

**State and Local Government Finance**

Political Science 4212/5212, Section 01

Spring Semester 2002

Instructor: David Haskin

Location: Pafford, Room 111

Time: Tuesday, 5:30-8:00

Contact Information: Pafford Building (Social Sciences), Room 128

Tues/Thurs 2:00 – 3:00 Wed 1:00 – 4:00 or by appointment

Phone: 770.836.4570

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Prerequisites: POLS 1101 and POLS 4203

**Course Description and Objectives:** POLS 4212/5212 examines the processes involved in financing state and local governments. The course covers public budgeting issues at the state and local level including budget processes, revenue sources and collection, administration of debt and allocation of resources. The technical side of public finance such as revenue collection systems and managing debt will be examined as will political issues that arise due to separation of powers and multiple interdependent governments. Issues that affect state and local finance such as deficits and surpluses, the extent of federal involvement, changes in budgetary systems and processes, public policy debates and changes in taxing and spending policies will be explored.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will demonstrate that they have developed: an understanding of state and local budgetary processes; a knowledge of the various systems used by governments in determining how to collect and allocate resources; an appreciation for the various roles individuals and institutions play in making public policy and determining how to finance public decisions; and an understanding of the importance of budget systems, revenue forecasting, efficient delivery systems and effective audit procedures. Students will communicate their knowledge through class participation, written assignments and examinations. The course requires a high level of informed participation...in other words outside readings and projects are part of the learning process. Graduate students will be expected to complete an extensive project demonstrating knowledge of an area of state and local finance literature and competence in the use of analytical skills.

**Textbook:** Mikesell, John Fiscal Administration: Analysis and Applications for the Public Sector, 5th Edition. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1999.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend class regularly. Classroom attendance will not only affect your participation grade but will also indirectly impact the scores achieved on examinations and other projects.

**Grading Policy:** POLS 4212 (Undergraduate students) Class Participation is 10% of your grade; each exam is worth 25% for a total of 50% of your grade; the remaining 40% comes from your finance project.

POLS 5212 (Graduate Students) Class Participation is 10% of your grade; A final exam is worth 30% of your grade; and the remaining 60% is from your outside project.

**Withdrawal and Incomplete Policy:** The last day to withdraw and receive a "W" is February 28th. Other withdrawals will be given only when consistent with the requirements of the State University of West Georgia.

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, May 7th from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM

**Reading Schedule and Other Significant Events:**

January 8 – Introductions and Course Description

January 10 – Chapter 1

January 15 –

January 17 – Chapter 2

January 22 –

January 24 – Chapter 3

January 29 –

January 31 – Chapter 4

February 5 -

February 7 – Chapter 5

February 12 -

February 14 - Chapter 6

February 19 –

February 21 - Midterm

February 26 – Chapter 7

February 28 -

March 5 – Chapter 8

March 7 –

March 12 – Chapter 9

March 14 -

March 26 - Chapter 10

March 28 -

April 2 - Chapter 11

April 4 -

April 9 - Chapter 12

April 11 -

April 16 – Chapter 13

April 18 –

April 23 – Chapter 14

April 25 – Chapter 15, Projects Due

April 30 -

May 7 – Final Exam HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!!

Note: The schedule might be modified from time to time at my discretion.