

JSGS 838 – Public Sector Financial Management

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN CAMPUS	
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OFFICE LOCATION:	Rm 154 – 101 Diefenbaker Place
TERM:	Fall 2021
ROOM:	DIEF 137 (Prairie Room)
DATE AND TIME:	Thursdays 9:00AM – 12:00PM CST

The syllabus for this course is comprised of this document plus the document titled “JSGS Common Syllabus 2021-22.”

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This course and online materials (<http://canvas.usask.ca>) were developed by Yang Yang.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide a survey of public sector budgeting and financial management in Canada. Students will learn the role that financial considerations play in formulating policy and in program management, examine the financial planning cycles of government and the elements of sound financial planning and management in public sector entities, and gain understanding of financial decision-making processes and elements of financial and program accountability within the context of public decision-making processes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

JSGS has developed a set of three competencies that all graduates will be able to demonstrate. The specific readings, assignments and activities in JSGS 838 will help you both acquire and demonstrate an understanding in the fundamentals of budgeting and financial management, including:

- Basic accounting and reporting in the public sector
- Budgeting as a decision-making exercise
- Financial management within budgetary constraints
- Accountability, reporting, review and evaluation and strategic planning

COURSE CONTENT AND APPROACH

This course is offered in a hybrid format, including both synchronous classroom meeting times and asynchronous modules learning through the Canvas learning management system (LMS). Students are expected to attend all synchronous sessions – in-person or remotely – unless otherwise instructed. Links for remote participation will be made available in the Canvas LMS. The synchronous sessions will be recorded and made available upon specific request from student. Please also ensure your Canvas Notifications are set to receive Announcements, Conversations, and Messages from the instructor about class updates, appointments and grades.

The course will be offered in a “[flipped classroom](#)”, which is around the idea that lecture or direct instruction is not the best use of class time. Instead, students should expose the information (at their own pace) prior to the class, freeing class time for more in-depth discussions and applied learning activities. Students in JSGS 838 are thus expected to complete the textbook readings and learning the assigned modules in Canvas LMS before the class, allowing for more interactive discussions and activities to take place during the class.

COURSE FORMAT

JSGS students have told us they prefer in-person instruction. That is why we are pleased to offer this class in person and on-site according to the latest protocols for health and safety at the [University of Regina](#) and the [University of Saskatchewan](#). Please refer to this information so that you are prepared for a great experience on campus. Health and safety guidelines may be adjusted as the pandemic situation changes into the fall.

This class is designed for synchronous instruction that complements learning material that you will access through URCourses or PAWS. Your regular attendance at synchronous sessions offers the best opportunity to ask questions, make connections, and participate in learning based on the learning material.

Students are encouraged to bring a laptop or other WIFI-enabled mobile device to class. This will enhance your experience by giving you access to online tools that allow classroom polls, surveys, and other collaboration tools that we may use this term.

Students who cannot attend in person can access the class remotely through a live Zoom link.

REQUIRED READINGS

The textbook for the course is Graham, Andrew (2019). *Canadian Public-Sector Financial Management*, 3rd Edition. Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press. The textbook is available for purchase at the <https://www.amazon.ca/>, and also available in an electronic Kindle version.

Readings required for each module are provided in the Canvas LMS. Any supplementary reading materials will be added and distributed during the course at a later date.

COURSE OUTLINE

Part I: The Framework of Public Financial Management

Distinction of public sector entities and implications for financial management; principles and issues in accounting in public sector entities.

1. Introduction of Public Sector Financial Management and Course Overview (September 2)

Introduction, course overview and objectives, why financial management, what is financial management, what makes government different (goals are not financial – they are services, bound by finances).

Graham, Introduction and Chapter 1

2. The Accounting Framework (September 9)

Graham, Chapter 3

3. Financial Reporting (September 16)

Types and uses of financial statements.

Graham, Chapter 10 and 11

4. Accrual Accounting (September 23)

Definitions and concepts. Cash versus accrual – advantages and disadvantages.

Graham, Chapter 3

Part II: Budgets and Budgeting

Budget and planning cycles, principles of budgeting and financial decision-making, linking budgeting and program operation and program design and policy development processes.

5. Budget Principles, Players and Roles (October 7)

Budget systems and their evolution. The role of the budget. Budget principles. Budget players and their roles.

Graham, Chapter 4

6. Budget Process and Cycle (October 14)

Chronology of the budget process. Budget cycles. Forecasting in budget planning. Budget approval. Tensions in the budget process.

Graham, Chapter 5, and Appendix 1

Part III: Budget Control and Management

Management control and risk management, cash management and control monitoring and reporting processes, governance principles in public entities.

7. Risk Management (October 21)

Risk and risk management. Risk avoidance, risk mitigation.

Graham, Chapter 2

8. In-Year Financial Management (October 28)

Managerial control. The cost of control. Monitoring and reporting. Cash management. Variance reports. Reallocations.

Graham, Chapter 8, 9, and Appendix 2

Part IV: Accountability and Performance Management

Principles of public accountability, role of accountability measures in program management, policy development and program evaluation. Performance management in the public sector.

9. Principles of Accountability (November 4)

Accountability in the public sector. Who is accountable to whom for what? Financial and non-financial accountability. Performance reporting. Accountancy is only a part of accountability.

Graham, Chapter 2

10. Performance Reporting and Review (November 18)

Types of reports. Formal and informal reporting. Program review. Efficiency, effectiveness and cost effectiveness. Pitfalls in review.

Graham, Chapter 12

11. Emerging Issues in Public Sector Financial Management (November 25)**12. Final Exam (Due on December 2)**

ASSIGNMENTS

Please note, the full and detailed instruction for each assignment item will be provided separately in due course.

Briefing Note (20%)

Students must complete a briefing note individually. To support your success with Briefing Note assigned in this course, please refer to the JSGS Guide to Writing Briefing Notes provided in the Canvas course page.

You may type your briefing notes using a word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word, Google Docs). All completed briefing notes should be submitted electronically by uploading a single Word document to the Canvas LMS.

Discussion Forum (20%)

Students are expected to effectively participate a discussion forum by providing their thoughtful comments. Participation will be graded based on the quality and frequency of the comments, the degree to which the comments integrate and demonstrate understanding of class material, the quality of the writing, and the extent to which students show genuine engagement with the material and their fellow classmates' posts. In other words, this should feel like a real, respectful and intellectually engaging conversation. Formulaic and "paint-by-number" response will not earn a good grade.

Mini-Lecture (30%)

In a group of *no more than three*, students are expected to give a 15-minute mini-lecture on a module topic covered in class, starting from module 4 (September 23). Groups will be expected to pick a topic by the 3rd week of the class (September 16), and the presentation should be relevant to the module topic in that particular week. A sign-up sheet will become available in Canvas LMS under the "Groups" tab.

Each group will need to upload a slide deck (i.e., a PowerPoint) of presentation to Canvas, so that your peer classmates can assess and review. Your mini-lecture should be relevant to the content in this class, while the format of mini-lecture is versatile. For instance, you could do a case study on your favorite budgeting system and discuss what makes it unique. Alternatively, you can focus on the readings assigned in the class by discussing the details of stories being told and lessons to be learnt. You could also talk about a current or historical news story relevant to public financial management and connect it back to class content. The mini-lecture should be well researched and triggering discussions in the class.

Each group member should provide the instructor confidentially with a grade for each of your fellow group members. Details on group work assessment will be provided separately. The quality of the mini-lecture will be determined by the instructor on a group basis, while a student's final mark will be adjusted based on peer evaluation.

Final Exam (30%)

The take-home final exam will consist of multiple-choice, short- and long-answer questions. Students should submit their own solutions to Canvas LMS.

EVALUATION

Format	Due Date	Percentage
Briefing Note	Due on October 1 by 12:00 PM	20%
Discussion Forum	Due on November 4 by 12:00 PM	20%
Mini-Lecture	Various due dates	30%
Final Exam	Due on December 2 by 12:00 PM	30%
Total		100%

* All times are Central Standard Time, which is the time zone for Saskatoon and Regina.