Dave Lakly provides financial management training for government officials and personnel as part of the faculty at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government’s Financial Management Program. Lakly coordinates and teaches in the Budget and Financial Management Certification Program, a series of courses for state government employees designed to offer an overview of the state’s budget and fiscal management cycle. He also teaches financial topics to school and local government officials through various programs at the Institute. He is also a frequent webinar host and presenter for programs here in Georgia and nationally. Prior to arriving at the Institute of Government, Dave began his government career as a budget analyst at the Georgia Senate Budget and Evaluation Office, where he would also eventually serve and as the office’s deputy director. He also served as the education division director in the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.

Maddy Oritt is the senior economist for the Utah Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst. She focuses on tax policy and revenue forecasting, and leads the office’s long-term fiscal health projects, including budget stress testing, long-term budgeting, and revenue volatility analyses. She holds a master’s degree in public policy from the University of Kentucky and a PhD in public policy from the University of Utah.
Gary VanLandingham is Director of the Reuben Askew School of Public Administration and Policy at the Florida State University. Previously, he was the founding Director of the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, which worked in over 30 states and local governments to build their capacity to use rigorous evidence and economic analysis to inform budget and policy choices.

Before joining Pew, he served as director of the Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. He has over 35 years of experience in policy analysis and program evaluation at the state and local government levels.

He served as staff chair of the National Conference of State Legislatures in 2008-09. He also has served as president of the Southeast Evaluation Association, chair of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society, president of the North Florida Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration, and as an advisory board member with the Government Accounting Standards Advisory Council and the Trust for Representative Democracy. His professional service has been recognized with the Legislative Staff Achievement Award from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Harry Hatry Distinguished Performance Measurement Practice Award from the American Society for Public Administration’s Center for Accountability and Performance.

He holds a Ph.D. in public administration and policy. In addition to contributing to well over 800 professional policy analysis reports, he has published journal articles and book chapters on evidence-based policymaking, benefit-cost analysis, program evaluation and policy analysis, and government transparency.
Faculty

2022 Fiscal Skills Building Workshop

Kirk Fulford, Deputy Director of the Legislative Services Agency Fiscal Division

Kirk Fulford is the deputy director of the Legislative Services Agency Fiscal Division, formerly Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO), a nonpartisan office established to provide independent, accurate, and objective information to members of the Alabama Legislature with respect to historical, current, projected, and proposed appropriations, expenditures, taxes, and revenues, as well as any other information requested. The LFO became the Fiscal Division of the newly created Legislative Services Agency on Oct. 1, 2017, and Fulford became the deputy director of the Fiscal Division at that time. As deputy director of the Fiscal Division, he also serves as the legislative fiscal officer. He has worked in state government with the Legislative Fiscal Office for over 25 years. Employed by the Legislative Fiscal Office as a fiscal analyst in September 1996, he worked his way up the ranks to serve as senior fiscal analyst from July 1999 through June 2012, Senate fiscal officer from July 2012 to December 2012, House fiscal officer from January 2013 through June 2015, and deputy director/House fiscal officer from July 2015 through September 2017.

He earned his master of business administration degree from Auburn University at Montgomery in 1995 and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Auburn University at Montgomery in 1994.

Chas Nichols, Budget Analyst, Louisiana House Fiscal Division

Chas Nichols is a budget analyst with the House Fiscal Division at the Louisiana House of Representatives. He has worked in state government for nine years, nearly seven of which have been with the Louisiana Legislature. He currently oversees over 46% of Louisiana’s total budget, focusing on health and human services and Medicaid. In addition, he oversees statewide analysis projects, is a frequent consultant on fiscal legislation, and trains new budget analysts in his office. He holds a bachelor of mathematics from Louisiana State University and a master of business administration with a concentration in finance from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In his spare time, he enjoys taking walks with his wife, binge-watching Star Wars movies, and serving as player-coach for his office softball team.
Martha Wigton, Director, Georgia House Budget and Research Office

Martha Wigton began her career with the Georgia General Assembly in 1991, and her 32 years of legislative service includes leadership positions in both chambers. Wigton was appointed the director of the Georgia House Budget and Research Office in 2011 after serving as deputy director and the senior policy analyst for the Speaker of the House. She oversees the professional staff for the House of Representatives’ 42 standing committees. In 2016, she received the National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices’ Legislative Staff Achievement Award and became a Council of State Governments’ Henry Toll Fellow. She served as staff chair for the National Conference of State Legislatures from 2019-2021, and is a member of the Southern Legislative Conference’s Legislative Service Agencies Directors Panel.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director, Tennessee Fiscal Review Committee

Krista Lee Carsner serves as the executive director of the Fiscal Review Committee, the independent, nonpartisan, joint standing committee of the Tennessee General Assembly responsible for general oversight of the fiscal affairs of the state. The 17-member office is responsible for conducting fiscal analyses and producing fiscal notes for proposed legislation, generating state tax and lottery revenue estimates, and reviewing both state contracts and audits.

Prior to her appointment in 2015, she spent 11 years serving in various roles within the Fiscal Review Committee office becoming a trusted expert on health care fiscal policy and overall budgetary matters as well as managing the work of other analysts and overseeing the committee’s contract review processes.

She currently serves as vice president of the National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices (NALFO) and previously served as a staff vice-chair and staff co-chair of the NCSL Budgets and Revenue Committee. She holds a bachelor of arts in political science and a master of public administration from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and serves as a member of the UT Master of Policy and Public Administration Advisory Board. Krista and her husband Nicholas live in Nashville with their dog Ozzie.
April Kees serves as the director for the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee with responsibility for staff direction, legislation, tax policy, debt, and legislative agencies. She has 25 years of experience with the Commonwealth of Virginia and joined the staff of the committee in 2006. She previously served as the committee analyst for capital outlay and higher education. Prior to joining the staff, she worked for the Virginia General Assembly, Joint Commission on Health Care; for the Higher Education Section of the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget; and for the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. She has a bachelor’s degree in biology and political science from Virginia Tech and a master’s degree in public administration from Virginia Tech.

She serves on the Virginia Debt Capacity Advisory Committee, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership’s Board of Directors, the Joint Advisory Board of Economists, the Public Private Partnership Oversight Committee, the Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan Advisory Committee, and as a designated reviewer for the six-year plans for the Virginia public higher education institutions and the tech talent investment programs.