

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

PS 141
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A History of Budgetary Politics in the U.S.

Throughout this nation's history, major political controversies have manifested themselves in the form of conflict over the size and nature of the budget of the federal government. This class will examine budgetary conflict at key junctures in U.S. history. Topics include the struggle to establish a viable fiscal system in the early days of the Republic, the *ante bellum* tariff, the "pension politics" of the post-Civil War era, the growth of the American welfare state, and the current controversy concerning the Social Security and Medicare programs. This course can be taken for grades only. Because much of the material covered in lecture is not covered by the readings, regular attendance will be required to obtain a good grade. Your grade will be based upon four papers, but if you insist I can arrange for you to take a closed-book final if you want. In addition to the books listed below, you will also find readings on the Moodle website.

Required Reading

Studenski, Paul, and Herman Krooss, *Financial History of the U.S.*, 2003

Brown, Roger H. *Redeeming the Republic*, Johns Hopkins Press, 2000

Weisman, Steven R. *The Great Tax Wars*, Simon and Schuster, 2002.