COURSE SYLLABUS

Financial Acumen for State Leaders Course (Self-Paced)

Build financial fluency for state and local leaders to interpret government financial documents, manage budget cycles, oversee public funds responsibly, and communicate clearly with stakeholders.

> Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/financial-acumen-for-state-leaders-course-self-paced



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Course Outline

Module 1: The State Financial Landscape

- Revenue sources: taxes, fees, transfers, grants
- Roles of councils, boards, and finance officers
- The state and local budget cycle

Module 2: Reading Budgets and Financial Reports

- The adopted budget, CAFR/ACFR, and dashboards
- Comparing budget to actuals during the year
- Activity: Decode a sample financial report

Module 3: Building and Defending a Budget

- From program goals to a budget request
- Working with elected officials and the public
- Activity: Draft a one-page budget narrative

Module 4: Managing Funds and Financial Risk

- Execution monitoring, audits, and internal controls
- Responding to revenue shortfalls and mid-year cuts
- Capital planning basics

Module 5: Capstone — Leading with Financial Confidence

- Capstone Activity: Build a Resource Decision Brief
- Closing: Key takeaways and next steps