

PLSC 352 – Politics of Public and Nonprofit Budgeting
Winter 2018
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 – 7:15PM
James L. Tatum III

CONTACT INFORMATION: jtatum3@emich.edu

REQUIRED TEXT: *Governmental Accounting Made Easy* by Warren Ruppel (2010)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides a basic understanding of budgeting processes and financial management practices.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: By the end of the course, all students will be able to read, understand and analyze financial data in the public sector.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: Class attendance is important.

GRADING SCALE:

Memo on Expenditure Analysis	=	10%
Memo on Revenue Analysis	=	10%
Memo on Capital Assets	=	10%
Memo on Indebtedness	=	10%
Memo on Indebtedness (2)	=	10%
Financial Statement Preparation	=	25%
Financial Condition Analysis	=	25%

HOMEWORK: You will not be asked to complete any task that has not been demonstrated in class first. Short problems will be assigned. Such assignments will be discussed in class, and you may be called to present your answers in class. Late work will not be accepted.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: It is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Students are also expected to have access to Microsoft Word and Excel outside the classroom. Unless told otherwise, students should not use electronic devices (laptops, tablets and smartphones) in class.

EXAMS: No exams.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: In addition to the course-specific policies and expectations listed here, students are responsible for understanding all applicable University guidelines, policies and procedures. The EMU Student Handbook is the primary resource provided to students to ensure that they have access to all university policies, support resources, and student's rights and responsibilities. Changes may be made to the EMU Student Handbook whenever necessary, and shall be effective immediately, and or as of the date on which a policy is formally adopted, and or on the date specified in the amendment. For questions about any university policy, procedure, practice, or

resource, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman: 248 Student Center, 734-487-0074, emu_ombuds@emich.edu, or visit the website: www.emich.edu/ombuds.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you wish to be accommodated for your disability, you must register with the Access Services Office (ASO) in room 203 King Hall. You may contact ASO by telephone at 734-487-2470. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with ASO promptly as you will only be accommodated from the date you register with them forward.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Each student in class is expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism violate the rules of the University and the ethical standards of public servants. Cheating and plagiarism will be punished to the full extent allowed by University rules and regulations. If found to be in violation of these expectations, your case will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Services for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal.

OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: EMU recognizes the rights of students to observe religious holidays without penalty to the student. University practice: Students will provide advance notice to their instructors in order to make up work, including examinations that they miss as a result of their absence from class due to observance of religious holidays. If satisfactory arrangements cannot be made with the appropriate instructor(s), students may appeal to the head(s) of the department(s) in which the course(s) is/are offered.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1

Topic: Course Introduction

Read for 1/4: "The Pentagon Is Almost Ready for Its Close-Up" by Russell Berman, *The Atlantic*

Week 2

Topic: Federal Budget

Read for 1/11: "Washington: Less Red Ink" by Milton Friedman, *The Atlantic*

Week 3

Topic: State and Local Budgets

Week 4

Topic: Expenditure Analysis & Policy Priorities

Week 5

Topic: Expenditure Analysis & Policy Priorities

Due on 2/4: Memo on Expenditure Analysis

Week 6

Topic: Revenue Analysis & Tax Policy

Read for 2/6: “Ferguson’s Fortune 500 Company” by Walter Johnson, *The Atlantic*

Week 7

Topic: Revenue Analysis & Tax Policy

Due on 2/18: Memo on Revenue Analysis

Week 8

Topic: Capital Assets – Planning, Budgeting, Analysis and Management

Week 9

Topic: Capital Assets – Planning, Budgeting, Analysis and Management

Read for 3/8: “If You Build It, They Might Not Come: The Risky Economics of Sports Stadiums” by Pat Garofalo and Travis Waldron, *The Atlantic*

Due on 3/11: Memo on Capital Assets

Week 10

Topic: Debt & Long-Term Financing

Read for 3/14: “Why Colleges Are Borrowing Billions” by Jon Marcus, *The Atlantic*

Week 11

Topic: Debt & Long-Term Financing

Due on 3/25: Memos on Indebtedness

Week 12

Topic: Governmental Accounting & Financial Reporting

Read for 3/27: “The Accounting Rules That Bankrupt Cities” by Jeremy Liss, *The Atlantic* and *Governmental Accounting Made Easy*, Chapters 2 - 4

Week 13

Topic: Governmental Accounting & Financial Reporting

Due on 4/8: Financial Statement Preparation

Week 14

Topic: Fiscal Crises & Cutback Management

Read for 4/10: “Downsizing Cities” by Witold Rybczynski, *The Atlantic*

Week 15

Topic: Fiscal Crises & Cutback Management

Due on 4/24: Financial Condition Analysis

The instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus.