



O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs
V 550: Topics in Public Affairs
The Federal Budget Process in Theory and Practice

Instructor: John McClelland; jdmcclel@iu.edu; 703-967-6465

Class Meeting: Thursdays at 6:30PM-9PM; IU Washington D.C. Advancement Center, 1455 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1125

Office Hours: Typically the instructor will be available both before and after class on Thursdays, otherwise by appointment (please reach out to the instructor via email to schedule a mutually agreeable time and place)

Course Description: This course will focus on the federal budget process and how it impacts the development and execution of federal policy. The course will examine the process through its various stages in both the executive and legislative branch. Case studies will be used to demonstrate how policy analysis shapes the development and execution of the federal budget. The course will also focus on challenges and failures of the budget process to work as intended and proposals for reform.

The focus of this course is the federal budget process and consistent with that I have selected class materials that present a variety of topics and arguments. It is likely that connections between our course and current and/or historical events outside the classroom will come up in our class discussions. Those connections may require careful thought rather than being immediately obvious, but the ability to understand and analyze connections among ideas and events is a core skill in professional career and will stand you in good stead in your life beyond IU.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester students should be knowledgeable about the various stages of the budget process and the roles of various entities in the executive and legislative branches. This includes being able to use and apply the various budget concepts and the legislative rules and procedures used to enact the federal budget. Students should also be able to provide the type of policy analysis of alternative policies used in both the executive and legislative branch during the budget process. Students should be able to effectively communicate, both orally and in writing, such analysis to policymakers. Students will also develop their ability to understand and analyze current events through the lens of concepts from this course.

Texts and Readings: There is no required textbook for this course and the readings are posted on Canvas. Please regularly check Canvas as these readings will be updated as material related to the ongoing budget negotiations become available/relevant.

If you would like a formal textbook treatment of the federal budget process the classic (but now somewhat dated) treatment is:

Allen Schick. *The Federal Budget Process: Politics, Policy, Process*. Brookings Institution, 2007.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments: The following schedule is subject to change. In particular, the topics discussed each week will be adjusted to accommodate discussion of current events.

Date	Topic/Assignment
August 29 th	Introductions, Overview of the federal budget process
September 5 th	What is discretionary spending, mandatory spending, revenues, tax expenditures, and what is the “baseline”
September 12 th	Agency budget formulation
September 19 th	The President’s Budget
September 26 th	Congressional consideration of the budget: budget resolution and budget enforcement; Legislative estimates, role of CBO, JCT, and OMB
October 3 rd	TBD, guest lecture; <i>Memo #1 due Oct. 4th</i>
October 10 th	<i>The O’Neill School Capitol Hill Colloquium</i>
October 17 th	Congressional authorization versus appropriation; what are continuing resolutions and their impacts
October 24 th	Policymaking via revenues, Tax expenditures; <i>Memo #2 due</i>
October 31 st	The Fiscal Responsibility Act’s impact on FY 24 and FY25 spending. The evolving role of reconciliation
November 7 th	Student Presentations
November 14 th	Student Presentations; Deficits, debt, and the debt ceiling
November 21 st	Student Presentations; Long-term budget challenges
November 28 th	<i>No class - Thanksgiving</i>
December 5 th	Challenges in the budget process; <i>Policy project materials due</i>
December 12 th	Budget process reforms; <i>Response to QFRs due</i>
December 19 th	Final exam

Additional details on the topics to be covered and the readings for each week will be available on Canvas. Please check Canvas regularly as the readings will be updated about a week before the relevant lecture.

Course Requirements:

Your grade in this course will be based upon the following assignments. The fraction of the course grade is indicated in parentheses:

- “Exec branch” policy memo and the accompanying fact check materials (15%)
- “Leg branch” policy memo/brief and the accompanying fact check materials (15%)
- “Questions for the record” (QFR); due day after each presentation (3%)
- Policy Project
 - Policy memo and fact check materials (20%)
 - Slidedeck for presentation (10%)

- Oral presentation (10%)
- Response to QFRs (7%)
- Final exam (20%)

The letter grades for the course will be determined by the following scale:

Grade Range*	Letter Grade
$\geq 97\%$	A+
$97\% > x \geq 93\%$	A
$93\% > x \geq 90\%$	A-
$90\% > x \geq 87\%$	B+
$87\% > x \geq 83\%$	B
$83\% > x \geq 80\%$	B-
$80\% > x \geq 77\%$	C+
$77\% > x \geq 73\%$	C
$73\% > x \geq 70\%$	C-
$70\% > x \geq 67\%$	D+
$67\% > x \geq 63\%$	D
$63\% > x \geq 60\%$	D-
$60\% > x$	F

*No rounding will be employed.

All assignments turned in for a grade in this course must be their own work unless the work is clearly attributed to others. Definitions of various types of academic misconduct and University policies for dealing with violations are included in the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct; see <http://studentcode.iu.edu/> for more information. Any student found cheating, plagiarizing, or working with another student (including providing or receiving assistance) in an unauthorized manner will receive a zero for the assignment and/or a failing grade for the course, and the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students. Other sanctions are possible.

O'Neill School expectations of civility and professional conduct¹

The O'Neill School takes matters of honesty and integrity seriously because O'Neill is the training ground for future leaders in government, civic organizations, health organizations, and other institutions charged with providing resources for the public, and for members of society who are vulnerable and who are lacking in power and status. Precisely because O'Neill graduates tend to rise to positions of power and responsibility, it is critical that the lessons of honesty and integrity are learned early.

¹ These expectations are excerpted from the O'Neill School Honor Code which can be found at: <https://oneill.indiana.edu/undergraduate/course-advising/advising/resources.html>

O'Neill requires that all members of its community – students, faculty, and staff – treat others with an attitude of mutual respect both in the classroom and during all academic and nonacademic activities outside the classroom. A student is expected to show respect through behavior that promotes conditions in which all students can learn without interruption or distraction. These behaviors foster an appropriate atmosphere inside and outside the classroom:

- Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be prepared for class.
- Students must be punctual in their arrival to class and be present and attentive for the duration of the class. Eating, sleeping, reading the newspaper, doing work for another class, wandering in and out of the classroom, and packing up or leaving class early are not civil or professional behaviors.
- Students must abide by the course policy regarding use of electronic devices in the classroom.
- Students must responsibly participate in class activities and during team meetings.
- Students must address faculty members, other students, and others appropriately and with respect, whether in person, in writing, or in electronic communications.
- Students must show tolerance and respect for diverse nationalities, religions, races, sexual orientations, and physical abilities.
- Students must not destroy or deface classroom property nor leave litter in the classroom.

Use of AI (such as ChatGPT) in this class: Using AI (such as ChatGPT) to assist in completing assignments in this class is prohibited. If you do use AI, you will be committing plagiarism* and will be subject to penalties in this class and sanctions by Indiana University.

*Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. *Any ideas or materials taken from another source* for either written or oral use *must be fully acknowledged*, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered "common knowledge" may differ from course to course. <https://studentcode.iu.edu/responsibilities/academic-misconduct.html>. (emphasis added)

Note Selling: Several commercial services have approached students regarding selling class notes/study guides to their classmates. Selling the instructor's notes/study guides in this course is not permitted. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Dean of Students as academic misconduct (violation of course rules). Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment for which the notes/study guides are being sold, a reduction in your final course grade, or a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. Additionally, you should know that selling a faculty member's notes/study guides individually or on behalf of one of these services using IU email, or via Canvas may also constitute a violation of IU information technology and IU intellectual property policies; additional consequences may result.

Materials: The faculty member teaching this course holds the exclusive right to distribute, modify, post, and reproduce course materials, including all written materials, study guides, lectures, assignments, exercises, and exams. While you are permitted to take notes on the online materials and lectures posted for this course for your personal use, you are not permitted to re-post in another forum, distribute, or reproduce content from this course without the express written permission of the faculty member. Any violation of this course rule will be reported to

the appropriate university offices and officials, including to the Dean of Students as academic misconduct.

Course Policies:

Attendance

Weekly discussion in class is a critical element of this course. Attendance and participation is expected at each scheduled class meeting. If a student needs to miss a class the instructor should be informed in advance and arrangements made for virtual participation or an alternative meeting with the instructor.

Make-up Exams

The final exam will be administered in class on December 19th. If a student can not take the exam at this time a mutually agreeable time must be arranged with the instructor in advance of the scheduled time for the exam.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due in class or via email in advance of class (unless alternative arrangements have been made in advance). Late assignments will result in a 5-percentage point penalty for each day (or part of) that an assignment is late.

Technology Use

Students are expected to be respectful of their classmates and the instructor and mute or turn off their phones or other devices that might disrupt the class.

Late Withdrawal

NOTE: The auto-W deadline is NO LONGER THE LAST DAY OF CLASS (as it was during and post-Covid). After the auto-W deadline, withdrawal will be significantly limited and you will need permission to withdraw and must meet requirements established by O'Neill.

Additional information:

Counseling and Psychological Services

For information about services offered to students by CAPS:

<http://healthcenter.indiana.edu/counseling/index.shtml>

TimelyCare

Indiana students have free, 24/7 access to virtual mental health care services with TimelyCare. Students do not need insurance to access TimelyCare services. <https://www.iu.edu/mental-health/find-resources/timely-care.html#0>

Religious Observation

In accordance with the Office of the Dean of Faculties, any student who wishes to receive an excused absence from class must submit a request form available from the Dean of Faculties for each day to be absent. This form must be presented to the course instructor by the end of the

second week of this semester. A separate form must be submitted for each day. The instructor will fill in the bottom section of the form and then return the original to the student. Information about the policy on religious observation can be found at the following website: <https://policies.iu.edu/policies/aca-59-accommodation-religious-observances/index.html>

Disability Services for Students

Securing accommodations for a student with disabilities is a responsibility shared by the student, the instructor and the DSS Office. For information about support services or accommodations available to students with disabilities, and for the procedures to be followed by students and instructors: <https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/student-support/disability-services/index.html>

Sexual Harassment

As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. Title IX and our own Sexual Misconduct policy prohibit sexual misconduct. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help.

If you are seeking help and would like to talk to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with:

- i. The Sexual Assault Crisis Service (SACS) at 812-855-8900
- ii. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 812-855-5711
- iii. Confidential Victim Advocates (CVA) at 812-856-2469
- iv. IU Health Center at 812-855-4011

For more information about available resources:

<http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/help/index.html>. It is also important to know that federal regulations and University policy require me to promptly convey any information about potential sexual misconduct known to me to our campus' Deputy Title IX Coordinator or IU's Title IX Coordinator. In that event, they will work with a small number of others on campus to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available to the student who may have been harmed. Protecting a student's privacy is of utmost concern, and all involved will only share information with those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. I encourage you to visit <http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/help/index.html> to learn more.

Commitment to Diversity: Find your home and community at IU

Asian Culture Center

Address: 807 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, IN 47408

Phone: 812-856-5361

Email: acc@indiana.edu

Website: <https://asianresource.indiana.edu/index.html>

First Nations Educational & Cultural Center

Address: 712 E 8th St., Bloomington, IN 47408

Phone: 812-855-4814

Email: fnecc@indiana.edu

Website: <https://firstnations.indiana.edu/contact/index.html>

Jewish Culture Center

Address: 730 E 3rd St., Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Phone: 812-336-3824

Website: <https://iuhillel.org/iu-jewish-culture-center>

LGBTQ+ Culture Center

Address: 705 E 7th St., Bloomington, Indiana 47408

Phone: 812-855-4252

Email: glbtserv@indiana.edu

Website: <https://lgbtq.indiana.edu/contact/index.html>

La Casa Latino Culture Center

Address: 715 E 7th St., Bloomington IN, 47408

Phone: 812-855-0174

Email: lacasa@indiana.edu

Website: <https://lacasa.indiana.edu/>

Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center

Address: 275 N Jordan Ave Bloomington, Indiana 47405

Phone: 812-855-9271

Email: nmgrad@indiana.edu

Website: <https://blackculture.indiana.edu/index.html>