of the Union Scorecard.” Politico Pro. January 11, 2016.

Kiely, Jackson, Robertson, Farley & Gore, “Fact Checking the State of the Union.” FactCheck.org. January 13, 2016.

Diaz, “Why Trump’s Tuesday Speech isn’t a State of the Union Address,” CNN, February 28, 2017.

Nix, “A Brief History of the President’s Annual Address,” The History Channel, February 28, 2017.

Blake, “President Trump’s Speech to Congress was a Very Good Moment for Him, Objectively,” The Washington Post, March 1, 2017.

Nelson, “Schumer Tries to Throw Cold Water on Trump’s Rave Reveiws,” Politico, March 1, 2017.

Website with FY2018 Budget Materials: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget> (skim only)

Website – US House of Representative’s History of the State of the Union:

history.house.gov/Institution/SOTU/State-of-the-Union/

Assignment Due Today: Readings & **Budget Message Critical Analysis Paper**

WEEK 4: Thursday, 21 September 2017 – Sequestration: BCA, BBAs and the Uncertain Fiscal Future

Reading Due Today:

Wallsten, Montgomery & Wilson, “Obama’s Evolution: Behind the Failed ‘Grand Bargain’ on the Debt.” The Washington Post. March 17, 2012.

Bai, “Obama vs. Boehner: Who Killed the Debt Deal?” The New York Times Magazine. March 28, 2012.

Levit & Labonte, “The Budget Control Act of 2011: The Effects on Spending and the Budget Deficit When the Automatic Spending Cuts are Implemented.” Congressional Research Service. April 23, 2012.

Klein, “Here’s What’s in Paul Ryan and Patty Murray’s Mini-Budget Deal.” The Washington Post. December 10, 2013.

Lynch, “Provisions in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 as an Alternative to a Traditional Budget Resolution.” Congressional Research Service. May 8, 2014.

Reich, “Sequestration and Its Impact on Non-Defense Appropriations.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. February 19, 2015.

Ryan (Press Release), “Speaker Boehner’s Remarks to House Republicans on the Bipartisan Budget Act.” Speaker Ryan’s Press Office. October 27, 2015.

Everett, Bresnahan & Kim, “Behind the Secret Budget Deal that Drove Conservatives Mad.” Politico. October 30, 2015.

Hallerman & McCrimmon, “Budget-Debt Ceiling Pact Cleared by Senate for Obama’s Signature.” CQ Roll Call. October 30, 2015.

Schroeder, “Budget Deal: Winners and Losers.” The Hill. October 30, 2015.

Nicholson, “Budget Deficit Expands to \$407.1 Billion Through May: Tresasury”, Bloomberg. June 10, 2016.

HBO, “VICE Special Report: A House Divided.” HBO, November 15, 2016.

<https://play.hbogo.com/series/urn:hbo:series:GV-5wnQEOU6bCwwEAAAww>

Assignments Due Today: Readings & Hearing Packet Committee Selection

WEEK 5: Thursday, 28 September 2017 – Taxes and More Taxes: The Congress Shall Have Power To Lay and Collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises

Reading Due Today:

Wessel, Chapter 4

Schick, Chapter 7

Levenson, “Former President Bush Honored for ‘90 Tax Hikes.” The Boston Globe. May 4, 2014.

Hirschfeld Davis & Rappeport, “White House Proposes Slashing Tax Rates, Significantly Aiding the Wealthy.” The New York Times. April 26, 2017.

Rappeport, “Trump’s Tax Plan is a Reckoning for Republican Deficit Hawks.” The New York Times. April 26, 2017.

Associated Press, “GOP Budget Deadlock Imperils Trump Hopes for Tax Overhaul.” Associated Press. June 20, 2017.

Assignment Due Today: Readings & **Tax Policy Memo**

WEEK 6: Thursday, 5 October 2017 – House and Senate Budget Committees

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 6

Elswick, “Why Federal Budgets Aren’t What You Think They Are.” NPR. March 15, 2015.

Congressional Budget Office, “The 2016 Budget Outlook.”, CBO. May 11, 2016. (Skim only)

DeBonis, “The Other GOP Stalemate on Capitol Hill: House Budget Gridlock Imperils Tax Reform.” The Washington Post. July 2, 2017.

Assignment Due Today: Readings & Final Paper / Presentation Topic

WEEK 7: Thursday, 12 October 2017 – The Power of the Purse: Congressional Appropriations

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 9

Tollestrup, “The Congressional Appropriations Process: An Introduction.” Congressional Research Service. November 14, 2014.

Gray, “The Appropriations Process: Spending Caps Explained.” The Heritage Foundation, July 20, 2015.

Hallerman, “Appropriations: A Return to Regular Order?” CQ Weekly. January 4, 2016.

Bade & Bresnahan, “House GOP Leaders Already Plotting to Avoid Fall Shutdown.” Politico. May 25, 2017.

Wong & Lillis, “House Urged to ‘Go Ugly Early’.” The Hill. May 31, 2017.

Andres, “Fixing the Congressional Appropriations Process.” The Hill. June 1, 2017.

Assignment Due Today: Readings & **Hearing Packet**

WEEK 8: Thursday, 19 October 2017 – Power Reduced: Today’s Congressional Appropriations

Reading Due Today:

Neyfakh, “Bring Back the United States of Pork.” The Boston Globe. May 12, 2013.

LaTourette, “The Congressional Earmark Ban: the Real Bridge to Nowhere.” Roll Call. July 30, 2014.

Alexander & Ellis, "Pork Won't Grease the Skids – Reviving Earmarks is Not Going to Break Congress' Gridlock." US News & World Report. November 18, 2014.

Frost & Davis, "How to Fix What Ails Congress: Bring Back Earmarks." Los Angeles Times. February 8, 2015.

Flake, "Twenty Questions – Government Studies That Will Leave You Scratching Your Head – An Oversight Report." US Senator Jeff Flake. May 2016.

Chadwick & Smith, "Congress Buys the Navy a \$400M Pork Ship." Politico. July 5, 2016.

McClatchy Newspapers, "Why Some in Congress Think Bringing Back Earmarks Would Be A Good Thing." McClatchy Newspapers. January 1, 2017.

Citizens Against Government Waste. Citizens Against Government Waste 2016 Pig Book Summary." website: cagw.org (skim only)

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 9: Thursday, 26 October 2017 – Authorization: Role in the Budget Process

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 8

Heniff, "Overview of the Authorization-Appropriations Process." Congressional Research Service. November 26, 2012.

Reich, "Proposals to Address 'Unauthorized Appropriations' Would Likely Do More Harm Than Good." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. August 31, 2016.

McMorris Rodgers & Phillips, "How to take Spending off Autopilot." The Washington Post, September 2, 2016.

Assignments Due Today: Readings

WEEK 10: Thursday, 2 November 2017 – The Power to Influence: Interest Groups, Lobbyists and their Role in the Budget and Appropriations Process

Reading Due Today:

Lichtblau. "Lobbyist Says Its Not About Influence." The New York Times. July 1, 2010.

Fang. "Where Have All the Lobbyists Gone?" The Nation. February 19, 2014.

Milligan, "The Rise of the Unlobbyists." US News and World Report. March 20, 2014.

Bernstein, "Influential Lobbyist Relished Role as DC Power Broker." The Washington Post. September 15, 2014.

Drutman & Teles, "Why Congress Relies on Lobbyists Instead of Thinking for Itself." The Atlantic. March 10, 2015.

Ackley, "Swarm of 'Unlobbyists' Fly Around Revolving Door." CQ Roll Call. January 4, 2016.

Bass, "For Top Federal Contractors, Investments in Lobbying, PACs Yield Big Returns." MapLight. April 28, 2016.

Smithberger, "Congress is Robbing America's War Effort to Pay for Unwanted Weapons." Project on Government Oversight. May 10, 2016.

Wright & Herb, "Lockheed Martin's Top Lobbyist is Not Registered." Politico Pro. June 21, 2016.

Murphy, "Don't Shy Away From Lobbying, Public Charities Advised." Bloomberg. June 29, 2016.

Stevens & Arnsdorf, "The Trump Lobbying Purge that Wasn't." Politico. January 18, 2017.

Website: OpenSecrets.org – glance through this website.

Assignment Due Today: Readings & **Position / White Paper**

WEEK 11: Thursday, 9 November 2017 – The New Normal: OMNIBUS Appropriations, Continuing Resolutions & Reprogramming Actions

Reading Due Today:

Bates, “Op-Ed: Fiscal Disorder – The Broken Budget Process and the Dire Need for Reform.” Ripon Forum. April 21, 2009.

MacGuineas, “Op-Ed: Congress’ Bad Record of Passing Appropriations Bills Shows Need for Budget Process Reform.” The Hill. December 10, 2009.

US Government Accounting Office, “Effects of Budget Uncertainty from Continuing Resolutions on Agency Operations.” March 13, 2013.

Bipartisan Policy Center Blog, “The Continuing Resolution and What it Means for Sequestration.” April 19, 2013.

Rogers, “Our Election Mandate: Bring No-Nonsense Governing, Regularity to the Federal Funding Process / Commentary.” Roll Call. November 17, 2014.

Tollestrup, Omnibus Appropriations Acts: Overview of Recent Practices.” Congressional Research Service. July 15, 2015.

Leonard, “The New Normal.” CQ. May 9, 2016.

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 12: Thursday, 16 November 2017 – Solutions: Potential Adjustments to the Budget and Appropriations Process

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 11

Wessel, Chapter 5

The Peterson-Pew Commission on Budget Reform, “Getting Back in the Black.” A Report of the Peterson-Pew Commission on Budget Reform. November 2010.

Bowles and Simpson, “A Bipartisan Path Forward to Securing America’s Future.” Moment of Truth Project. February 2013.

Posner, Redburn, Joyce & Myers. “Memo to National Leaders – Strengthening the Federal Budget Process.” National Academy of Public Administration. July 11, 2013.

Knudsen, “Why Congress Needs a New Budget Process.” The Heritage Foundation. December 5, 2013.

Bowles and Simpson, Simpson and Bowles: Budget Deal is Just a Start.” Log Angeles Times. December 16, 2013.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, “The Budget Act at 40: Time for a Tune Up?”. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. July 14, 2014.

MacGuineas, “The Better Budget Process Initiative: Strengthening Statutory Budget Enforcement.” Center for A Responsible Federal Budget. July 25, 2015.

Martin, “Fixing Sequestration and Improving the Budget Process.” Center for American Progress. July 28, 2015.

Hearn & Phaup, “Making Better Budget Decisions Easier: Some Changes Suggested by Behaviour Research.” Brookings. June 17, 2016.

Assignments Due Today: Readings & **Opinion Paper**

Thursday, 23 November 2017 - Thanksgiving – NO CLASS

WEEK 13: Thursday, 30 November 2017 – First Round of Presentations

Reading Due Today: TBD.

Assignment Due Today: **Budget Project Paper and Budget Project Presentation (Note that BOTH the Presentation & Paper are DUE via e-mail by noon, Wednesday, November 29th)**

WEEK 14: TBD - Thursday, 7 December 2017 – Second Round of Presentations – LAST CLASS

Reading Due Today: TBD.

Assignment Due Today: **Budget Project Presentation**

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.