Cleveland State University  
Levin College of Urban Affairs  
Department of Urban Studies  
Instructor: Winifred Weizer  
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Office hours: (UR217) By appointment

**Course Description:** This course is designed to introduce the student to the world of budgeting at the local, state and federal level. Revenue sources, expenditures, and debt structures of the various levels of government will be covered. Special attention is given to theories of public budgeting as well as types of budgets and budget formats as well as the role that ethics plays in budget decisions.

**Course Objective:** The objective of the course is to provide the student with an understanding of the basic tools of budgeting. Students will learn how budgets are used to advance (and sometimes hinder) policy implementation. This class will also familiarize the student with the language used in budgeting.

**Course Method:** This course will combine lectures by the instructor with class discussions. *Students are expected to read and come prepared to discuss the material that is assigned.*

**Grading Policy:** Grades are based on the results of assignments, class questions, and a midterm and a final. The grade weight will consist of the following:

- Chapter Questions: 10%
- Personal Budget: 10%
- Decision Memo: 10%
- Media Analysis: 10%
- Budget Interview: 15%
- Midterm: 15%
- Final: 20%
- Class participation: 10%

Exam attendance is required. Makeup exams will only be given with the prior approval of the instructor. Late assignments are subject to a 5% grade penalty per week they are late.

**Grading scale:**  
95-100 A  
94-90 A-  
89-87 B+  
86-83 B  
82-80 B-  
79-75 C+  
74-70 C  
60-69 D

**Chapter Questions:** Each student is expected to submit a minimum of two questions for each of the chapters covered in the syllabus. Your questions should reflect that you read the chapter in a thoughtful manner. Questions like “What is the point of this reading?” will not be accepted (or receive credit). Questions can be used to help clarify material that might not be understood. Questions may also be used to challenge something that has said. Questions will also allow you to link the reading to your
experience, material we have discussed, or issues you may have seen in the news. Questions must be word-processed and double spaced. Spelling and grammar count so be sure to spell and grammar check your work!

**Personal Budget:** The instructor will provide the student with two scenarios for you to choose from. You will resolve the personal budget problem in the best manner possible.

**Media Analysis:** How the media covers an institution or a situation is critical to public perception. The reaction of an agency or public entity to press coverage is also a major factor in public opinion. The student will identify media articles that cover specific budget problems and deconstruct them for bias. The student will analyze the agency response as well as public perception. More detailed instructions will be distributed during the course of the semester for this assignment.

**Decision Memo:** The instructor will provide the student with a budget scenario that the student will analyze. The student will identify stakeholders and propose a solution that will address all of these concerns. The solution is to be presented as a two page single spaced decision memo with recommendations for your Mayor. Papers must be word processed, grammar and spell checked.

**Budget Interview:** The student will interview a finance director or fiscal officer of a local government, special district or public agency. The interview subject must be approved by the instructor. The instructor will provide the student with a basic list of questions that are appropriate for the student to use in the interview.

**Additional information:** The instructor will make copies Budgets and additional information available to students on the college’s “n” drive. This drive can be reached relatively easily in the computer lab in UR40. These can also be accessed from outside of the college by going to ftp://www.urban.csuohio.edu/ Choose “utility” at the next screen, then choose “weizer” and then choose “ust459”.


**Class Schedule and Readings**

- **January 15:** Course Overview and Expectations  
  *Read Chapter 1*

- **January 17:** The Nature of Public Budgeting  
  *Chapter 1 questions are due*

- **January 22:** The Nature of Public Budgeting
January 24: The Nature of Public Budgeting
   Read Chapter 2
   Personal Budget Assignment is due
   January 25 Last day to drop (by 8:00 p.m.).

January 29: Government Revenues, Spending and Borrowing
   Chapter 2 questions are due

January 31: Government Revenues, Spending and Borrowing
   Read Chapter 3

February 5: The Budget Cycle
   Chapter 3 questions are due
   Decision Memo is due

February 7: The Budget Cycle
   Read Chapter 4

February 12: Budget Preparation
   Chapter 4 questions are due

February 14: Budget Preparation
   Media analysis is due

February 19: Budget Preparation

February 21: Budget Preparation
   Read Chapter 5

February 26: Midterm

February 28: Budget Analysis
   Chapter 5 questions are due

March 4: Budget Analysis

March 6: Budget Analysis
   Read Chapter 6

March 10 through March 16th Spring Break – No class!!

March 18: Budget Adoption
   Chapter 6 questions are due

March 20: Budget Adoption
   Read Chapter 7
March 25:  Budget Execution  
*Chapter 7 questions are due*

March 27:  Budget Execution  
_March 28  Last day to drop with a W on transcript_

April 1: Budget Execution  
*Read Chapter 8*

April 3:  Financial Management  
*Chapter 8 questions are due*

April 8:  Financial Management  
*Read Chapter 9*

April 10:  The Economy and the Budget  
*Chapter 9 questions are due*

April 15: The Economy and the Budget

April 17:  The Economy and the Budget  
*Read Chapter 10*

April 22:  Intergovernmental Aspects of Public Budgeting  
*Chapter 10 questions are due*

April 24:  Intergovernmental Aspects of Public Budgeting  
*Read Chapter 11*

April 28:  Budget Reform (or is it?)  
*Chapter 11 questions are due*

May 1: Budget Reform (or is it?)

**Thursday May 8: Final 8:30-10:30 am**

**Note:** Students are strongly encouraged to email the Instructor with questions or problems they may be having. I am on campus most days of the week and check my email on a daily basis. I am also willing to meet with students that may be having difficulty with the material. Please contact me to set up a specific time and place.

**A special note on plagiarism:** All submitted work is to be to academic standards with appropriate citations. Material that is copied word for word and submitted without appropriate citations will be graded as an F in either the exercises or the short paper. If you are unsure about how to paraphrase material or how to cite correctly, please contact the instructor before you submit your work. Copy and paste answers, while
easy, are not a good way to learn to write. I would much rather have you restate the material than to copy and paste the answer. If you do use copy and paste, you must enclose the material in quotes and cite your source appropriately. Wikipedia is NOT to be used as a source for your papers. Students using Wikipedia will be penalized 10 points.

The Writing Center at Cleveland State is available to assist the student with writing issues. Information on the writing center is found at http://www.csuohio.edu/writingcenter/index.html.

Questions regarding the university calendar (holidays and finals week schedule) can be resolved by using the following link to the registrar's office.

http://www.csuohio.edu/registrar/calendar.html

University Policies
Students should refer to the Undergraduate Bulletin for procedures regarding add/drop and withdrawals and any other policies that may apply.

Physically challenged/Special Needs
Students with special needs (physical handicaps, learning disabilities, English as a second language) should identify themselves so that the appropriate arrangements can be made. The Office of Disability Services provides additional assistance for those students who have special needs. Further information about services provided can be found online at http://www.csuohio.edu/clc/disability/. Students can contact the office at 687-2015.