# ACCOUNTING FOR GOVERNMENTAL AND NONPROFIT ENTITIES



EARL R. WILSON
LEON E. HAY
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ELEVENTH EDITION

# EDITION

# Accounting for Governmental and Nonprofit Entities

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# Preface

The first two editions of this text (published in 1951 and 1956) were written by Professor R. M. Mikesell of Indiana University—Bloomington. Dr. Leon Hay, a coauthor of this 11th edition, joined Professor Mikesell as coauthor of the third and fourth editions (1961 and 1969). After Professor Mikesell's death in 1972, Professor Hay prepared the fifth (1974), sixth (1980), seventh (1985), and eighth (1989) editions with the help and suggestions of many good friends, but without a coauthor. Dr. Earl R. Wilson of the University of Missouri—Columbia became a coauthor beginning with the ninth edition of Accounting for Governmental and Nonprofit Entities. Dr. Hay and Dr. Wilson also coauthored the 10th edition of the text. Dr. Susan C. Kattelus, an Associate Professor at Eastern Michigan University, has joined as coauthor on this 11th edition. Professor Kattelus brings a broad range of professional and academic experience to the text, particularly in the area of not-for-profit organizations. Her expertise in this area will be obvious as readers use this edition.

Because financial accounting and reporting standards, as well as auditing standards, are expected to continue their rapid change, new editions are expected to be published at least every three years. During the life of this 11th edition, the authors will prepare Update Bulletins as needed to inform adopters of this text of changes in the standards explained and illustrated in the 11th edition, as necessitated by new pronouncements of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, the Financial Accounting Standards Board, Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board, U.S. General Accounting Office, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Users of the text should occasionally check for Update Bulletins at the lead author's web page: http://www.missouri.edu/~accterw. In addition to downloading bulletins from the web page, users can submit technical inquiries about the text and provide the

authors with feedback or point out errors and omissions. Your input will be greatly appreciated.

As was true of each previous edition, the authors owe a debt of gratitude to the many professors, students, and governmental financial report users, preparers, and auditors who have shared their knowledge, experience, and views on governmental and not-for-profit organization accounting and financial reporting. In the preparation of this edition the authors are greatly indebted to the standards-setters themselves, especially to Tom L. Allen, Chairman; David Bean, Director of Research; and to all the member of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and its staff, both current and past.

Many professors who were thanked by name in the Prefaces to earlier editions have continued to give generously of their time and effort in improving explanations in chapters of the text and improving the wording of questions, exercises. problems, answers, and solutions. The authors gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for reviewing drafts of chapters, providing excellent suggestions for improvement, and providing useful materials for inclusion in the text, either in this 11th edition, the preceding edition, or both: Dr. Kenneth W. Brown of Southwest Missouri State University for Chapter 11 on the evaluation of financial performance; Robert Bramlett of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board, Bruce K. Michelson of the U.S. General Accounting Office, and J. Thomas Luter, formerly of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, for Chapter 13 on federal government accounting; Bridget M. Anderson, KPMG Peat Marwick, LLP, and Dr. Zafar Khan, Eastern Michigan University, for Chapter 14 on budgeting and costing; Susan B. Perlin, Plante & Moran, LLP, for Chapter 16 on not-for-profit organizations; Sherwood A. Mitter, CPA, for Chapter 17 on regulatory and taxation issues related to not-for-profit organizations; Dr. Mary L. Fischer of the University of Texas at Tyler, Robert T. Forrester, Coopers & Lybrand, LLP, and David Smarr of the University of Missouri-Columbia for Chapter 18 on colleges and universities; and James L. Birchler, CPA, and Sonja J. Schuster for Chapter 19 on health care organizations. Bobbye S. Hay, CPA, contributed greatly to this and previous editions, both technically and personally. Florence J. Wilson also provided significant administrative assistance as well as much needed moral support. John T. Kattelus also provided much appreciated support. Wei Jin, a graduate assistant at Eastern Michigan University, devoted many hours to helping with the preparation of the text.

The authors appreciate the courtesy of the Government Accounting Standards Board in giving permission to quote their pronouncements and reproduce illustrations from their publications. The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada generously gave permission to use its published materials. The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants has also been very helpful by allowing use of questions and problems from previous Uniform Certified Public Accountant Examinations and permitting quotations from its publications, particularly in the audit and accounting guide series. The International City/County Management Association contributed significantly to the material now in Chapter 11 by granting permission for use of its materials on financial analysis. In

Chapter 16, the United Way of America graciously allowed the use of illustrations from Accounting and Financial Reporting: A Guide for United Ways and Not-for-Profit Human Service Organizations.

Ancillary materials that accompany this text include:

- Instructor's Guide (revised to include teaching and case analysis tips).
- Power Point lecture presentations (new) which include 20 to 30 slides for each chapter.
- Test Bank
- Computerized Test Bank
- Computerized Continuous Problem/Practice Set.

Although a number of persons helped refine the explanations in the chapters and the wording of the questions, cases, exercises, and problems, it is probable that errors, inconsistencies, and ambiguities remain in this edition. As readers encounter errors of omission or commission in this text, we urge them to let us know so that corrections can be made. Additionally, every user of this edition who has suggestions or comments about the material in the chapters—or the questions, cases, exercises, or problems—is invited to share them with either of the following two coauthors, either by regular mail, e-mail, or Internet.

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# Financial Reporting for Governmental and Not-for-Profit Entities

### Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify and explain the characteristics that distinguish governmental and not-for-profit entities from for-profit entities.
- Identify the authoritative bodies responsible for setting financial reporting standards for (1) state and local governments, (2) the federal government, and (3) not-for-profit organizations.
- Contrast and compare the objectives of financial reporting for (1) state and local governments, (2) the federal government, and (3) not-for-profit organizations.
- Distinguish the general purpose financial reports of state and local governments from their comprehensive annual financial reports.
- Explain the rationale for the proposed dual perspective reporting model.
- Explain why analysis of the financial performance of governmental and not-for-profit entities differs from that of forprofit entities.

Governmental and not-for-profit organizations are vast in number and diversity. In the United States, governments exist at the federal, state, and local levels and serve a wide variety of functions. The most recent census of governments reports there are 84,955 local governmental units within the 50 states: 3,043 counties, 19,279 municipalities, 16,656 townships, 14,422 independent school districts, and 31,555 special districts.<sup>1</sup>

States, counties, municipalities (for example, cities and villages), and townships are general purpose governments—governments that provide many categories of services to their residents (such as police and fire protection; sanitation; construction and maintenance of streets, roads, and bridges; and health and welfare). Independent school districts and special districts are limited purpose governments—governments that provide only a single function, or a limited number of functions (such as education, drainage and flood control, irrigation, soil and water conservation, fire protection, and water supply). Limited purpose governments have the power to levy and collect taxes and to raise revenues from other sources as provided by state laws to finance the services they provide.

Not-for-profit organizations also exist in many forms and serve many different functions. Estimates of the number of not-for-profit organizations range from several hundred thousand to more than 1 million.<sup>2</sup> These include private colleges and universities, various kinds of health care entities, libraries, museums, professional and trade associations, fraternal and social organizations, and religious organizations.

#### Distinguishing Characteristics of Governmental and Not-for-Profit Entities

Governmental and not-for-profit organizations differ in important ways from business organizations. Moreover, as you will soon learn, accounting and financial reporting for governmental and not-for-profit organizations are markedly different from accounting and financial reporting for businesses. An understanding of how governmental and not-for-profit organizations differ from business organizations is essential to understanding the unique accounting and financial reporting principles that have evolved for governmental and not-for-profit organizations.

In its Statement of Financial Accounting Concepts No. 4, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) noted the following characteristics that it felt distinguished governmental and not-for-profit entities from business organizations:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1992 Census of Governments, vol. 1, no. 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office), p. v.

<sup>2</sup>The LLS Bureau of the Census (1992 Census of Service Le Journe of Service Le Journe

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>The U.S. Bureau of the Census (1992 Census of Service Industries, SC92-S-1, Table 1b) reports that in 1992 there were 208,911 tax-exempt service organizations. This does not include, however, numerous other not-for-profit organizations such as religious organizations, labor unions, and political organizations. The total of tax-exempt not-for-profits numbers more than 1 million (1996–97 Nonprofit Almanac: Dimensions of the Independent Sector, Washington, DC).