

**University of Wisconsin-Madison
La Follette School of Public Affairs**

PA 869: LF Capstone Project
Spring 2008, TH 1:20-3:20 pm
Office Hours TH 12:00-1:15 pm
Location: 4308 SOC SCI or My LF Office

Instructor: Susan Webb Yackee, Ph.D.
Phone: 608-265-6017; Office: La Follette RM 205
Email: syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu

This workshop is the capstone course for La Follette students engaged in the study of policy analysis. After having completed a course in policy analysis, this course will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about program and policy analysis by conducting a policy analysis for an actual client. Students will in effect now put their policy analysis skills into practice and learn more about doing so by doing policy analysis for a major client. Although the term *policy analysis* covers a wide range of activities and perspectives, its essence involves the development, design, and assessment of existing or potential public policies. A good policy analyst should be able to function as a generalist, thus the objective of the course is to help prepare you to offer useful advice to policymakers on a wide range of issues regardless of your specific interest. Thus, like any policy analysts, these projects will be driven to a great degree by the informational and analysis needs of our clients.

The course will use the theory and the methodological tools of economic, political, and statistical analysis that you have acquired in previous courses. Prerequisites assumed are PA 818, PA 874, PA 880, and PA 873. Please talk to me if you have not fulfilled all the course prerequisites. The vast majority of the class will be spent working in teams on projects, and I will meet separately with each team on a regular basis to ensure proper progress. In addition to the major policy analysis projects, students will be required to complete 48-hour exercise and a few other individual assignments.

Tasks

48 Hour Exercise. A characteristic of most policy analyst and public administration jobs is the frequent need to respond very quickly to a request for advice, often on issues about which you have no prior knowledge. In class on the date specified below, you will be given a short description of a public policy problem that Congress has recently dealt with or that will soon be on their agenda. You will have 48 hours to analyze the problem and write a short decision memo recommending a course of action to the chair or the ranking minority member of a congressional committee. More details will be provided in class. The exercise is worth 15% of your grade.

Other Individual Assignments. Students will also be asked to complete individual assignments in addition to the 48 hour exercise. Unless otherwise specified, you will be allowed (in fact, you are encouraged) to discuss all assignments with other students, however, your written memorandum must be entirely by your own hand. The projects are: the peer review of other projects, individual background context paper, and the visual display of data assignment.

Group Project. Each team project will receive a grade depending on the quality of the final report, as well as on the adherence to the process, including meeting deadlines, attendance at team meetings and attentiveness to draft requirements (formatting and content requirements). A large percentage of the course grade will be based on your team project. 5% of this grade will stem from the Work Cited page, 5% from the First Draft, 5% will result from the Second Draft, 30% of this grade will be the Final Draft, and 5% will be the in-class PowerPoint presentation.

Each team member will also be asked to submit a confidential evaluation of the individual contributions of each of his or her fellow team members. These evaluations will constitute 15% of your final grade. I note that the majority of the work in this class is group-oriented. It is the responsibility of each group member to encourage and maintain strong group membership and participation throughout the semester.

Note About Group Projects

Projects of insufficient quality or content, as assessed by me, will not be distributed to clients.

Grading Summary

<i>Individual Projects</i>		<i>Group Projects</i>	
48 Hour Exercise	15%	First Draft	5%
Other Individual Projects	5%	Second Draft	5%
Peer Review of Other Projects	5%	Works Cited	5%
(Individual) Project Context Paper	10%	Final Draft	30%
Peer and Self Evaluation	15%	In-Class Presentation	5%

Other Information

Late Assignments. All assignments that are not provided to me at the beginning of class (or when requested, as per the syllabus) will be reduced by 20% automatically. Assignments will then be deducted by another 20% for each additional day late (beginning at 8 AM the next day). I do not accept assignments via email unless otherwise authorized by me. Please do not slide assignments under my door or place them in my mailbox. If you must provide an assignment to me, and I am not in my office, then do not move forward without receiving a signature and a time stamp from a secretary or other office personnel. Without this time stamp and signature, I will not “accept” the document.

Expectations for Academic Integrity. I expect a full adherence to UW’s code of academic integrity. I also expect that you will acknowledge all ideas that are not your own through proper citation. Please put all direct quotes in quotations. This issue is very important. Any accepted format for citation may be used as long as it is used consistently. You may want to follow the style format of a major public administration journal, such as, *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, or *Administration and Society*.

There is to be no cheating in this course – be it via plagiarism or some other form of falsification. Students who do not adhere to the highest levels of integrity may receive no credit on assignment or exam (i.e. a zero), fail the course, or suffer the more extreme consequences of some other action, depending on the action.

Disabilities. People with disabilities will be fully included in this course. Please inform me if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to participate fully. Confidentiality of the shared information will be strictly maintained. Certain accommodations may require the assistance of the UW’s McBurney Disability Office - <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>

Email. I will return emails from students within three business days.

Readings. Will be distributed by the instructor or made available for copying purposes. There is no textbook for this class. Depending on your projects, I may assign additional readings to groups.

Thank you and Acknowledgement. I would like to thank Professors Moynihan and Holden for sharing past work and experience regarding this course with me.

**Dr. Susan Yackee – Spring 2008
LF Capstone Project**

Schedule of Activities

Thursday January 24

Class Meets

Introduction, Discussion of Projects, and
Student Rank Preferences

[Friday January 25]

[Assignment to Project. SY emails groups. Email Syllabus.]

Thursday January 31

Teams Meet with SY

Exchange contact info and teams establish email listserves

Team 1- 1:30 to 1:50

Team 2- 2:00 to 2:20

Team 3- 2:30 to 2:50

Team 4- 3:00 to 3:20

Individual Assignment Due: Read two reports written last year for PA 869 (Domestic): 1) Transportation Utility Fees AND 2) Vehicle Use by Employees. The reports can be found on the LF webpage. Prepare ½ page written critique of each report.

Friday February 1

Milwaukee Trip

Thursday February 7

Teams Meet with SY

Research in Groups and Writing Module

Individual Reading Assignment Due:

*Dan Bednarz and Donna J. Wood, "Policy Analysis and Teams: People, Tasks, and Trust," in *Research in Teams: A Practical Guide to Group Policy Analysis*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall, 1991), 3-15.

*Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 1995. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 7: "Making Good Arguments: An Overview," pp. 88-93.

SY emails class graphing assignment

Thursday February 14

Class Meets

Karen FASTER in class to discuss Works Cited page

Introduce 48 Hour Exercise

Graphics Module

Individual Reading Assignment Due:

*Howard Wainer, "Understanding Graphs and Tables," *Educational Researcher*, Jan./Feb. 1992.

*Aaron Wildavsky, "Analysis as Art" from *Speaking Truth to Power*, pp. 1-19.

Individual Assignment Due: Graphing assignment.

Individual Assignment Due: Project Context Paper - Two page paper detailing background of organization, context, problem statement, and assembling evidence. Do not consult with other group members on this assignment. Bring six copies of this paper to class.

Thursday February 21

Teams Meet with SY

Individual Assignment Due: Read teammates' Project Context Papers. These papers should be read in advance of your completion of the team assignment memo.

Team Assignment Due: One page memo detailing break out of work required for project, including revised problem statement. One page "Schedule of Work Activities" with target dates and people assigned to action steps. Bring to group meeting.

[Wednesday February 27]

SY emails you the 48 Hour Exercise at 1:00 pm

Thursday February 28

Prep Time

[Friday February 29]

Individual Assignment Due: Email your 48 Hour Exercise to SY by 1:00 pm.

Thursday March 6

Teams Meet with SY

Team Assignment Due: Revised version of one page memo detailing break out of work required for project, including problem statement. Revised one page "Schedule of Work Activities" with target dates and people assigned to action steps. We will discuss the distribution of these documents to your client.

Thursday March 13

Teams Meet with SY

Thursday March 20

No Class – Spring Break

[Monday March 24]

Team Assignment Due: **First Draft** of team project due. Email copies to me, client, and peer reviewers by 11:59 pm.

[Wednesday March 26]

Peer Reviewers Send Feedback by Email to Team and CC: me by 11:59 pm.

Thursday March 27

Teams Meet with SY

Discuss changes to First Draft

Thursday April 3

Prep Time

[Monday April 7]

Team Assignment Due: **Second Draft** of team project due. Email copy to be and Karen Fester by 11:59 pm. Please include a coverage page that lists the team members with full contact information, title of report, and name of client. Draft must follow class style guidelines. Note:

Work Cited list must be complete, consistent, and cross-referenced with the paper. Thus, every source in the report must be in the reference list, and every item in the reference list must be cited in the paper. Draft must follow style guidelines discussed in class. Even minor deviations from the correct guidelines provided in class will result in grade deductions. This version of your Works Cited page will be graded.

Team Assignment Due: ½ page Memo to me relating the date, time, and city of presentation to Client. Indicate probably time of presentation, travel time necessary to reach site, and travel arrangements. In this memo, provide the number of reports to print for the client. Email copy to me and Karen FASTER by 11:59 pm.

Thursday April 10

Teams Meet with SY

Discuss changes to Second Draft

Thursday April 17

Prep Time

[Two Weeks Before Presentations]

Team Assignment Due: **Final Reports** are due by 10 a.m. in La Follette Publications Office two weeks before scheduled presentation with all reports due no later than 10 a.m. on Thursday May 1. For exact date, confer with SY (and Karen FASTER). Each team must turn in to Karen FASTER:

- hard copy of report
- electronic copy of report
- separate Excel files for all figures and tables
- word-processing file with title of report, and names of client and authors as they should appear on cover
- three to four sentences that summarize the report for the school's web site
- acknowledgements
- final PowerPoint slides

Thursday April 24

Teams Meet with SY

Team Assignment Due: Discuss PowerPoint slides.

Thursday May 1

Class Meets

Team Assignment Due: Present Presentations to Class. Arrange time for SY presentation feedback before formal presentation.

Individual Assignment Due: Peer and Self Evaluation. Please email me this document by 10 AM.

Thursday May 8

Prep Time

[Monday May 5 to Friday May 16]

Likely Window for Presentations to Client

~Sunday May 18

Commencement