Basic Information and Resources

Instructors:
John Leggieri, Adjunct Professor
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&
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Communication
The best way to contact us is via e-mail. You can normally expect a response within 24 hours or less. We are 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 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.
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 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 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 us 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 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; and the role of agency liaisons. 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 and Participation:** (10% of grade). Any graduate seminar discussion is enlivened by the thoughtful contributions of all the students in class. You are expected to attend all classes, be prepared and participate in class discussions. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. A reduction of one letter grade will be taken for students missing more than two (2) classes and additional full letter grade reductions will be imposed for missing each class after that (exceptions will apply to emergencies situations only). 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.

   Additionally, at the beginning of each class period we will review current events and issues and relate them to our course subject matter. Keep up with current events as they pertain to the topics of this course.
2. **Point Paper** (15% of grade)  
DUE: 24 September 2015

You are a Congressional Staffer working for a Member of Congress. Read or watch President Obama’s 2015 State of the Union Address and read “The Budget Message of the President” that accompanies the President’s budget submission. Select one of the FY16 programs or policies discussed in the speech and write a point paper (no more than 3 pages) to be given to your Member which supports or opposes the program/policy. In your review and analysis, you should drill down into the topic by following the program/policy through the budget process (up to submission to Congress). Determine which agency the program/policy falls under, determine the FY16 funding for the program (and past funding if applicable), state the agency’s position on the program/policy, and summarize any additional information available on the program/policy, including articles, positions of think tanks, etc. Finally, recommend that your Member support or oppose the program/policy. Use all information available to back-up your position of defending or criticizing the program/policy. Provide us your agency/program topic **NLT 10 September**.

3. **Hearing Packet** (15% of grade)  
DUE: 15 October 2015

You are a Professional Staff Member (PSM) working for one of the House or Senate Appropriations Subcommittees (HAC/SAC). You must prepare your Chairman or Ranking Member for the FY16 Budget Hearing (also called Posture Hearing) for an agency of your choosing. You may select any federal agency testifying before one of the HAC or SAC subcommittees. To prepare your Member, read the agency’s FY16 budget or posture statement and prepared testimony, review corresponding budget materials and become as familiar as possible with that agency and its FY16 programs prior to the hearing. The hearing packet should include: the Chairman’s or Ranking Member’s Opening Statement (no more than 2 pages), a brief summary of the agency’s budget request highlighting funding levels and pointing out key programs, biographies of witnesses and a set of detailed hearing questions related to the agency’s budget request and materials for the Chairman / Ranking Member and other Members of the committee to ask the witnesses (at a minimum you should have at least one question per committee Member). Also include a face chart showing all committee members (majority and minority). To avoid having everyone do the same committee, please submit your selected HAC/SAC committee and agency to us **NLT 17 September**. We will de-conflict any duplicates. If you work for Congress, select a committee and agency other than one you normally deal with.

4. **Position / White Paper**: (10% of grade)  
DUE: 29 October 2015

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 or company is interested in. Your paper should clearly identify the program, the budgetary detail (line, agency where funded, current amount in the President’s budget and clearly state your request or ask). Outline the details about the program – what it is, the request you propose (hold budget request, increase amount, etc.) and reasons for your request in FY2016. Your goal is to **advocate** for this program to maintain the President’s Budget level, or receive a budgetary increase – make a strong case. At the end, make a recommendation to Congress for the FY2016 funding level.
5. **Opinion Paper (15% of grade)**  
**DUE: 19 November 2015**

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

6. **Budget Project Paper and Presentation (35% of grade)**  
**DUE: 3 December 2015**

**PRESENTATION DUE: Noon on 2 December 2015**

(Presentations on 3 and 8 December)

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 10 pages) which includes the following:

- Clearly outlines the program or policy and identifies the federal agency it belongs to.
- Details the FY16 funding request, as well as previous year funding (requested, appropriated and enacted), for the program. Use of tables and graphs is encouraged.
- Summarize material contained in the President’s budget request related to the program/issue – including statements made by the Administration, testimony by the agency, etc. Be sure to explain details of the program or what the policy would do.
- Outline action taken by Congress – to include questions during budget/posture hearings, sub and full committee mark-up results to include funding increases/decreases and report/bill language. Also outline past action by Congress.
- Identify the political equities involved and state which Members of the House or Senate might support or oppose the program/policy and why.
- State any industry, state government, or organization’s possible connection to the program or policy and outline what groups might advocate for or against it.
- Explain any advocacy or lobbying efforts taking place or that might take place and guage their likely effectiveness.
- Recap any relevant press or articles written about the program/policy.
- Based on all your research, make a recommendation to support or oppose the program or policy as it moves to conference for final inclusion in the FY16 Appropriations Bill.

Additionally, use your research to construct a **presentation** which covers all of the points above and ultimately makes a recommendation to a Member of Congress to support or oppose the program or policy. Your presentation should be about 7 to 10 minutes in length.

**Submit your final paper/presentation topic to us NLT 8 October 2016.**
### Evaluation and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 – Point Paper</td>
<td>Objectives 1 - 3</td>
<td>24 Sep</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 – Hearing Packet</td>
<td>Objectives 1 - 3</td>
<td>15 Oct</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 – Position Paper</td>
<td>Objectives 1-3</td>
<td>29 Oct</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4 – Opinion Paper</td>
<td>Objectives 1 - 3</td>
<td>19 Nov</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 5 – Budget Project and Presentation</td>
<td>Objectives 1 - 3</td>
<td>3 Dec</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Present on 3 &amp; 8 Dec</td>
<td>(25% paper &amp; 10% presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>Objectives 1 - 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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<td>100%</td>
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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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade*</th>
<th>Grading Standard</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72 (lowest grade to pass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.*

*Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.*

*Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.*

*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.*

*You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.*

*Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.*

*Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.*

*Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.*

*Unacceptable performance or inability to submit the assignment.*
Required Text and Learning Materials

Text Books:


Additional Readings:

The readings for each class will often include other 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, 3 September 2015 – Introduction - Budget and Appropriations Process and Politics

Reading Due Today:
**Schick**, Chapter 1 & 2
**Nether**, “Barack Obama’s ‘have it all’ budget.” POLITICO, February 2, 2015.

Assignment Due BEFORE 1st Class: Provide 1 page bio (due NLT Thursday, August 27, 2015)

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 2: Thursday, 10 September 2015 – The President’s Budget: Putting It All Together

Reading Due Today:
**Schick**, Chapter 4 & 5

Website with FY2016 Budget Materials: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget) (skim only)

Assignment Due Today: Readings and Point Paper Topic
WEEK 3: Thursday, 17 September 2015 – President’s Budget Submission to Congress

Reading Due Today:


Website with FY2016 Budget Materials: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget (skim only)

Assignment Due Today: Readings & Hearing Packet Committee Selection

WEEK 4: Thursday, 24 September 2015 – Sequestration: BCA, BBA and the Uncertain Fiscal Future

Reading Due Today:


Assignments Due Today: Readings & Point Paper

WEEK 5: Thursday, 1 October 2015 – House and Senate Budget Committees

Reading Due Today:

Schick, Chapter 6


Congressional Budget Office, “The 2015 Long-Term Budget Outlook.” CBO. June 16, 2015. (Skim only)

Assignment Due Today: Readings
WEEK 6: Thursday, 8 October 2015 – The Power of the Purse: Congressional Appropriations

Reading Due Today:
Schick, Chapter 9

Assignment Due Today: Readings & Final Paper / Presentation Topic

WEEK 7: Thursday, 15 October 2015 – Power Reduced: Today’s Congressional Appropriations

Reading Due Today:

Assignment Due Today: Readings & Hearing Packet

WEEK 8: Thursday, 22 October 2015 – Authorization – Role in the Budget Process

Reading Due Today:
Schick, Chapter 8

Assignments Due Today: Readings
WEEK 9: Thursday, 29 October 2015 – The Power to Influence – Interest Groups, Lobbyists and their Role in the Budget and Appropriations Process

Reading Due Today:
Website: OpenSecrets.org – glance through this website.

Assignment Due Today: Readings & Position / White Paper

WEEK 10: Thursday, 5 November 2015 – Presidential - Congressional Relations: Budgetary Politics Causes High Tensions and Drama

Reading Due Today:

Assignment Due Today: Readings

Reading Due Today:

Assignment Due Today: Readings

WEEK 12: Thursday, 19 November 2014 – Solutions – Potential Adjustments to the Budget and Appropriations Process

Reading Due Today:
Schick, Chapter 11

Assignments Due Today: Readings & Opinion Paper
Thursday, 26 November 2015 - Thanksgiving – NO CLASS

WEEK 13: Thursday, 3 December 2015 – First Round of Presentations

Reading Due Today: TBD.

Assignment Due Today: Budget Project Paper and Budget Project Presentation (Note that Presentation is DUE via e-mail on noon, Wednesday, December 2nd)

WEEK 14: Tuesday, 8 December 2015 – 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.