



Sponsored by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget
and The University of Akron

For over 20 years, the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget (www.crfb.org) has been sponsoring *An Exercise in Hard Choices*SM, a budget debate that asks participants to role-play members of Congress as they deliberate over the current year's budget. The University of Akron is now piloting electronic versions of the Exercise and the Exercise scorecard in order to increase citizen and student access to the debate.

We invite you to use the Exercise with your classes, either in a traditional face-to-face version (normally taking three hours to complete) or in one of three electronic versions:

1. An asynchronous version using WebCT (taking place over several weeks).
2. A synchronous, computer-to-computer version using a Macromedia Flash Communications server.
3. A synchronous, site-to-site version using Polycom video-teleconferencing.

Students are placed into small groups based on a demographic questionnaire to insure diverse viewpoints. They then review the issues and agree or compromise on 14 decisions relating to: goals (size of government; budget discipline); outlays (11 separate decisions); and revenues. At the end of the Exercise groups discover whether they met their initial goals and have an opportunity to revise goals or spending/revenue decisions.

The University of Akron and The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget can provide copies of the Exercise and staff to moderate any delivery method. For more information, contact Dwight Bishop, Manager, Design and Development Services, The University of Akron (dbishop@uakron.edu, 330.972.6025).