

## Syllabus

### *Course Description*

*Adapted from the NPS academic catalog:* This distance learning course analyzes the resource requirements process within the Department of Defense (DoD) and in the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. The course covers the resource planning and budgeting processes of the Department of the Navy, DoD and the federal government. It includes the politics of executive and congressional budgeting, and DoD budget and financial management processes and procedures including budget formulation and execution. It also includes analysis of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting Execution System (PPBES) used by DoD to plan, budget and implement national defense resource management policy and programs. Other areas included are budget process and fiscal policy reform and the dynamics of internal DoD competition for resources. Executive and congressional budget processes are assessed to indicate how national security policy is resourced and implemented through the budget process. Spending for national security policy is tracked from budget submission through resolution, authorization and appropriation. Budget formulation, negotiation, and execution strategies are evaluated to indicate the dynamics of executive-legislative competition over resource allocation priorities. Supplemental appropriation patterns and current year budget execution patterns and problems are also considered. Prerequisite: None.

The course is divided into five parts, as follows:

#### *Part A – Public Budgeting Theory and Federal Budget Practice*

provides a foundation on public policy, budgeting theory, and a broad description of the federal budget process in general.

#### *Part B – Budget Content and Trends: Federal and Defense*

provides information on the structure, content and trends in federal spending and defense spending to set a foundation of understanding the elements and magnitude of spending.

#### *Part C – Budgeting for Defense and PPBE*

addresses the topic of budgeting for defense and how it differs from budgeting for other government functions; the process, products and participants of the DoD's PPBE system are described and analyzed.

#### *Part D – Executing the Defense Budget*

considers the processes and issues associated with the execution of the defense budget...the previous part described formulating plans and seeking authority; this part covers the execution of the plan, exercising authority and adapting to a contingent environment.

#### *Part E – Defense Budget & Financial Management Issues*

addresses critical issues affecting the defense program through the budget, such as cost, affordability, acquisition cost growth, and paying for war.

Details on each of the five parts of the course can be found on the **Lessons** page. Each of the five parts of the course has a brief introductory video and consists of three activities for the student and instructor in pursuit of the learning objectives for that part: (A) the instructor has

provided required and optional readings designed to provide new information for the student, (B) the instructor and students will engage in a discussion about those readings, often in a contemporary context, designed to clarify your understanding of the information, (C) you will write a short assignment employing the information to refine and demonstrate your understanding of it.

### ***Broad Course Objectives***

The primary objectives for this course are to develop the ability for students to understand – for when they eventually participate in – the processes that result in an annual budget for the military. The course begins by developing a framework for understanding public policy and public budgeting in general. It then covers the specific instance of budgeting for defense. Throughout we will discuss contemporary issues affecting defense budgets. In particular, by the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the broader policy context in which defense budget decisions are made.
2. Describe the budget system for national defense: the principal actors, processes, and products of the system, including those both inside and outside the Department of Defense.
3. Summarize the structure and content of the federal and defense budgets, and describe trends over time.
4. Apply the concepts, principles, and theories of policy and practice to address financial management challenges typical of future assignments.

There are specific learning objectives for each module of the course.

### ***Course Administration***

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Office Hours : Since this is a distributed learning course, students are located in various time zones, and all have full-time jobs, regularly scheduled office hours are not necessarily helpful. I will be available to you as needed, please call or email me with questions or to schedule a time to talk. We can chat by phone, email, Skype, or we can set up an online Collaborate session (an online place to share applications and "whiteboard") -- whatever works best. My schedule is flexible to accommodate your needs.

### Meeting Time :

There is no established meeting time. Each part of the course is scheduled to occur within a two week time period (with an allowance for the Thanksgiving holiday). Students are expected to keep up with the pace of the course and that expectation is reflected in the open dates for the discussion forums and the due dates for writing assignments. As a former boss once told

me, "deadlines exist for a reason." The course begins on Monday 29 September and ends on Monday 15 December.

Text, Readings : No text is required. Readings are linked on the Lessons page of this site.

An optional text is ***Financing National Defense: Policy & Process*** by Information Age Publishing. It is available as a hardback, paperback, or e-book.

Hardcover: 978-1-61735-678-0

Paperback: 978-1-61735-677-3

E-book: 978-1-61735-679-7

*Note* - To avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest, your instructor receives no royalties from the sale of this book.

### ***Evaluation Criteria :***

Your final grade will consist of four items, weighted in the following proportions:

**25 %** Discussion Forum Participation

**75 %** Weekly Assignments (15% each x 5)

Discussion forum participation is a function of the quality and quantity of interaction. I do not require a particular number of new comments or responses because then students are tempted to do the minimum, figuratively check the box, and tune out. Instead, for this part of your grade I will look for substantive comments, insightful questions, and the application of course concepts to real world current events or significant historical events. Just showing up and offering a simple statement like, "I agree with Maria," will not count. Debate and dialogue are highly encouraged and doing that effectively often requires multiple postings by a student. Questions seeking clarification of reading assignments are also encouraged and do count toward class participation. During the quarter, if you are concerned whether you are participating enough or well enough, the instructor will be glad to give you a mid-term assessment.

The weekly assignments task you with demonstrating a more refined understanding of one or more learning objectives. They typically take the form of 2-3 page written essays on an open-ended question or they are application problems that task you with applying concepts from the current part of the course to a real-world scenario. Grades here are based primarily on the accurate selection and use of appropriate concepts from the course up to that point. Each assignment is weighted equally.

### ***Protocols:***

- **Workload Considerations**. This is a four-credit course. If you took this course in residence at NPS (or via a synchronous mode of instruction such as VTC), you would spend 4 hours per week in class, plus at least that amount of time in class preparation and homework. This course is designed with the same expectation. Students should plan to spend about 8-10 hours per week reading, discussing and writing. The discussion forums are designed to replicate the in-class time.
- **Course Website** . This course uses the Sakai learning environment. You can access the

course site through your portal at <https://cle.nps.edu/> . It is important that you browse through the site before the first day of class to become familiar with its layout. Everything you need to successfully complete the course is located on that site. The vital pages are "Lessons" where the learning objectives, readings, and resources are located with planned start and stop times; "Discussion forums" where we will meet to engage one another about the content; and "Assignments" where graded assessments are distributed, collected, and returned to you.

- **The Asynchronous Environment** . The class is designed to take advantage of the asynchronous mode of delivery: you can read when it fits your schedule, post to the discussion boards when it fits, and do the assignments according to your schedule. The format, however, also narrows communications. Be especially mindful on the discussion boards that sarcastic or rhetorical comments may not be perceived the way they were intended. It is often best to compose a post off-line, get the language just right, then post it to the discussion board. The instructor reserves the right to "unpublish" comments (in whole or in part) that he considers inappropriate.
- **Speak your Mind, Safely** . Be advised that your instructor does not hold the only viable point of view and it might run counter to official DoD positions. A good academic debate stimulates learning and so they will be provoked now and again. Expect your instructor to occasionally ask more questions than provide information. Expect him to challenge your position. You are encouraged to challenge his. (He learns from his students every term.) This is a course in which there is often not "the one right way" – it is a class where questions are raised, issues are discussed, nuance and subtlety are important. You should feel just as free to criticize as defend DoD and government policies. In the classroom all students are equal and one's military rank or civilian grade has no bearing on the ideas and concepts discussed. Class discussions are non-attributional -- the goal is learning, not rules enforcement. What is said in class, stays in class. (Kinda like Las Vegas, but more fun.) In a discussion, be sure to engage the material, not the person.
- **Attendance/Pacing** . Attendance is not a concern, but keeping up with the work might be. If you need an extension on an assignment, ask the instructor before the assignment is due outlining your rationale for needing an extension. Discussion boards automatically lock about a week after a module ends to encourage you to move along.
- **Honor Code** . NAVPGSCOLINST 5370.1D requires faculty to "clearly state in each course...how much consultation/cooperation among students is permissible, and must indicate what materials may be used in student preparation for, and performance of, all graded work." Unless otherwise stated in the instructions of a graded assignment, all work submitted for a grade is to be the student's own, exclusive and unique work with citations of other work properly attributed to the original sources. Excessively quoting other work or failing to cite sources of other material will result in a significantly lower score on the assignment or, in egregious cases, disciplinary action. Using old homework assignments obtained from students who have taken this class in the past is forbidden.