Class Meeting: Wednesday 6:00-8:50pm  
Location: Chilton Hall Room 274  
Class Number: 14318  
Instructor: Yu (Kelly) Shi, Ph.D.  
Email: yu.shi@unt.edu  
Office: Room 204N, Chilton Hall  
Office Phone: 940-565-XXXX  
Office hours: Tuesday 2:00 pm-4:00pm  
Or by appointment (*will respond within one business day)

Course Overview and Objectives:

This course provides an overview of budgeting and financial management in the public sector. Fundamental concepts and practices of public finance are introduced for all levels of government with special emphasis on state and local government budgeting and financial management in the United States. At a broad level, the budget is the toll governments use to transform policies and goals into outcomes, and it determines the extent to which these goals are achieved. At a more basic level, the budget specifies the allocation of government resources among competing services and operations.

The course is organized to cover key subjects in public budgeting, including budget preparation, budget development, budget implementation, performance budgeting, internal control and cost analysis. The objective of this course is to give students a basic understanding of the concepts and skills needed to perform these tasks and to evaluate both budget processes and documents.

Required Text and Other Readings


Other required readings will be posted on Blackboard: [https://learn.unt.edu/](https://learn.unt.edu/)

Course Requirements and Grading:

The format for the course is a combination of lecture and discussion, with particular emphasis on discussion of the cases.

There are three requirements for the course:

1) Examinations (weight of 25% for each of the two exams): There will be two in-class exams. The first exam will cover basic finance and budget topics. The second exam will be comprehensive and cumulative in that it will require a basic understanding of the material
covered in the course. The format for the exams will include essay, short answer, and problem solving etc. Exams are closed book. No cheat sheet.

2) Project assignment (weight of 30%): Each student is expected to complete a project by the end of the semester. Each student needs to prepare a written report that evaluates a government’s budget process and budget documents. This report will be presented to the class and distributed to the government. For the presentation (roughly 15 minutes), each student needs to prepare a one or two-page executive summary for the audience. The report, the presentation and the executive summary will be graded. In addition, I will ask each student in the class to anonymously grade the presentations and the executive summary in the class. These grades will be used to adjust the final grades of students in marginal class. In other words, if you are on the margin between A and B, and you fellow students give you low grades for the presentation and the executive summary, I will adjust your final grade downward. A separate handout explaining this project will be distributed to the class at a later date.

3) Homework exercises (weight of 20%): There are four exercises. Each of them accounts for 5%. Font and page format is Times New Roman font 12, 1 inch margins, and double spaced. Paper should be stapled. Working together where it is clearly indicated is entirely appropriate, but if you are preparing a written document that will be submitted for evaluation, that document is expected to be the result of your work alone. Please submit your product in the class in person on the due day. Electronic document sent by emails will not be accepted. You need to print it out, and hand it over to the instructor.

Your grades will be based on the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project:</th>
<th>30 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Exams:</td>
<td>25 % each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PERCENT</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades are based on total percent received in the course, which is the same as a weighted average if all assignments were grades on a scale of 0 - 100. Please note that I do not give letter grades on individual assignments or exams. I give a numerical score for each course element during the semester and assign letter grades based on a weighted average of the numerical scores. I also reserve the right to base final grades on a “curve” rather than use the standard scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted numerical score of</th>
<th>Letter grade in the course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% or above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% to 90%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65% to 75%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55% to 65%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 55%</td>
<td>F</td>
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</table>

Most of the students are active learners and learn best when they can actively engage and discuss the material. Students who pose questions and participate in the discussion sharpen their public presentation skills and learn to think in a clear and critical manner in real time. Students benefit
from hearing the discussion and questions of other students. Class participation will greatly enhance the learning experience of all students.

Course Policies

Class attendance is expected and is critical for understanding the material. Students must also do the assigned readings and cases before class in order to understand the lectures and class discussions.

Blackboard

Blackboard is an internet-based information display system, and it will be a primary source of additional reading materials and means of communication for this course. You will find the course syllabus, additional required readings, project assignments, and class lecture notes on the blackboard site. Students are expected to check Blackboard and their UNT emails frequently for course announcements and materials. Plus, all new students should get a UNT computer account the first week of the class.

Original Work and Plagiarism

Unless explicitly assigned to work in groups, all students are expected to work independently. The project, exams, and exercises should be the student’s own work. Working together where it is clearly indicated is entirely appropriate, but if you are preparing a written product that will be submitted for evaluation, that product is expected to be the result of your work alone. Where questionable situations arise, always ask the instructor for clarification. Also, students must cite their sources where relevant, and plagiarism will be not tolerated and will be penalized severely at UNT. Please read MPA handbook for more information. You could also find information from the following website that defines academic dishonesty and available penalties: https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf

The Learning Environment

The instructor is strongly committed to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such an environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Policy on Cell Phone and Laptop in the Classroom

The classroom setting at an institution of higher learning is intended to serve as a venue that permits the transfer of knowledge and facilitates the sharing of ideas. As such, it is imperative that any distractions from these stated objectives be avoided and kept to a minimum. Potential disruptions include modern electronic devices such as laptop computers and cell phones.

Students are allowed to take notes on personal laptop computers to enhance the learning process, but they should not activate their internet browsers during class or use computers for non-academic purposes (as this diverts attention from the lecture/discussion for both the student using it and others nearby). Students should also avoid using cell phones to search the Internet or text while class is in session.

Exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the faculty only and may occur if searching the Internet is necessary to find additional information or facts related to the subject being covered on that particular day.
Policy on Student Behavior in the Classroom
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Incompletes, late homework, and extra work
I do not allow students do extra work (i.e. an additional paper) to improve their grade in the course. This is not fair to other students who are not given the same opportunity.
Late homework will be penalized unless the student has a legitimate excuse or crisis causing the delay in completing work (i.e. illness, family death). Also I will only grant incompletes to students who have legitimate excuses or crises and who make requests prior to the end of the course.
You will lose 5% of your total score if you submit within 24 hours after the deadline. You will lose 10% of your total score if you submit between 24 hours and 48 hours after the deadline. Your assignment will not be accepted beyond 48 hours of the deadline.

Participation by Students with Disabilities
The Department of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA), complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must inform the instructor of the need for accommodations. Please present your written accommodation request to the instructor during regular office hours before the 12th class day of regular semesters (4th class day of the summer sessions). Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course should contact ODA at apply.oda@unt.edu. https://disability.unt.edu/

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE)
SETE is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Once the SETE becomes available via your my.unt.edu portal, please complete the survey as it will help in every effort to improve the instructor’s teaching skills.
## Course Schedule, Overview

**Week 1:**  
August 31: Introduction to course

**Week 2:**  
September 7: The public sector in perspective

**Week 3:**  
September 14: Budgeting for revenues

**Week 4:**  
September 21: Budget preparation

**Week 5:**  
September 28: The use of cost analysis in budgeting

**Week 6:**  
October 5: **In-Class EXAM 1**

**Week 7:**  
October 12: Performance budgeting

**Week 8:**  
October 19: Budget review and approval

**Week 9:**  
October 26: Budget execution and control

**Week 10:**  
November 2: Accounting and financial management

**Week 11:**  
November 9: Capital budgeting and debt management

**Week 12:**  
November 16: Intergovernmental relations and management

**Week 13:**  
November 23: Work on projects/Project Q&A via blackboard

**Week 14:**  
November 30: Local economic development & Presentation I

**Week 15:**  
December 7: Presentation II & Exam review  Project DUE (Dec 8th, no later than 6:00 pm)

**Week 16**  
December 12: **In-Class EXAM 2**
Course Schedule, Detail  *(subject to change)*

**Week 1 (August 31): Introduction to Course**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 1  
Bland, Chapter 1

**Week 2 (September 7): The Public Sector in Perspective**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 1, Chapter 2  
Rubin, Chapter 1  
Carney and Schoenfeld, How to read a budget  
Exercise#1: Reading a budget (done outside of class in groups): due Sep 14

**Week 3 (September 14): Budgeting for Revenues**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6  
Bland, Chapter 5  
In-class discussion: Good tax, bad tax?  
Exercise#2: Property tax policy memo (done outside of class individually): due Sep 21

**Week 4 (September 21): Budget Preparation**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 4, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8  
Franklin, Budgeting  
Axelrod, How departments get their budgeting act together  
In-class discussion: How to be a budget analyst?

**Week 5 (September 28): The Use of Cost Analysis in Budgeting**  
*Reading:* Anthony and Young, Chapter 5  
Rose, Costing government services  
Michel, Chapters 1-5  
Brief review for exam 1

**Week 6 (October 5): In-Class EXAM 1**

**Week 7 (October 12): Performance Budgeting**  
*Reading:* Kelly and Rivenbark, Chapters 1, 4 and 7  
Bland, Chapter 12  
Exercise#3: Develop a set of objectives and performance measures for a government you are familiar with (done outside of classroom individually): due Oct 19

**Week 8 (October 19): Budget Review and Approval**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10  
Streeter, The Congressional Appropriations Process

**Week 9 (October 26): Budget Execution and Control**  
*Reading:* Lee et al, Chapter 11  
Konigsberg, Implementation of Spending Laws
Week 10 (November 2): Accounting and Financial Management
   Reading:  Lee et al, Chapter 12
            Xiaohu Wang, Auditing and financial condition
            Jacob and Hendrick, Assessing financial condition
            GFOA Best Practices- Timeliness of financial reports
            GFOA Best Practices- Departmental financial reports
            GFOA, Cash flow and budget variances
   In-class activity:  Cashflow exercise

Week 11 (November 9): Capital Budgeting and Debt Management
   Reading:  Lee et al, Chapter 13 and Chapter 14
            Dension, Debt management

Exercise&4: Examine the CAFR document for a state government or a city government (large city) and calculate financial conditions by financial measures (done outside of class in group):  
Due Nov 16

Week 12 (November 16): Intergovernmental Relations and Management
   Reading:  Lee et al, Chapter 15

Week 13 (November 23): Work on the project and Project Q&A
   Happy Thanksgiving Day!

Week 14 (November 30): Local Economic Development
   Reading:  Lee et al, Chapter 3
            Reese and Sands, Local economic development
            Presentation I

Week 15 (December 7): Presentation II
   Review section for exam 2
   Project Assignment Due (December 8, no later than 6:00 pm)

Week 16 (December 12): In-Class EXAM 2