

JSGS 838 – Public Sector Financial Management

(subject to change)

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN CAMPUS	
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OFFICE LOCATION:	Rm 154 – 101 Diefenbaker Place
TERM:	Fall 2022
ROOM:	DIEF 137 (Prairie Room)
DATE AND TIME:	Tuesdays 1:00 – 4:00 PM CST

The syllabus for this course is comprised of this document and a companion document titled “JSGS Common Syllabus 2022-23.”

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Exposes students to the significant financial issues that have practical significance in the management and operations of public sector departments, agencies, and initiatives. The course will focus on select aspects of public sector governance and financial management. Students will be expected to apply the knowledge they learn from the course materials and lectures to problems and assignments that could typically arise in a public administration setting.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

JSGS programs, courses, and assignments are designed to prepare students for successful careers. Student performance is assessed based on a competency framework shaped through ongoing collaboration with researchers, alumni, and other public sector partners. The specific readings, assignments and activities in JSGS 838 will help you both acquire and demonstrate an understanding in the fundamentals of macroeconomic, 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
- Basics of macroeconomic structure of economy and role of the state in managing business cycles and encouraging development

COURSE CONTENT AND APPROACH

The purpose of this course is to provide a survey of public sector macroeconomic, budgeting and financial management in Canada. Students will learn the role that economic and 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.

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 learning management system (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 course in person and on-site according to the latest protocols for health and safety at the [University of Saskatchewan](#). Please refer to this health and safety information so that you are prepared for a great experience on campus.

This course is designed for participation in real time (also known as synchronous instruction). Scheduled classes complement learning material found on Canvas LMS. Please review the learning material in advance of each scheduled class. Your regular attendance in class 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.

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.

Supplementary Textbooks

CORE Economics: *The Economy*.

Available at: <https://www.core-econ.org/the-economy/book/text/0-3-contents.html>

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: Financial Management and Accounting Framework – lay the foundations

1. Introduction of Public Sector Financial Management and Course Overview (September 6)

What is financial management? What makes management in the public sector different from that in the private sector?

Graham, Introduction and Chapter 1

2. Financial Reporting (September 13)

Basic definitions and concepts of accounting (e.g., fundamental accounting equation, accounting cycle). Types and uses of economic and financial statements. Interpret information presented in core statements. Evaluate the performance of government and specific entities through reading its economic and financial statements.

Graham, Chapter 10 and 11

3. The Accounting Framework and Accrual Accounting (September 20)

What are the principles of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)? Who are the internal and external users of the economic and accounting information? Cash versus accrual – advantages and disadvantages for both financial accountability and economic management.

Graham, Chapter 3

Part II: Budget Management – how government spends

4. Chronology and Systems of Budgeting (September 27)

Public sector budget cycle and approval process. Macroeconomic goals (growth, full employment, low and stable inflation rates, balance of payments and exchange rates) and policy and programming objectives. Contrast and evaluate different budgeting systems.

Graham, Chapter 4, 5, and Appendix 1

5. Risk and In-Year Economic and Financial Management (October 4)

Business cycles, program risk and risk management strategies. Risk avoidance and mitigation. Use forecasting and analytical tools (e.g., variance analysis) to manage the approved budget. Managerial control and reallocations.

Graham, Chapter 2, 8, 9, and Appendix 2

6. Budgeting Exercise (October 11)

Budget players and their roles. Tensions in the budget process. Exercise on the budget decision-making process.

Part III: Performance Management and Accountability – evaluate government spending

7. Principles of Accountability (October 18)

Role of accountability in financial management. Who is accountable to whom for what? Financial and non-financial accountability. Accountancy is only a part of accountability.

Graham, Chapter 2

8. Program Review and Evaluation (October 25)

Review elements of a Logic Model. Identify meaningful indicators and performance measures for public sector policy/programs. Efficiency, effectiveness and cost effectiveness, with a consideration of incrementality and impact.

Graham, Chapter 12

9. Performance Reporting (November 1)

Communication of actual performance and value created. Types of reports. Formal and informal reporting. Pitfalls in review.

Graham, Chapter 12

Part IV: Foundations of Macroeconomy – after all, why government spends

10. Introduction of Macroeconomic Management (November 15)

What is the macroeconomy and how does it add up? Review basic macro concepts, including components of GDP, inflation, crowding-out, economic multipliers, debt-GDP ratios, economic fluctuations and unemployment.

[The Economy](#), Chapter 13, 14

11. Financial Sustainability and the Macroeconomy (November 22)

Why does macroeconomic management matter? Macroeconomic implications of public sector entities' financial health.

[The Economy](#), Chapter 15, 16

12. Emerging Issues in Public Sector Financial Management (November 29)

13. Final Applied Project Presentation (December 6)

ASSIGNMENTS

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

Briefing Notes (30%)

Students must complete two briefing notes individually. Each briefing note is worth 15% of the final grade. 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 (15%)

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 (20%)

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 27). Groups will be expected to pick a topic by the 3rd week of the class (September 20), 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 Applied Project and Presentation (35%)

In a group of *no more than three*, students are expected to complete an applied final project. The project would be a review of an existing program in the public sector, where the student needs to situate the program, review its costs and impacts, undertake an assessment and provide program

recommendations. Students are required to: 1) locate and search for available data/resources (e.g., financial documents or government reports); 2) interpret and evaluate data; and 3) discuss the implications and translate findings to target audiences.

The final product of this applied project will be a technical report (5 single-spaced pages, 20%) and an in-class presentation (15 minutes, 15%), by a group of no more than 3 students. The template for a program review and further details on in-class presentation will be provided in due course.

Each group member should also 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 final project report and presentation will be determined by the instructor on a group basis, while a student's final mark will be adjusted based on peer evaluation.

EVALUATION

Format	Due Date	Percentage
Briefing Notes	Due on October 4, November 15 by 1 PM	30%
Discussion Forum	Due on October 18 by 1 PM	15%
Mini-Lecture	Various due dates	20%
Final Applied Project – Report	Due on December 6 by 1 PM	20%
Final Applied Project – Presentation	In class on December 6 PPTs due on December 6 by 1 PM	15%
Total		100%

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

ENROLLMENT

Class enrollment will be normally limited to 30 students.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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