DL 101 — Foundations of Government Business

The first rung of the undergraduate ladder. No prior knowledge assumed. You will learn where federal and public money lives, how the market is structured, the shape of the pursuit pipeline, and the ORBITAL skeleton — and you will meet the case company you will work with for the next four years.

Course number: DL 101 · **Credit hours:** 3 · **Term:** 14 weeks, one 75-minute session per week (plus independent reading and assignments) · **Audience:** first-year undergraduates · **Prerequisites:** none · **Tier:** introductory (Year 1, Fall) · **Texts:** this repository — the doctrine folder (the concepts) and the literacy folder (the maps) · **Tools:** none required beyond a web browser for SAM.gov and Grants.gov. This course is stack-agnostic by design (doctrine/08).

Doctrine spine

`doctrine/01` (where the money lives), `doctrine/03` (the pursuit pipeline), `doctrine/04` (gates and governance), `doctrine/08` (tools change, concepts don't) — with `doctrine/02` (solicitations), `doctrine/06` (the ORBITAL), and `doctrine/07` (the lifecycle) introduced at survey depth. Reading maps from the `literacy/` folder accompany the doctrine.

Where this course sits in the program

This is the **landscape** course. DL 102 teaches the documents; DL 101 teaches the world the documents live in. By the end, you can answer three questions that frame the rest of the degree: *Where is the money? How does an organization decide what to chase? What does a pursuit look like when it is structured?*

Ladder: no prerequisite. Serves as the prerequisite for DL 102 (Reading the Solicitation) and DL 210 (The Capture & Pursuit Pipeline).

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, a student can:

- Explain the three main kinds of federal money and the difference between a contract and a grant.
- Name the four identifiers a business needs to receive federal money (UEI, CAGE, NAICS, SAM.gov) and describe what each one does.
- Find a contract opportunity on SAM.gov, a grant opportunity on Grants.gov, and a forecast on an agency's site.
- Trace a federal dollar from appropriation to a published award.
- Explain the small-business universe (set-asides, HUBZone, 8(a), WOSB/VOSB, SBIR/STTR) as a deliberate market design.
- Draw the pursuit pipeline from memory and explain what a gate is and why gates need criteria written in advance.
- Name the seven axes of the ORBITAL and sketch one for a real opportunity.

- Explain the Dream → ORBITAL → World lifecycle and the cosmology loop.
- Tell a durable concept from a swappable tool on sight.

How the course works

The course is a 14-week survey that moves in four movements:

1. **Weeks 1–6 — The market.** Where the money lives, the identifiers, the bulletin boards, the money flow, and the small-business universe.
2. **Week 7 — Midterm.** A real, published, closed money-map exercise.
3. **Weeks 8–13 — The machinery.** The pipeline, the gates, the ORBITAL, the lifecycle, the case, and the tools-change rule.
4. **Week 14 — Final.** A market-map portfolio, presented and defended.

Every week maps to a doctrine chapter and a literacy page. Every assignment is a concrete deliverable — a map, a diagram, a one-pager — never a tool exercise.

Weekly schedule

Week	Theme	In-session (75 min)	Reading (doctrine / literacy)	Assignment due next week
1	Welcome to the federal market	Why this course. Concepts are durable, tools are swappable. What you will be able to do in May.	doctrine/08	"What I think the federal market is" one-pager (pre-test, not graded)
2	Where the money lives	The three kinds of money: contracts, grants, other transactions. The market as a market, not a club.	doctrine/01	A one-page "money types" map: one example of each kind of money

Week	Theme	In-session (75 min)	Reading (doctrine / literacy)	Assignment due next week
3	The four identifiers	UEI, CAGE, NAICS, SAM.gov — what each is, why each exists, where to get them.	doctrine/01; literacy/glossary	A one-page identifier card for a fictional (or the Ravonics) company
4	The bulletin boards	SAM.gov, Grants.gov, agency forecasts. Finding opportunities with your own eyes.	doctrine/01; literacy/where-the-money-flows	Find one contract opportunity and one grant opportunity; note the identifiers visible in each
5	The money flow, end to end	Congress → appropriation → agency → solicitation → competition → award → performance → published record.	literacy/where-the-money-flows; doctrine/01	Money map of one agency: appropriation to a past award (USAspending.gov)
6	The small-business universe	Set-asides, HUBZone, 8(a), WOSB/VOSB, SBIR/STTR. The government is required to notice small business.	doctrine/01; literacy/glossary	A one-page “who can compete here?” sheet for a real set-aside opportunity

Week	Theme	In-session (75 min)	Reading (doctrine / literacy)	Assignment due next week
7	**Midterm**	In class: break down a real (closed) opportunity — kind of money, identifiers, eligibility, money flow, who competes.	(review week)	Midterm submission
8	The pursuit pipeline	The nine stages: sense → qualify → score → pursue → design → audit → submit → deliver → learn. A pipeline, not a lottery.	doctrine/03	Draw the pipeline from memory; place one real news story about a company on it
9	Gates and governance	What a gate is: trigger, criteria, decision, owner. Why excitement makes gates necessary.	doctrine/04	Gate charter for one pursuit (the four parts written out)

Week	Theme	In-session (75 min)	Reading (doctrine / literacy)	Assignment due next week
10	The ORBITAL skeleton	The seven axes: Objective, Resources, Budget, Indicators, Transport, Activities, Logistics. Structure first, document second.	doctrine/06	One-page ORBITAL for the opportunity you found in Week 4
11	The lifecycle	Dream → ORBITAL → World. The cosmology loop and why it compounds.	doctrine/07	One-page lifecycle map: where is the case company, and what moves it forward?
12	The case: Ravonics	Run Ravonics through the doctrine: certifications, identifiers, capabilities, partner, place in the market.	case-study/ravonics.md	One-page “Ravonics in one page” profile using the doctrine
13	Tools change, concepts don’t	The two layers. What survives; what gets re-learned. Ethics as the foundation of the market.	doctrine/08; doctrine/04	One-page reflection: “a tool I use today that a capture professional would not recognize in 1990”

Week	Theme	In-session (75 min)	Reading (doctrine / literacy)	Assignment due next week
14	**Final: market-map portfolio**	Students present a portfolio: money map, pipeline diagram, gate charter, ORBITAL, lifecycle map. Panel Q&A.	(review week)	Final portfolio submission

Assessment summary

- **Weekly assignments** — 30% (each a concrete deliverable: a map, a card, a charter, a one-pager).
- **Midterm** — 25% (breaking down a real, closed opportunity in class).
- **Final market-map portfolio** — 30% (the five artifacts from Weeks 5–13, presented and defended).
- **Participation and peer review** — 15%.

The grading philosophy and the public rubric are in `course/assessments-and-rubric.md`. The 4-point rubric (correctness, completeness, doctrine use, clarity) applies to every weekly deliverable.

The midterm

In class, with a real (published, closed) opportunity you have not seen before, produce in 75 minutes:

1. **Kind of money** — contract, grant, or other transaction? How do you know?
2. **Identifiers** — what identifiers does a responder need, and where would they be found?
3. **Eligibility** — who may compete? Any set-aside or small-business restrictions?
4. **Money flow** — trace the appropriation logic: where does this money come from, and what is the published record of past awards?
5. **Who competes** — name the likely competitive pool and why.

The trap being tested: students who write a policy essay instead of *reading the opportunity as a market document.* The midterm rewards observation, not opinion.

Policies worth stating plainly

- **The doctrine is the course.** Every assignment tests the concept, never a tool. If an assignment ever seems to require knowledge of a specific product or system, that is a bug in the assignment — flag it.
- **Real documents, safe exercises.** We read real opportunities, but always published, closed ones. You never submit anything live in this course.
- **Late work.** The pipeline has deadlines; so does the course. The one professional grace: an honest early warning beats a silent late submission.
- **Academic integrity.** The federal market runs on trust in a fair, documented process. This course models that. Cite your sources; do not fabricate evidence; be the person the market can trust.

The course in one sentence

By Week 14 you will be able to look at any federal opportunity and answer four questions — what kind of money it is, who can compete, where it sits in a pipeline, and what a structured pursuit of it would look like — and you will have done it with nothing but the doctrine, the public record, and your own two eyes.