

Carnegie Mellon
Heinz College

<p>Course Information</p>	<p>Course Title _____ 90-894 Policy Topics I: Federal Budget Policy</p> <p><u>Units</u> <u>Lec/Sec</u> <u>Days</u> <u>Begin</u> <u>End</u> <u>Instructor</u> 6 Mini W4 W 6:30PM 9:20PM George Krumbhaar</p> <p>CONTACT INFORMATION: Ph: 202-364-0108 Cell: 202-641-2977 E-mail: mailto:georgekr@andrew.cmu.edu or mailto:legemar@starpower.net</p> <p>LOCATION: 444 North Capitol Street, NW; Suite 399; Washington DC 20001 (possibly remotely)</p> <p>OFFICE HOURS: Available by phone or e-mail as listed above; shall keep office hours at 202-364-0108 each Wednesday from 11am to 1pm. Other times, at 444 North Capitol Street, by appointment.</p>
<p>Prerequisites</p>	<p>No prerequisites. A basic course in macro-economics is useful, but not required; the course will assume some familiarity with such concepts as the business cycle, leading/lagging indicators, net present value, and basic tax concepts (capital gains, deductions, credits).</p> <p>A knowledge of congressional legislative processes is useful, but not required; the course will assume some familiarity with such matters as committee reports, House and Senate floor procedures, and House-Senate conferences.</p>
<p>Description</p>	<p>Why do we have such large budget deficits? Why does Congress have such a hard time getting to agree on budget policy? Why is there such pork barrel spending and government waste in Washington?</p> <p>The answers to these questions, and others like them, require a detailed knowledge of the law and politics that lie behind the budget process, and the difficult policy choices that make up that process each year.</p> <p>Track I</p> <p>This course proceeds simultaneously along two tracks. Track I will cover the law and procedures you need to understand how the federal budget is formulated and acted upon. This sounds dull, but it isn't! For good reason, people call Congress the world's greatest soap opera; and the budget process, while complex, is full of political warfare, the clashing of egos, and the constant pressure of voter demands. Those who know the law and procedures can gain an advantage over others in the struggle for dollars and the way they get spent. While in this phase of the course, you will be assigned "mini-briefs": short oral presentations on certain technical aspects of the budget.</p> <p>Track II</p> <p>Track II will introduce you to some of the important budget issues that have made life so difficult for Republicans and Democrats alike: working out an effective budget process, balancing the budget, funding budget priorities with limited resources, and deciding how much (and how) to</p>

<p>Selected issue student briefings</p>	<p>tax workers and investors. When we are working on Track II, you will develop “two-pagers,” the kinds of memoranda and statements written by congressional staff and political advisers.</p> <p>For a better grasp of budget policy than an eight-week course would normally allow, this seminar will also assign teams to investigate selected budget issues (e.g., Social Security funding), and report back to the seminar with their findings and, where appropriate, recommendations. Each team will produce a written report, based on a detailed assignment provided by the instructor, with a draft summary of the issues distributed to the rest of the seminar. Team members will deliver their 5-10 minute report, and field questions from the rest of the seminar in a hearing-like setting. A sample student briefing assignment is attached to this syllabus.</p>												
<p>Course Materials (if applicable)</p>	<p>The basic material for this course is <i>Working the Federal Budget: A Guide</i>.” Available for purchase on Amazon and at the publisher, Routledge. (referred to elsewhere in this Syllabus as the “course text.”) You will be assigned additional reading materials from free-of-charge public sources and current news articles. You will be provided these other materials, or links and articles will be posted on Canvas.</p>												
<p>Evaluation Method</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>“Two-pagers”</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student briefings and mini-briefs</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class Participation*</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> </table> <p>There is no final exam in this course. You are, however, expected to complete the reading and written assignments, even with excused absences.</p> <p>* “Class participation” comprises contributions to class discussion, the preparation of answers to assigned questions from the course text, and the preparation of questions you will ask team members when they give their issue briefings.</p>	“Two-pagers”	30%	Student briefings and mini-briefs	30%	Class Participation*	40%						
“Two-pagers”	30%												
Student briefings and mini-briefs	30%												
Class Participation*	40%												
<p>Learning/Course Objectives</p>	<p>The overall objective of the course is to introduce you to the concepts and procedures that the players in the federal budget and appropriations process need to know. Because virtually all other policy areas (e.g., health care, environment, defense) have a budget component, you will be encouraged to bring your experience from other seminars and from your internships into this course.</p> <p>More detailed learning objectives follow:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Learning Objective</th> <th>How Assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Identify and explain concepts and players that are central to the federal budget process and budget policy.</td> <td>"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Identify and explain the legal and regulatory underpinnings of the budget process.</td> <td>"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Identify and explain the constitutional basis for the "power of the purse" and other budget-related powers granted to Congress and the president.</td> <td>"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Identify and explain major budget-related issues in their political, economic and legal context.</td> <td>"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Familiarize oneself with the basic documents that make up the federal budget, and how to find information within those documents.</td> <td>"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, written responses</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Learning Objective	How Assessed	Identify and explain concepts and players that are central to the federal budget process and budget policy.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.	Identify and explain the legal and regulatory underpinnings of the budget process.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.	Identify and explain the constitutional basis for the "power of the purse" and other budget-related powers granted to Congress and the president.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.	Identify and explain major budget-related issues in their political, economic and legal context.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.	Familiarize oneself with the basic documents that make up the federal budget, and how to find information within those documents.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, written responses
Learning Objective	How Assessed												
Identify and explain concepts and players that are central to the federal budget process and budget policy.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.												
Identify and explain the legal and regulatory underpinnings of the budget process.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.												
Identify and explain the constitutional basis for the "power of the purse" and other budget-related powers granted to Congress and the president.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.												
Identify and explain major budget-related issues in their political, economic and legal context.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, discussion of team projects and course text.												
Familiarize oneself with the basic documents that make up the federal budget, and how to find information within those documents.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation, written responses												

	Articulate in oral and written form the arguments used by political leaders regarding select budget issues.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation																			
	Utilize one's knowledge of budget policy to develop advisory material for a Member of Congress, political appointee, lobbyist, etc.	"Two-pagers," mini-briefs, class participation																			
Grading Scale	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>A+</td><td>99.0-100%</td><td>B+</td><td>88.0-90.9%</td><td>C+</td><td>78.0-80.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td><td>94.0-98.9%</td><td>B</td><td>84.0-87.9%</td><td>C</td><td>74.0-77.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A-</td><td>91.0-93.9%</td><td>B-</td><td>81.0-83.9%</td><td>C-</td><td>71.0-73.9%</td> </tr> </table>			A+	99.0-100%	B+	88.0-90.9%	C+	78.0-80.9%	A	94.0-98.9%	B	84.0-87.9%	C	74.0-77.9%	A-	91.0-93.9%	B-	81.0-83.9%	C-	71.0-73.9%
A+	99.0-100%	B+	88.0-90.9%	C+	78.0-80.9%																
A	94.0-98.9%	B	84.0-87.9%	C	74.0-77.9%																
A-	91.0-93.9%	B-	81.0-83.9%	C-	71.0-73.9%																
Grading Rubric/explanation of grades	<p>A+ Given an issue, identify multiple arguments that are on point, logically consistent, clearly presented and show a professional understanding of the workings of budget policy. Footnotes reflect original sources, when available. This grade is reserved for work that would excel in a professional setting.</p> <p>A Given an issue, identify multiple arguments that are logically consistent, clearly presented and show a professional understanding of the workings of budget policy. Footnotes reflect original sources, when available. This grade is reserved for work that would be considered quite adequate in a professional setting but might require minor editing to be considered outstanding.</p> <p>A- Given an issue, identify some arguments that are on point, logically consistent, clearly presented and show a professional understanding of the workings of budget policy. Footnotes reflect original sources, when available. This grade is for work that would be considered adequate in a professional setting but falls short for missing key arguments and/or details.</p> <p>B+ Given an issue, identify some arguments that are logically consistent, clearly presented and show a professional understanding of the workings of budget policy. This grade is for work that would be considered barely adequate in a professional setting because it misses key arguments, is poorly referenced and/or displays a misunderstanding of one or two budget issues that we have covered in class.</p> <p>B Given an issue, identify some arguments that show some understanding of the workings of budget policy. This grade is for work that would be considered barely adequate in a professional setting because it reflects hurried and shallow preparation, misses key arguments, is poorly referenced, has gaps in reasoning and/or displays a misunderstanding of multiple (more than two) budget issues that we have covered in class.</p> <p>B- Given an issue, identify some arguments that show some understanding of the workings of budget policy. This grade is for work that would be not considered adequate in a professional setting because it reflects hurried and shallow preparation, misses key arguments, is poorly referenced, has gaps in reasoning, and/or displays a misunderstanding of multiple (more than two) budget issues that we have covered in class. The difference between this and a "B" grade is one of degree; the B- and below are reserved for work that would not be considered adequate in a professional setting.</p> <p>C+</p>																				

Given an issue, posit arguments that, throughout, show a flawed understanding of the workings of budget policy. This grade is for work that would be not considered adequate in a professional setting because it reflects hurried and shallow preparation, misses key arguments, has gaps in reasoning, and/or displays a marked misunderstanding of multiple (more than two) budget issues that we have covered in class.

Note: One point will be taken off for lateness of any deadlines written materials. Thus, an A would become an A-, an A- would become a B+, etc. *In rare cases*, if a student asks in advance for more time, and has a reasonable case, points will not be taken off for limited lateness. See also "**Course Policies & Expectations**," below, for more information on absences.

Note also: Students with excused absences will not be marked down for lack of classroom participation.

It is understood that students will have questions in order to set straight any misunderstanding they may have about budget policy. Questions are encouraged at any time in class! An informed curiosity about the subject, as evidenced by intelligent questions and the ability to apply the answers in ensuing discussions, will be noted when compiling students' final grades.

Course/Topical Outline: Note assignments listed here subject to change.

Note also: "Read" means: get to know the content as if you are going to be tested on it. "Skim" means: be aware of what's in the article and bring it to class in order to discuss its contents.

Class 1 – (March 24)

Topic	The constitutional power of the purse How the budget process has developed over two-plus centuries Who are the players in drafting, approving and executing the budget
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch "2021-Federal_Budget_Policy.pptx," a 30-minute summary of the course (to be posted Feb 2021) • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapters 1-3 • Read Principles of Appropriations Law (4th ed.), p. 1-4 through p. 1-9 (top) • Skim Principles of Appropriations Law (4th ed.), p. 1-9 through p. 1-22
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare written answers to "questions" at the end of chapters 1, 2 and 3. E-mail them to instructor by 9AM, March 24. • Be prepared to discuss the "discussion items" at the end of chapters 1, 2 and 3. • <i>PLEASE SUBMIT THIS AND ALL OTHER WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AS SEPARATE, EDITABLE FILES (e.g., MSWord). PLACE YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF EACH FILE.</i>

Class 2 – (March 30)

Topic	Budget concepts
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapters 4 through 6. • Read "CRS - The Spending Pipeline" • Read "Senate Appropriations Committee - Authorizations vs. Appropriations" • Read OMB Circular A-11, sections 10 (Overview of the Budget) and 15 (Basic Budget Laws) <p>Sources not given a link will be posted on Canvas</p>

Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare written answers to “questions” at the end of chapters 4, 5 and 6. E-mail them to instructor by 9AM, April 7. • <i>PLEASE SUBMIT THIS AND ALL OTHER WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AS SEPARATE, EDITABLE FILES (e.g., MSWord). PLACE YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF EACH FILE.</i> • Be prepared to discuss the "discussion items" at the end of chapters 4, 5 and 6.
-------------	--

Class 3 – (April 7)	
Topic	The budget
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected readings from the FY 2022 budget, to be published March, 2021
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete "Eleventh Annual Federal Budget Scavenger Hunt." Do not hand it in. Bring your written answers to seminar.

Class 4 – (April 14)	
Topic	Congressional consideration of the budget The content of appropriations bills
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapters 7 and 8 • Read "How your appropriations amendment might fail if you fail to read this blog" • Read CRS - "Introduction to the Federal Budget Process" • Read CRS - "Baselines and Scorekeeping in the Congressional Budget Process" • Skim CRS - "The 'Deeming Resolution': A Budget Enforcement Tool"
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams 1 and 2 submit materials to seminar and instructor by midnight Monday April 11; brief seminar on April 14. Rest of seminar prepares questions. Bring to seminar and use; do not hand in. • Prepare written answers to “questions” at the end of chapters VII and VIII. E-mail them to instructor by 9AM, April 14. <u>Note there are eight (8) questions to Chapter VII, the last one being at the top of a new page.</u> • Come to seminar prepared to discuss “discussion items” at the end of chapters 7 and 8.

Class 5 – (April 21)	
Topic	Tax policy Tax expenditures
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapter 9.
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams 3 and 4 submit materials to seminar and instructor by midnight Monday April 18; brief seminar on April 21. Rest of seminar prepares questions. Bring to seminar and use; do not hand in. • Come to seminar prepared to answer questions at end of Chapter 9.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come to seminar prepared to discuss “discussion items” at the end of chapter 9. • "Two-pager," as posted **
--	--

Class 6 – (April 28)

Topic	Federal loan, loan guarantee and insurance programs The budget and the economy
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapters 10 and 11. • Read CRS brief, "Tax Expenditures: Overview and Analysis"
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams 5 and 6 submit materials to seminar and instructor by midnight Friday April 25; briefs seminar on April 28. Rest of seminar prepares questions. Bring to seminar and use; do not hand in. • Come to seminar prepared to discuss "questions" and “discussion items” at the end of chapters 10 and 11. • "Two-pager," as assigned

Class 7– (May 5)

Topic	Reducing waste, fraud and abuse: The budget and government performance Federalism and the budget
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapters 12 and 13. • Read Washington Post article, "The Great Society at 50" (This is the same article you were asked to skim for the first seminar. It is one of the themes of the course, and an important look at the relationship of federal, state and local governments.)
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team 7 submits materials to seminar and instructor by midnight Friday October 4; briefs seminar on October 7. Rest of seminar prepares questions. Bring to seminar and use; do not hand in. • Be prepared to discuss “questions” at the end of chapter 12 • "Two-pager" to be assigned**

Class 8 – (May 12)

Topic	The budget and economic outlook (guest instructor: Jeff Holland, Director of Research, Peterson Foundation)
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Working the Federal Budget</i>, Chapter 14 (NOTE: This chapter, which updates the budget situation, will be posted on Canvas. Do not read the version from the “course text.”) • Skim CBO web site, especially the About page • Skim CBO, The 2020 Long-Term Budget Outlook • Skim CBO, Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2031 (posted in January, 2021) • Read CBO, Monthly Budget Review for March 2021 • (Note you will be using the CBO materials as the basis for much of your written assignment.)
Deliverable	Prepare questions for Jeff Holland. E-mail those questions to the instructor by 9AM , May 12..

	<p>Note: There will be “mini-briefs” assigned during the course. In addition, it is likely that current news stories will be assigned during the eight weeks of the seminar. Those eight weeks cover a key set of events in the budget calendar, including the first budget of the new administration.</p> <p>I reserve the right to alter some assignments.</p>
<p>Plagiarism and Cheating Notice</p>	<p>Students are subject to Carnegie Mellon University's policies on academic integrity. Plagiarism is a serious offense that will result in the student failing the course. Note that all academic integrity violations will be reported to the Associate Dean. Additional penalties may be imposed.</p> <p>Plagiarism includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting another writer’s work as your own; • Cutting and pasting content verbatim without using quotation marks to indicate a direct quote; • Inserting a direct quote or paraphrasing content without citing the source in-text using footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations with a corresponding Works Cited, References, or Notes page – in a manner consistent with an APA, MLA, or Chicago style guide; • Providing incomplete or incorrect information about the source cited; • Over-relying on templates or other writers’ phrasing. <p>Also, submitting work written for another course is not acceptable; consequently, a failing grade will be issued for that assignment.</p> <p>The way to avoid plagiarism is to attribute. Attribution is important for its own reasons, but especially in a political setting. Most Members of Congress and most political appointees want to hear different views, but it’s equally important for them to know where those views are coming from. Are they coming from the party leadership? A major business/labor interest? A nonpartisan source such as the Congressional Research Service? Knowledge of the source will often color the Members’/appointees’ reactions and your staff recommendations.</p> <p>This approach to research may run counter to the kind of work you have done in previous university settings, where the aim is to test hypotheses and arrive at firm conclusions. In a political setting, however, there are often a number of legitimate “firm conclusions” out there, depending upon one’s ideology, one’s constituency, and the circumstances of the day. An unadorned statement of “fact” is of less use to a policymaker than the same statement when attributed to a known source. The bottom line: When in doubt, attribute!</p>
<p>Course Policies & Expectations</p>	<p>You are expected to be on time, attend all seminars and participate in seminar discussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars will begin and end precisely on time! There will be a 15-minute break approximately 90 minutes into each seminar. • Students are expected to attend all seminars. However, there can be unforeseen circumstances and emergencies that arise. Students may be granted <u>one</u> excused absence for the course which could include an illness or personal emergency (you need to contact me within 1-2 days of missing seminar if not sooner in order to be excused) or an internship-related travel/opportunity that is worked out with me in advance of the missed seminar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After the one excused absence, or for any unexcused absences, the student can choose to submit a make-up paper OR receive a “0” for their participation grade for each missed seminar, which will factor into the student’s final grade for the course. The student should contact me to work out the topic for the paper. Please note that even if a student misses a seminar (whether excused or unexcused), assignments due for that day must still be completed and handed in. Under certain circumstances, such as illness of the student, the

	<p>instructor may grant extensions to due dates. I recognize that some absences will be unavoidable but stress that if you miss two seminars, you will have missed more than a quarter of the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I recognize that most students will be coming directly from work to the evening seminar. You are permitted to bring food to seminar, as long as it does not interfere with the conduct of the seminar. You are also permitted to use laptops in seminar, even referencing outside sources in order to add to seminar room discussion. • You are permitted to record seminar sessions if you speak with me beforehand. This gives me a chance to remind you that the recording must be for your personal use only. • I encourage, even urge, different points of view. The clash of different viewpoints is what makes a democracy viable and strong. You will be expected to participate in seminar discussions. Don't be afraid to have opinions, and to see them challenged in seminar! You will also, however, be expected to be respectful of others' points of view. • <i>UNLESS YOU ARE MAKING A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION, PLEASE SUBMIT ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AS SEPARATE, EDITABLE FILES (e.g., MSWord, not PDF). PLACE YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF EACH FILE.</i>
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	<p>If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, I shall have received that letter also; I encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, I encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.</p>
Student Health & Well-being	<p>Graduate school is stressful; take care of yourself! A good diet, exercise, sleep, time to relax or meditate are important parts of a lifestyle that will serve you well, now and throughout life.</p> <p>If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is ready to help. Call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/. Also, consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.</p>

ATTACHMENT

Student Briefing Assignments, Student “mini-briefs”

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A STUDENT BRIEFING ASSIGNMENT. THIS SPRING, WE SHALL HAVE TEAMS OF 2-3 PERSONS EACH. EACH TEAM WILL CHOOSE AN ASSIGNMENT FROM A LIST SUPPLIED BY INSTRUCTOR. TEAMS WILL HAVE THE OPTION OF DEVELOPING THEIR OWN ASSIGNMENT.

Student briefing: Where is the Social Security program headed?

Issue: Each year we are warned that the Social Security system is headed toward bankruptcy, with little guarantee that future generations will get to see the full benefits that their parents received. The latest Social

Security Trustees report, in fact, states that the Disability Insurance portion of Social Security will run out of money next year. Just the same, there's little momentum on Capitol Hill for reform of the program.

Your briefing: Summarize the program. Describe its size relative to the rest of the budget. Plot its trends, and describe what will happen under current law if/when funding runs out.

Questions to answer along the way:

- Social Security is actually two programs, not one. Explain.
- What is the solvency situation with the Social Security Trust Funds?
- Why does there appear to be so little progress in making the Social Security program solvent?

Resources to help you get started:

- 2020 Social Security Trustees report