

Minnesota State University, Mankato
URSI 651, Urban Finance Systems Spring 2009
Urban & Regional Studies Institute
Wednesday 2-4:45 p.m.

This syllabus is subject to change without notice. Contact the professor for most recent changes

Instructor:

Dr. "J" Cherrington, 104b Morris Hall Fax: (507) 389-6377 (Mark Attn: Dr. "J")
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Office Hours: These are posted on my office door or on my website.

www.intech.mnsu.edu/cherrington

Texts/etc.: Bland, Robert L., A Budgeting Guide for Local Government, ICMA, Isbn #

Required:

Class Packet for URBS 651 (availability announced 1st class)

Ruled accounting paper (2-column and 8-column) available in bookstore.

Large 3-ring binder.

Course Goal:

This is an introductory level course on governmental accounting designed to teach non-accounting majors how accounting systems are organized and operated on a fund basis. Students will learn double-entry accounting and utilize a uniform Chart of Accounts that facilitates preparation of uniform financial statements which may be reliably compared to those of other cities and generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Extensive emphasis is placed on the basic procedures involved in preparing and adopting a budget, capital improvement financing and sound financial management. The course is geared toward both practitioners as well as students of urban and regional planning, city management, and the non-profit sector.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Apply basic accounting principles, including Fund accounting.
2. Understand use of Excel software to develop revenue & expenditures analysis.
3. Classify financial transaction by Fund, Account group prefix numbers using the MN Office of State Auditor's Uniform Chart of Accounts classification system.
4. Understand fiscal reporting, e.g., the difference between a Balance Sheet and an Statement of Changes in Fund Balance (Income Statement) and what each tells.
5. Understand principles of GAAP and methods of government accounting..
6. Understand budget design, preparation and adoption process.
7. Understand how to use budgeting as a policy making and management tool.
8. Understand the interrelationship of budgeting with strategic planning.
9. Understand approaches to capital improvement programs, debt financing options and legal compliance.
10. Use presentation software in ways to present technical budget information in simplified ways citizens can understand.

Personal Skill Development Goals: In addition to the specific course outcomes, there are 4 additional goals that are most common to all other URSI graduate courses at MSU. They are:

- to develop your creative and critical thinking powers in addressing problems and opportunities.
- to develop your personal communication skills, both written and oral.
- to improve your ability to work and interact with others in a team approach.
- to improve your understanding and use of technology.

Instructional Methodology & Teaching Strategies: A variety of techniques will be used throughout the semester including small group discussions, lecture, guest speakers, and student presentations. Local government practitioner guest speakers, coupled with applied analysis, will provide a comprehensive approach for developing the skills necessary to understand urban finance systems. My teaching style is based on an “adult centered” model wherein students are active participants responsible for their own learning. I act as a facilitator and a resource to engage you in a meaningful academic experience.

Instructor Policies:

All written assignments must be prepared in *duplicate* neatly printed or set up in an Excel spreadsheet. One copy should be submitted at the start of class (for homework credit) the other should remain with you to refer to during class discussion. Staple multiple pages together and consecutively number them. Each page should have your name, section no., assignment description, and date submitted in the upper right corner to avoid point reduction. The “header” feature in Word is a good method to do this. Homework will be reviewed in class and you should make necessary corrections on your copy. Keep your original returned assignments until the end of the course. These should be coupled with *corrected exercises* in a course notebook.

Late Assignments will not be accepted (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor) and will be subject to a point reduction. Should an emergency arise, email or fax your written assignment (to my fax number or email address on page 1) *before* the start of class to receive credit. *Note: Any email attachments need to be in PC (not Macintosh) platform.*

American Disabilities Act (ADA)

ADA requires that the university provide services for persons with disabilities. For more information regarding the services that are available to you, please contact the MSU Disability Services Office at (507) 389-2825 (V) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY). If you are a person with a disability, please discuss your special needs with this instructor within the first week of class. This will allow you and the instructor ample opportunities to make arrangement for taking notes, completion of assignments, and examinations.

Other Policies: When **cell phones** and beepers go off in class they are very distracting to others. Please turn off your cell phones and beepers during class time or if possible put them on vibration mode. Thank you.

Laptops: *Close them during guest speaking.*

Course Requirements:

Students will be expected to have read, thought about, and prepared the assigned materials and case studies. Students are expected to engage in discussion on these. In order to build your oral presentation and facilitation skills, students will be asked to prepare a PowerPoint presentation(s) and lead a class discussion on a topic(s) to be announced. Students will be assessed on comprehension of reading /lecture information, completion of course exams/projects, attendance and class participation.

Attendance, class participation, quizzes, guest speakers:

Students are required to attend classes and participate on a regular basis in class or group discussions. Points will be given (or deducted) for each class attended. If you plan to be absent, please communicate the reason for your absence to the instructor beforehand. You may be tested on material not covered in class but in the course materials. *It is the student's responsibility to obtain notes and assignments for missed classes from another student (not the instructor).* We will circulate a class list with names, phone nos., and email addresses; be sure you get a copy.

Quizzes will be given at the instructor's discretion.

Students should prepare two type-written questions when a guest speaker is scheduled (or announced in advance) and submit them before the start of class on the appropriate weeks. (Be sure your name is on the questions.) On the prior week, the instructor will provide you with background information on the guest speaker to help you develop relevant questions.

Reports/Projects:

Students will work on out-of-class local government finance field project(s) and prepare descriptive analysis and a class led presentation as called for in the field project handout(s). Outside sources and "real-world" correlations can greatly expand presentations of your topic. **You should email the instructor your completed PPT 2 days before class by (noon) of the week you are to present. Email transmission time will be noted and there will be a point reduction for late (or incomplete) submissions.** The instructor will return a "received" acknowledgement—if you don't receive one, resend, requesting "delivery" verification.

Course Notebook/Homework:

Each student should maintain a well-organized course notebook in a 3-ring binder that contains:

- Your solutions to assigned questions, exercises, and problems.. Note: you should attach corrected solutions *on top of* your original assignment submission.
- Notes on text chapters, class lectures and discussions, etc.

Your notebook is an excellent tool for studying for exams. Bring your notebook to each exam as they will be collected and reviewed during the exam.

Exam(s):

These exam will be administered on the date listed on the weekly schedule. You should bring a #2 pencil, “blue” book (available at bookstore) and columnar accounting paper. Calculators may be used for computation in-class and during examinations.

Course Grading:

Exam #1	15
Exam #2	15
Homework	15
Project/Presentation (20+10)	30
Attendance	15
Notebook/Guest Speaker Questions	<u>10</u>
	100

**URBS 651 Urban Finance
Weekly Course/Reading Assignment Guide**

(note: changes maybe announced)

This course calendar is a general guide. Changes may occur. If they do, announcements will be made in class. **R**=Reading; **H**=Homework; **GS**=Guest Speaker; **CP**=Class Packet, **C/H**=Class Handout; **Q**=Questions, **TBA**=To be Announced. Note: *All homework(H) is for the following week.*

Week 1 Jan. 14	Course overview Context of Loc. Gov Finance [B/R-1] & Evolution of Acctg.	Complete student sheet R Bland Budgeting Ch. 1 R - Exercise 1-1
Week 2 Jan. 21	In-class exercise 1-1 Role of Acctg in Plng. Eval, transactions & Acctg.	R Wk 2 lecture H Exercise 1-2
Week 3 Jan. 28	Basic Acctg. Principles In-class 1-3A (1) & 2 Project Assignments	R Wk 3 Ppt lecture H – Exercise 1-3A (3)
Week 4 Feb. 4	Flow of Acctg. In-class exercise Corey Realty 2-5A (1) – (5)	R Wk 4 Ppt lecture R ILGA pp. 15; 16-19; 29-38 CP H Exercise 2-1A (1)-(5)
Week 5 Feb. 11	Mn Office of State Auditor COA Classifying Accts. In-class City of Savoy CP	R Wk 5 Ppt.lecture R ILGA pp. 6-15; 20;29 CP Review CP Mn Uniform COA H – F/S 3-4 CP
Week 6 Feb. 18	Exam 1 begin Char. of Gov/NP Acctg.	Notebook collection R Wk 6 Ppt lecture: p1-to “stop” H - TBA
Week 7 Feb. 25	continue Char. of Gov/Np Acctg	R rest of Wk 6 Ppt lecture H TBA H - Q’s 1, 4,7 N/F p. 799
Week 8 Mar. 4	Revenue Sources City Rev. Sources	R Wk 8.1, .2,.Ppt. lectures H TBA R ILGA Sec. 7 CP

3/7-3/15	Spring Break	
Week 9 Mar. 18	Gov. Acctg. Methods Acctg. for Revenues & Exps Interfund Trans, Adj/Closing Entries	R Wk 9 Ppt lecture_ R ILGA Sec 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 CP H Exercise 28-5; 3-1,-2,-7
Week 10 Mar.. 25	Exam 2 Redesigning the Budget [B/R-2] Preparing & Approving the Budget	Notebook Collection R Bland Ch. 2 H City of Tyler budget exercise #1
Week 11 Apr. 1	Budget Prep/Adoption [B/R-3] Managing the Budget	R Bland Ch. 3; H Bland 3,. Qs 1(a-h); Tyler #2 R Wk 11 Ppt lecture
Week 12 Apr. 8	Project Ppt Presentation A.1: "Implementing the Budget" Recording the Budget	R Bland Ch. 4 R Wk 12 Ppt lecture R Paradigm pp 1006-07 CP H " " "Ex. 29-2-3, N/F ;28-2,-3 H Bland Ch.4 Q's1(1)-(6),
Week 13 Apr. 15	Project Ppt Presentation .A.2: "Acctg & Financial Reporting	R Bland Ch. 5 H Bland Pt. 2 discussion Q's 1,2,4,5,6; N/F 28-6,-7
Week 14 Apr. 22	Project Ppt Presentation A.3: "Budgeting for Imprvd Performance" Possible G. Spkr	R Bland Ch. 6 H Bland Discussion Q's 1,3,4,5,6
Week 15 Apr. 29	Project Ppt Presentation A.4: "Plng & Budgeting for Cap Imprvmts"	R Bland Ch. 7 R Wk. 15 Ppt. Lecture H Project Assignments Due
Finals May 6	Project Ppt Presentation A.5 ->: Possible G. Spkr.' A. 5 's Topic(s) TBA	

Note: For classes when guest speakers are scheduled, you should prepare two typed questions on the speaker's topic & turn in one copy at start of class. Check with the instructor about topic prior week. No open laptops. Your PPT. presentation should be emailed by [day TBA]. noon the week you present.