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| Instructor: Kirk A. Leach, Ph.D. | Course #: PADM 7323; CDN 61395 |
| Office: Ross Hall 636 | Title: Public Finance Administration |
| Email: kaleach@ualr.edu | Semester: Fall 2017 |
| Phone: 501.569.8513 | Meeting date / time: Thursday 6:00-9:00 pm |
| Office Hours: M/T 4-5:30 pm & by appt. | Location: Ross Hall 321 |

**General Course Description:**

This course introduces graduate students to the principles of public finance and the skills necessary for sound management of public sector financial resources. The course covers the theory and practical issues of public sector budgeting. How governments obtain revenue and determine expenditures will be explored. The theory of why a public sector exists and how society makes collective choices will be discussed. The legal, political and economic perspectives of public budgeting will be emphasized.

**Student Learning Objectives:**

The goal of this course is for students to obtain public budgeting and finance knowledge and skills that will be useful in their careers and in their role as citizens. Students who successfully complete this course will be able:

1. To lead and manage in public governance
   1. Students will study how public organizations construct budgets and other financial statements.
   2. Students are expected to distinguish between effective and ineffective management
2. To participate in and contribute to the public policy process
   1. Students are expected to learn how to effectively critique, construct and present arguments for legislative, judicial and administrative change
3. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.
   1. Show mastery of up-to date theoretical and practical (applied) knowledge in public budgeting and finance
   2. Show mastery of specialized knowledge and skills appropriate to executing the tasks associated with public budgeting and finance
   3. Show an understanding & appreciation of organizational, political and socio-economic environments
4. To articulate and apply a public service perspective
   1. Students are expected to work cooperatively on some class projects
   2. Students are expected to internalize the values of justice, equality, diversity and transparency through coursework
5. To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry
   1. Students are expected to successfully complete team projects
   2. Students are expected to communicate with one another in class discussion with sensitivity to the diversity within the classroom and subject matter

Specifically:

1. Develop an understanding of

1. Key concepts and terms utilized in public budgeting and finance;
2. The budgetary process and budget reforms;
3. The impact of the political, social, economic, technical, and legal environment on public budgeting and finance decisions; and
4. Managerial issues related to public budgeting and finance including financial ethics, and teamwork.

2. The ability to

1. Effectively communicate issues related to public budgeting and finance; and
2. Apply analytic skills in addressing public budgeting and finance issues.

**Course format**

The course will include the use of both theory and practice. The course will combine several delivery modalities including structured discussion, lectures, peer learning via individual discussion and group work, online video materials, and visits from experts to deliver course content. **I will primarily use discussion to supplement traditional lecture. During a typical class meeting we will engage in debates, and structured reflections.**

**Course policies**

**Attendance –** Our course requires active participation and discussion. Therefore it is important that you come to class and be prepared to discuss the readings. If you are unable to attend class because of work, family or other obligation please email me at: [kaleach@ualr.edu](mailto:kaleach@ualr.edu). Multiple absences from class will lower your grade.

**Blackboard** – A Blackboard site is setup for this course. Each student is expected to check the site multiple times every week during the semester. Blackboard will be the primary venue for outside classroom communication between the instructor and students. Students can access the course site at: https://blackboard.ualr.edu/

**Written work** – This is a university-level course and accordingly all written work, including online discussion posts, will be evaluated not only based on substance and persuasiveness, but also spelling, style, grammar, and organization. Proof read your work prior to submission. All assignments are to be uploaded via Blackboard. **No late work will be accepted**.

**Academic integrity** – All students are expected to be familiar with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Integrity Standards. The UALR Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed here: http://ualr.edu/deanofstudents/academic-integrity/

**Students with Disabilities** – It is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) on how we can meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at ualr.edu/disability.

**Classroom culture**

**Electronic devices** – Electronic and wireless devices have become an integral part of modern life. However, it is important that electronic/wireless devices are used appropriately. In consideration of your fellow students and to maintain an optimal learning environment, please **silence cell phones while you are in class**. **The use of electronic/wireless devices in class is a privilege**. The use of electronic/wireless devices during class is r**estricted to in-class activities,** including taking notes, viewing the lecture slides presented by the instructor, or accessing the internet for class-related information. If the instructor or one of your classmates says something that really strikes you please feel free to #MindBlown #JustDroppedSomeKnowledge

It is expected that **learning** in our class will depend on **active participation and vigorous discussion**, but in **an atmosphere of mutual respect** among students and the instructor. Be creative and question what you read. All ideas and contributions are encouraged. **We will cover controversial social topics.** It is important to recognize that others may have different opinions and that we should discuss these issues in a cooperative and respectful manner. Students should feel free to challenge the instructor and one another assured that **the classroom is a safe environment to explore not only technical, but also controversial and provocative ideas**.

**Required Texts**

We will be using the following as our main text.

Mikesell, John. *Fiscal Administration: Analysis and Applications for the Public Sector (10th edition).* Harcourt, Brace and Company. Orlando, FL: 2010.

**You are responsible for all required readings.** You are encouraged to use any additional materials that will help you with the material we will cover. Periodically I will post peer reviewed journal articles or media that supplement the required reading.

**Course Requirements**

1. Course **readings as assigned** and **active participation in class discussions is expected**. Students are also encouraged to read the daily newspaper in order to follow current budgeting discussions from a local, state and national perspective. Those students who do not subscribe to a daily paper are encouraged to access newspapers on-line and an Arkansan paper*.*
2. **Case discussion and questions.**  Case studies and questions allow you to explore in greater depth the topics covered in class. All students are expected to read and analyze the assigned cases/questions prior to coming to class. On assigned weeks students will be responsible for an in-class discussion of their analysis, and the issues presented in the cases. **Participation grades will be based on thoroughness of case analysis, student participation in the discussion, and critical analysis of counter positions.** Participation will be based on the following criteria:
   1. Inclusion of key facts of case study
   2. Attention to key budgeting concepts in case
   3. Ability to tie case study to course readings
   4. Ability to tie case to current issues and or articles
   5. Appropriateness of discussion & questions
   6. Ability to encourage and extend class discussion

1. **Written case analysis.** Students will also submit a written analysis of the case. Papers should be 4 – 5 pages in length. The written analysis should reflect the class discussion, the course readings, **AND include a *minimum of 2 peer-reviewed journal articles* that relate to the case or the public budgeting issue discussed**. The due dates are listed on the syllabus.
2. **Final State budget analysis group project.** Students will be given a budget analysis research project. Directions for the assignment will be distributed in class. Note, there is a peer review component of the final that also impacts your grade.

**Grading Policy**

The weight of each assignment/examination will be as follows:

In class participation including case discussion 20%

Case study written analysis 35%

Final State Budget analysis, presentation and peer evaluation 45%

**Grading**

I will calculate your grades by summing the points you have accumulated and dividing by the total points available (500), to convert your grade to a 100-point scale. Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

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| A | 91-100 |
| B | 81-90 |
| C | 71-80 |
| D | 61-70 |
| F | <60 |

**Readings and themes**

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| Week | Date | Topics, readings, and assignments |
| 1 | Aug 17 | Getting to know each other; and what we hope to accomplish over the next few weeks  **Introduction to Public Budgeting**  **Budgeting Fundamentals and the Logic of the Budget Process**  *How are budgets put together? Who are the key actors? What is the timing?*  **Mikesell Chp1 & 2** |
| 2 | Aug 24 | **Budget Methods and Practices**  *How do agencies prepare budgets? What is the role of the executive budget?*  **Mikesell Chp 3**  **Discussion** – |
| 3 | Aug 31 | **Federal Budget Structures and Institutions**  *How does spending differ between federal, state and local governments?*  **Turn in signed acknowledgment of UALR Academic Integrity Policy.**    **Mikesell Chp 4** |
| 4 | Sept 7 | **State and Local budgets**  *State and local spending and the delivery of local services*  **Mikesell Chp 5**  C**ase discussion** –  **State selections due for team project.** |
| 5 | Sept 14 | **Budget Classification and Reform**  *How are government services provided? What can we expect from various forms of budgeting? How have budgets changed over time to meet political and policy demands?*  **Mikesell Chp 6** |
| 6 | Sept 21 | **Guest lecture –**  **Case analysis due**: |
| 7 | Sept 28 | **Tax Evaluation Criteria**  *What makes a good tax? How do we evaluate and compare various types of taxes?*    **Mikesell Chp 8** |
| 8 | Oct 5 | **Revenue Sources: Income Taxes**  *What are the criteria for evaluating tax options? How can earnings be tapped as a revenue source?*  **Mikesell Chp 9**  **Discussion** – |
| 9 | Oct 12 | **Taxes on Goods and Services**  *How do we determine rates, levies and assessed values? How can the exchange of goods and services serve as a source of revenue? Who bears the burden of the tax?*  **Mikesell Chp 10**  C**ase discussion** – |
| 10 | Oct 19 | **Guest Speaker:**  **Case analysis due -** |
| 11 | Oct 26 | **Taxes on Property**  *How do we determine rates and assess value? How equitable is this? Who benefits from this tax or nontax?*  **Mikesell Chp 11** |
| 12 | Nov 2 | **Capital Budgeting, Public Infrastructure and Project Evaluation**  *How can communities pay for the big ticket items? How can we weigh the costs and the benefits of a project to make the best decision?*  **Mikesell Chp 7** |
| 13 | Nov 9 | **Revenue from User Fees, User Charges and Sales by Public Monopolies**  **Mikesell Chp 12**  **Case discussion:**  [Video: Privatizing US Toll Roads](https://youtu.be/bd04jnDq8x0) |
| 14 | Nov 16 | **Case analysis due:** |
| 15 | Nov 23 | No classes – Thanksgiving break |
| 16 | Nov 30 | Class presentations |
|  | Dec 7 | Class presentations |

**Acknowledgment of UALR Academic Integrity Policy**

Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity fully and abiding by them in all their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to report alleged violations of academic integrity to the faculty member teaching the course in which the violation is alleged to have occurred.

Academic Integrity Policy is available at

<http://ualr.edu/deanofstudents/academic-integrity/>

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (please print) acknowledge I read and understand UA Little Rock’s Policy on Academic Integrity.

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Signature Date

This form must be signed and returned to the professor by **August 31st, 2017.**