



Leadership & Strategic Thinking on Public Financial Management

Hagen Hall, 115 Séraphin-Marion Pvt. Suite 107, University of Ottawa

Monday, February 4, 2019

Readings

[Liberal party platform](#)

[Economic & Fiscal Update 2017](#)

[Speech from the Throne 2017](#)

From Electioneering to Governing: Transitions

08:30	Continental breakfast
09:00	Welcome, introductions and review of the IFSD 360° agenda Kevin Page, President & CEO, IFSD Sahir Khan, Executive Vice-President, IFSD Helaina Gaspard, Director, Governance & Institutions, IFSD Icebreaker: Welcome to Cabinet The election is over... and now the Prime Minister must choose their cabinet. Participants will prepare a 1-minute bio to pitch their colleague's posting of choice to the Prime Minister and introduce them to the group.
09:45	Health break

10:00	<p>Good intentions: The writing & costing of a political platform</p> <p>Mark Cameron Dan Demers Ian Wayne</p> <p>Election platforms are political documents that are equal parts vision, ambition and assumption. While the first ingredient can engage voters and inspire public servants, the two latter can be the cause of stress and conflict as vision and ambition confront the realities of governance, policies and programs.</p> <p>In this session, you will learn from political insiders who have constructed platforms, fought elections, and transitioned with their party into government.</p>
12:00	Lunch
13:00	<p>The Speech from the Throne (SFT)</p> <p>The SFT is a critical point of engagement between political leadership and the public service. Connected to the platform, the end result is often a compilation of influences, perspectives, and commitments.</p> <p>In this session, you will draft your own – shortened – SFT with the support of our experts.</p> <p>Each team will be assigned a theme from the 2015 Liberal platform and will develop a related paragraph for the SFT. The entry should consider cost, risk and performance. The final product will be critiqued by our experts. How would they challenge the contribution as a central agency? In a House of Commons debate?</p>
14:30	Health Break
14:45	<p>The Promise and the Perils... governments, transitions and their first months in office</p> <p>Mel Cappe</p> <p>Second only to the capacity to run a free and fair election, a smooth transition of power is one of the hallmarks of a modern democracy. The outgoing government must transfer not only authority but knowledge to their political foes. The neutral public service is at the centre of this transition, that begins even before the election ends.</p> <p>In this session, you will hear from a former Clerk of the Privy Council on managing the tactical and personal considerations of a transition of power.</p>
16:30	Close

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Readings

[Economic and Fiscal Update 2017](#)

[IFSD Case Study: DRAP](#)

Planning and spending

08:30	Continental breakfast
09:00	<p>Morning Session I: How the best laid fiscal plans can change</p> <p>Mostafa Askari, Chief Economist IFSD</p> <p>There is an inextricable link between what happens in the economy and how governments make decisions. Economic changes can affect government revenues, with implications for taxation and spending activities.</p> <p>In this session, you will engage in a practical exercise to examine how changes to the economy at the macro level can affect government finances and what tradeoffs policy makers face when they want to offset the impact of the economic changes.</p>
10:30	Health break
10:45	<p>Morning session II: Case studies: modelling the fiscal impacts of economic change</p> <p>Mostafa Askari</p> <p>In political periods such as elections, unexpected economic changes or unstable or worsening economic environments can influence fiscal plans. The result is sometimes a mismatch between proposals and economic realities. What happens when things change? What should governments do?</p> <p>In this session, you will analyze three case studies of shifting economic realities and the actions taken by governments to meet commitments or to reset expectations in these unstable environments.</p> <p>The cases include: the differences between the 2008 Fall Economic Statement (FES) with the 2009 Budget (following a federal election); FES 2014 and Budget 2015; as well as FES 2015 and Budget 2016.</p>
12:00	Lunch
13:00	<p>From departmental proposal to budget announcement: the makings and financing of government policies and programs</p> <p>Kevin Page Sahir Khan Mostafa Askari</p>

	<p>Angella MacEwen</p> <p>There are a series of steps a proposal must pass to become a policy or program. While the process may appear straightforward on paper, politics, incentives and circumstances inform the trajectory, impacting timing and results. How does a proposal work its way through the system? What are the political forces that attempt to act on it from the outside? Are there trade secrets on a successful proposal?</p> <p>In this session, you will enhance your understanding of the process by learning from veteran public servants who were responsible for formulating budgets, vetting proposals, and developing policy.</p>
14:15	Health break
14:30	<p>Analyzing Expenditure Reviews and Transformations</p> <p>Helaina Gaspard</p> <p>Expenditure reviews are important fiscal tools for the targeting of priorities, savings and program effectiveness. Governments have used both program reductions and efficiency initiatives (e.g. IT enabled transformations) to achieve desired fiscal objectives. Each approach has benefits, costs and risks.</p> <p>In this session, we examine the history of reviews in Canada, their contexts, effectiveness and approaches.</p>
15:00	<p>Case study #1: DRAP</p> <p>Sahir Khan</p> <p>In Budget 2012, the federal government introduced the Deficit Reduction Action Plan (DRAP). The government promised that these measures would generate cost savings without program reduction or impacts on service provision.</p> <p>In this session, you will analyze the DRAP case. What cost savings were promised? Which were realized? Were there impacts on service provision? Leveraging tools to assess efficiency and transformation initiatives for operational performance, financial results and transparent reporting, you will consider the options and repercussions of DRAP for government and stakeholders.</p>
16:30	Close

Wednesday, February 6, 2019



Readings

[Strengthening Parliamentary Scrutiny of Estimates and Supply: A report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations & Estimates](#)

[The fiscal impact of the Afghan War \(PBO report\) \(Français\)](#)

Parliament & oversight

08:30	Continental breakfast
09:00	<p>Morning Session I: Parliament and the Public Purse</p> <p>Helaina Gaspard</p> <p>From the principles of the Magna Carta to the Parliament's fiscal scrutiny obligations, a fiscal ecosystem is a web of connections, riddled with incentives.</p> <p>In this session, you will explore the constitutional and legal foundations of Parliament's role in public finance, and survey its opportunities and challenges in executing its obligations.</p>
9:30	<p>Following the Money: Easy as pie?</p> <p>Kevin Page</p> <p>Imagine you are a member of parliament called to vote on a spending bill. What would you do? Where would you go for information? Using the information available to parliamentarians and the public, you will track a spending initiative through the Expenditure Management System (EMS), from policy announcement to evaluation and audit (i.e. from the Budget, to the Estimates, and the Public Accounts).</p> <p>In this session, you will analyze the scope of resources available to parliamentarians to support their fiscal scrutiny function and identify and assess the quality and utility of publicly available financial information for decision-making.</p>
10:15	<p>The media, journalism, and political interplay</p> <p>Alastair Mullin James Baxter</p> <p>Brown envelopes, leaks and unnamed sources...the stuff journalistic careers are made of and often, the demise of political ones. How does the media hold the government to account? How do journalists craft their stories? How do political operatives respond? With perspectives from a journalist and former communications expert, explore what it takes to make the news and try to shape or change the news.</p>
12:00	Lunch

13:00	<p>Hindsight is 20/20: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC)</p> <p>Charles-Antoine St-Jean</p> <p>Financial management is about more than dollars, but about accountabilities to stakeholders in government, in parliament, and the citizenry. The systems and processes designed to control spending and eliminate fraud are many, but they do not correct a weak proposal or poor political decision. Public servants play an important role in generating and pursuing evidence-based proposals and decisions. When the system fails, who catches the mistake?</p> <p>In this session, you will explore the control function and the role of the PAC in holding the government accountable for the results of its spending and policy decisions.</p>
14:30	<p>Health break</p>
14:45	<p>The Constitutional Obligations of Parliamentarians</p> <p>Yasir Naqvi</p> <p>Parliamentarians around the world have experienced gaps or a lack of access in information to provide their informed consent (or refusal) to government proposals. In 2006, Paul Dewar was asked to develop a position for the NDP on the Afghan War. He quickly found that information was difficult to find and that the actual cost of the war effort was obscure. This is not a unique experience. The ability to discharge your constitutional obligations may change depending on where you sit.</p> <p>In this session, learn from the perspective of a former politician with experience managing fiscal matters at the cabinet table and as a parliamentarian in opposition.</p>
16:30	<p>Close</p>

Thursday, February 7, 2019

Readings

[IFSD Case Study: IT Infrastructure Costing](#)
[A Guide to Preparing Treasury Board Submissions \(Français\)](#)

Review exercises

08:30	Continental breakfast
09:00	<p>Due-diligence in decision-making</p> <p>Ram Mathilakath Jackie Choquette</p> <p>Sound decision-making begins with sound policy and financial evidence. Building a proposal prior to consideration by Ministers, Cabinet and Treasury Board, has a number of key ingredients for success, including a reliable business case.</p> <p>In this session, you will survey and learn to leverage techniques for testing cost estimates and risk based on project components.</p>
10:45	Health break
11:00	<p>Outside influences: Lobbying and decision-making</p> <p>Robert Asselin</p> <p>There are various pressures that attempt to influence decision-making within the financial cycle both from within and outside of government. Given the structure and nature of Westminster-style government, issue-based advocacy efforts from government relations firms and NGOs tend to target both public servants and elected officials.</p> <p>How do these organizations perform their roles? What information do they use in their efforts? What role do public servants have in maintaining the transparency and accountability of the system? How do actors in the financial cycle respond to these pressures?</p> <p>In this session, you will explore how lobbying efforts attempt to influence decision-making and how the system responds.</p>
12:00	Lunch

13:00	<p>Case Study #2: The Cost of Performance</p> <p>Azfar Ali Khan, Director, Performance, IFSD</p> <p>Control gates are in place to stop problem files from reaching cabinet due to their risk, cost, lack of evidence, lack of support or a combination thereof. What happens when a problem file makes its way through the system and a cabinet raises a red flag on the project? In this session, you will work through a case based on a real file flagged by a cabinet for its risks and costs.</p> <p>In the first part of this exercise, you will explore comparative methodology to develop the techniques to identify, acquire, and analyze the data needed to assess the reasonableness of a proposal's cost estimate.</p>
14:30	Health break
14:45	<p>Case Study #2: The Cost of Performance (con't.)</p> <p>Azfar Ali Khan</p> <p>In the second part of this exercise, you will use data sets similar to those developed for the file to identify cost drivers and define and answer questions for decision-support to a cabinet.</p>
16:30	Close

Friday, February 8, 2019

Reading

[IFSD Case study: Phoenix](#)

[A Drafter's Guide to Cabinet Documents \(Français\)](#)

Challenges and Opportunities

08:30	Continental breakfast
09:00	<p>Case study #3: Looking for Phoenix</p> <p>Sahir Khan</p> <p>The Phoenix pay system has created issues for two governments in the last five years. Poorly planned with limited testing, the program has impacted morale, confidence and productivity within the public service. How did the problem file reach an apex? What could have been done to stop it?</p> <p>In this session, you will survey the due-diligence gaps in the Phoenix pay system proposal, propose mechanisms to correct the problems, and define alternative strategies for raising its problems internally and to stakeholders.</p>
10:45	Health break
11:00	<p>What makes a good communicator?</p> <p>Alastair Mullin</p> <p>There are fundamentals for sound communication, whether you are a politician, a public servant, a journalist, or news anchor. Leveraging at least some of these principles in your daily work, can improve the potential usability and applicability of your work.</p> <p>In this session, you will explore best practices in written and oral communication and identify practices you can adopt in your daily work, which can include fast changing political environments.</p>
12:00	Lunch
13:00	<p>The way forward</p> <p>Frank Graves</p> <p>Canada is internationally renown for the neutrality and professionalism of its public service. A stable and competent institution, it has opportunities to improve its responsiveness, due-diligence and planning functions. What are the future trends that public servants should be considering in their work? How can they best prepare for the opportunities and challenges ahead, especially in an election year?</p>

	In this session, you will hear from and engage with experts from a variety of fields on charting the way forward.
14:45	Health break
15:00	Wrap-up and lessons learned
16:00	Close