

**Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration**  
**PPPA 6053-10**  
**Financial Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations**  
Fall 2020  
Dr. Kate Yang

**Time:** Thursday, 6:10 pm – 8:00 pm  
**Location:** Blackboard Collaborate Ultra  
**Instructor:** Kate Yang ([langyang@gwu.edu](mailto:langyang@gwu.edu))  
**Office Hours:** Make an appointment through <https://langyang.youcanbook.me> (if the listed does not work, feel free to email me about alternative times)

### 1. Course Description

The primary objective of this class is to provide a foundation in financial management to allow students to understand and use financial information to make decisions in public and non-profit organizations. The course provides the skills and vocabulary to use financial information rather than to generate that information. The secondary objective is to familiarize students with spreadsheet applications and financial calculations through the weekly assignments.

The first half of the course focuses on the development of operating budgets, tools for capital budget decisions, and an introduction to accounting principles. The second half of the course focuses on practices related to financial statements, financial analysis, and the unique aspects of accounting for public and not-for-profit organizations. We will consider how the information is presented, and how it can be used to provide meaningful conclusions about the financial position and performance of a public service organization. At the end of this section, you should be able to analyze an organization's financial statements to communicate about the fiscal health of the organization.

While there is no prerequisite for this course, if you have limited prior exposure to accounting and finance, please expect to devote a significant amount of time to the coursework and problem solving.

### 2. Required Text

Steven Finkler, Daniel L. Smith, Thad D. Calabrese, Robert M. Purtell. *Financial Management for Public, Health, and Not-For-Profit Organizations*, 5th Edition, CQ Press, 2016.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard. They are recommended but not required. However, recommended readings can be very valuable in providing you a practice-relevant understanding of the course concepts and preparing you for the written assignments.

You need to collect financial reports/statements of an organization of your choice for the final project. These are not annual reports or tax forms, and can be difficult to obtain from some organizations because not all of them post financial statements on their website. GWU has an institutional subscription to Guidestar, which provides you access to financial reports of many (but not all) nonprofit organizations. Go to this [link](#), click on Guidestar and then you should be able to search within Guidestar with the institutional subscription.

### 3. Remote Learning Policies

Course delivery approach. This class is fully online through synchronous sessions. We will use Blackboard for synchronous meetings, course materials, lecture slides, homework templates and solutions, and student grades. I may also communicate with you directly concerning course logistics using the Blackboard announcements and emails. Please check to be sure that you are listed as a registrant, and be sure to check Blackboard and your e-mail regularly.

Recording of the class. All classes will be recorded and accessible on Blackboard. All course materials, including course recordings, are for your personal use. Unauthorized downloading, distributing, or sharing of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, as well as using provided information for purposes other than the student's own learning may be deemed a violation of GW's Student Conduct Code.

Equipment. Please ensure you have access to a working computer with proper audio and video setup, stable internet, and Microsoft Word and Excel (or other software with similar functions).

Time zone. All the times in this Blackboard course correspond to U.S. Eastern Time zone (e.g., Washington, DC). It is your responsibility to convert these times to the time zone of your location so you can meet this course's deadlines.

#### 4. Student Learning Objectives

Through course discussions, readings and assignments, students will develop knowledge and skills that enable them to:

- Create operating and cash budgets;
- Conduct break-even analyses, variance analyses, and allocate costs;
- Perform time-value of money calculations;
- Value bonds;
- Construct and interpret balance sheets, activity statements, and cash flow statements; and
- Conduct financial condition analysis and develop recommendations.

#### 5. Student Commitment

Attendance is required. Class time will be a key part of learning the materials covered by lecture slides and assigned readings. Class time will also include discussion of information and observations that are not in those readings. As a result, attending class will be a strong contributor to your success in this course. Excused absences require advance notice with legitimate reasons. The grade on attendance and participation is made based on the instructor's review of whether a student shows up for class and actively participates in in-class discussions. Please note that if you are absent or late for class, it is your responsibility to learn about announcements, obtain class notes, and hand in assignments. Lab sessions are optional but I **strongly** encourage you to attend them as they provide important review of course concepts, assignments, and tests.

Excel. For homework and practice problems, you will need access to Excel. A short-Excel tutorial can be found on Blackboard and you are required to complete it on your own before the start of the semester. Although experience with Excel is not a prerequisite for this class, you should be able to allocate a significant amount of time at the beginning of the semester to gain familiarity of the software if you are not already comfortable with using Excel to construct tables and perform simple calculations. In all work done in Excel, points may be taken off for numbers that are directly typed into Excel without showing the calculation/formula.

Late assignments. Late work will be accepted up to ONE WEEK after the due date, but grading will be penalized for late submission (5% penalty for the first offense and additional 5% for each offense after that). No credit for work submitted more than one week late unless you have extraordinary circumstances such as a serious illness *and* you have received approval from the instructor PRIOR TO the original due date for a late submission.

Minimum time requirement. This is a 3-credit graduate course. Over 14 weeks, students will spend about 2 hours per week in class. Required reading and written assignments are expected to take up, on average, 6 hours per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 28 hours in instructional time and about 85 hours outside of class.

**6. Grading:** Your final grade will be the sum of grades on the following activities. Specific instructions for homework, quizzes, final project and final exam will be passed out when assigned.

- *Homework assignment*  
(9 assignments, 4 points each) 36 %
- *Tests*  
(3 take-home tests, 12 points each) 36 %
- *Financial Analysis Project*  
(Material preparation, in-class presentation & written memo) 23 %
- *Attendance & participation*  
(Instructor review of student participation) 5 %

Grading scale (based on student handbook: “no student will be permitted to graduate with a GPA of less than 3.0”; that is an average of B across all your courses).

A	>93.50 up through 100 (← specifically: 93.51 – 100)
A-	>89.50 up to and including 93.50
B+	>86.50 up to and including 89.50
B	>83.50 up to and including 86.50
B-	>79.50 up to and including 83.50
C+	>76.50 up to and including 79.50
C	>73.50 up to and including 76.50
C-	>69.50 up to and including 73.50

## 7. Class and University Policies and Resources

### **Class Policies:**

Instructor response time. I will respond to emails within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). I will return assignments within one week.

Classroom expectation. Higher education works best when it becomes a vigorous and lively marketplace of ideas in which all points of view are heard. Free expression in the classroom is an integral part of this process. At the same time, higher education works best when all of us approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, irrespective of their ideology, political views, or identity. We value civility because that is the kind of community we want, and we care for it because civility permits intellectual exploration and growth.

*Respect for Diversity.* It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. I strive to create an inclusive classroom and present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity including gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and political affiliation. Your suggestions on how to help me succeed with this are encouraged and appreciated.

**University Policy on Religious Holidays:** Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.

**Changes to the Syllabus:** Please note that this syllabus is intended to be a guide to the course for students. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may, with appropriate notice, change the content and requirements during the course.

**Academic Integrity Code:** Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

For the complete Academic Integrity Code, see: <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>

Students are welcome to consult with each other on homework assignments, but should individually draft responses. All work on the take-home Final Exam should be your own, *solo effort*.

**Changing Grades after Completion of Course:** No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

**Incompletes:** A student must consult with the instructor to obtain a grade of "I" (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes. At that time, the student and instructor will both sign the CCAS contract for incompletes and submit a copy to the School Director. Please consult the TSPPA Student Handbook for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information, please refer to <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

**GW Counseling Resources:** In addition, should you need any non-academic support outside of class please consult the following:

**University Counseling Center**

Division of Student Affairs Marvin Center, Ground Floor  
800 21st Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20052  
Phone: [202-994-5300](tel:202-994-5300) | Fax: [202-994-5267](tel:202-994-5267)  
Email: [counsel@gwu.edu](mailto:counsel@gwu.edu)

**8. Class Schedule:**

Class schedule is arranged on a class (weekly) basis. Under each class title, you will find readings that you will need to complete **prior to** the class date, and practice problems, homework assignments, and take-home tests due **after** the class date but (usually) before the next class. Practice problems do not require a submission; please work on them and check your answers against the posted answer keys.

**September 3, Class 1 — Course Overview, Operating and Cash Budgets**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 1, Ch. 2
- Recommended: Office of the New York State Comptroller (2010), Citizens' Guide to Local Budgets.

Practice problems:

2-17, 2-28.

Homework assignment #1:

2-35 Marquoya College Parts 1, 2 and 3. Due September 9 at 8 PM.

**September 10, Class 2 — Additional Budgeting Concepts; Understanding Costs**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 3, Ch. 4 up to P. 145 Cost Measurement

Practice problems:

3-23, 4-47.

Homework assignment #2:

Mead Meals on Wheels Center case study questions 1 and 2. Due September 16 at 8 PM.

**September 17, Class 3 — Cost Allocation; Intro to Capital Asset and Financing**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 4 from p. 145 Cost Measurement to end
- Recommended: MRSC (2015), Cost Allocation

Practice problems:

4-53 (also do it using the step-down approach allocating purchasing function first, i.e. 4-54).

Homework assignment #3:

4-55. Due September 23 at 8 PM.

**September 24, Class 4 — Time Value of Money**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 5 except for Appendix 5-A.

Practice problems:

5-11, 5-14, 5-15, 5-16.

Homework assignment #4:

5-35, 5-36. Due September 30 at 8 PM. Submit an Excel file to Blackboard.

**October 1, Class 5 — Capital Asset Investment Analysis**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 6

Practice problems:

5-29, 5-37

Test #1:

Complete the take-home, timed test on Blackboard by October 7, 8 PM. Covers classes 1 to 4.

**October 8, Class 6 — Long-term Financing Pricing; Variance Analysis**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 8

Practice problems:

6-14

Homework assignment #5:

5-38, 6-13, 8-26. Due October 14 at 8 PM. Submit an Excel file to Blackboard.

**October 15, Class 7 — Financial Accounting; Balance Sheets**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 9 and 7.

Practice problems:

9-23.

Final Project Part I:

This is the first component of your final Financial Analysis project. Submit a short, one-page memo that identifies the organization you will be analyzing. Due October 21 at 8 PM.

**October 22, Class 8 — Activity Statements**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 10.

Practice problems:

10-14.

Homework assignment #6:

9-28, 10-19. Due October 28 at 8 PM. Submit an Excel file to Blackboard.

**October 29, Class 9 — Connecting Financial Statements; Cash Flow Statements**

Homework assignment #7:

One World Not Three case. Due November 4 at 8 PM. Submit an Excel file to Blackboard.

**November 5, Class 10 — Accounting for Nonprofit Organizations; Intro to Financial Statement Analysis**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 11 (excluding Appendix 11-A).
- Recommended: Ann Goggis Gregory & Don Howard (2009). The nonprofit starvation cycle.

Practice problems:

11-17.

Test #2:

Complete the take-home test on Blackboard by November 11, 8 PM. Covers classes 5 to 9.

**November 12, Class 11 — Financial Statement Analysis: Ratio Analysis**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 14.

Practice problems:

14-10.

Homework assignment #8:

House of Ruth assignment part 1. Due November 18 at 8 PM. Submit a Word file to Blackboard.

**November 19, Class 12 — Accounting for State & Local Governments**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 12 and Ch. 13.

Practice problems:

12-5 (related to 12-4).

Homework assignment #9:

House of Ruth part 2. Due November 25 at 8 PM. Submit a Word file to Blackboard.

**November 26 — Thanksgiving break, no class**

**December 3, Class 13 — Financial Condition Analysis**

Reading:

- Finkler et al., Ch. 15.

Practice problems:

- 15-10.

Financial project part 2:

This is the second component of your final Financial Analysis project. Submit a PowerPoint file that summarize the financial condition of the organization you analyze. Due December 9 at 8 PM.

**December 10, Class 14 — Presentation & Class Wrap-up**

We will have student in-class presentation on the final Financial Analysis project.

Test #3:

Complete the take-home, timed test on Blackboard by December 16, 8 PM. Covers classes 10 to 13.

**December 17, Final**

Financial analysis memo: This is the third component of your final Financial Analysis project for the class. Submit a two-page memo and supporting Excel file that summarize your financial analysis for the final project. Due December 23 at 8 PM.