

WORKSHOP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Public Affairs 869, Spring 2008, Th. 1:20-3:15,
Meeting most often in Soc. Science 4308. Room 2165 Grainger available for group meetings

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The Workshop in Public Affairs is the capstone course for La Follette students in the Masters in Public Affairs program. It is designed to provide the practical applications of skills acquired during the previous three semesters of course work. While many La Follette courses have students working on real world problems, often for actual clients, this course is designed specifically to have students work *as a team* on a policy issue proposed by an actual client before whom you will present your report. As in the public policy world, you will work in a team with individuals selected based on relevant skills and knowledge to produce a report that is well documented, well written and edited, and extremely professional in content and appearance. The report is being written for the client and thus will require students working with the clients to discover the best way to approach the issue and explore it in a way most useful for the client's purposes. Because a good policy analyst must be able to function as a generalist, 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. While effort has been made to find projects consistent with the diversity of La Follette students' interests, a challenge for each student will be to discover how to add value to the analysis using the student's particular skills and knowledge.

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 880 and Public Affairs 873 (concurrent enrollment in the last is OK). Please talk to me if you have not fulfilled all the course prerequisites.

During the first part of the course we will devote some class time to learning or refining some of the skills that provide the foundation for conducting policy analysis. For most of the rest of the semester, students will spend their time working in teams on projects, and I will meet separately with each team on a regular basis.

The class times are for both all-class meetings and to assure the all members of a group are available to meet during that period as a group separately, with their clients or with me. Hence, **DO NOT** make any other appointments during the scheduled class period. Most meetings will be in Social Science 4308. The Grainger Hall class is available for group meetings on days when the full class does not meet and for class meetings when Section 1 must use the Social Science classroom.

You **MUST** be registered in the section of the instructor responsible for the project. If you initially registered in the other section, change your section. This is to assure your receiving emails that are sent out to the individual section and that you are graded by your section's instructor.

Tasks

Forty-eight 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, each student 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. Memos will be due as specified below. The 48 hour exercise is worth 20% of your grade.

Other Individual Assignments. Students will also be asked to complete three individual assignments in addition to the 48 hour exercise. 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 review of 2007 Workshop reports (5%), the background statement (5%) and the visual display of data assignment (5%).

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). Approximately 50% percent of the course grade will be based on your team project. Responses to draft critiques and suggestions will lead to students having the full 55% of the grade based on the grading of the final report. Failure to respond to critiques will have grades on a prior draft calculated into the grade.

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 10% 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.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES AND WEIGHTING

<i>Individual Assignments (NG=no grade given)</i>		<i>Due Date</i>
Project ranking	NG	January 24
#1: Review of 2007 Projects	5%	January 31
#2: Background and Policy Context	5%	February 5
#3: 48 Hour Exercise	20%	February 21-22
#4: Peer evaluation of team project	5%	April 14
#5: Peer and Professor Evaluation	10%	After Client Presentation
TOTAL FOR INDIVIDUAL WORK	45%	
<i>Team Assignments</i>		
#1: Problem Statement	NG	February 13
#2: Work Plan	NG	February 28
#3: Revised Statement/Policy	NG	March 6
#4: Presenting Visual Date	5%	March 27
#5: First Draft	10%	April 7
#6: Second Draft (including citations)	15%	April 21
#7: Power Point	NG	April 24
#8: Final Draft	25%	No later than May 1
TOTAL FOR TEAM WORK	55%	

NG=not graded

Course Materials:

Textbooks: Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, CQ Press, 2004. This book is available at the Underground Textbook Exchange, 664 State St.

Other assigned readings are posted on the course web page at <https://learnuw.wisc.edu/>

There are several resources that students should access as needed. Do not be shy about doing so as many of these services are designed specifically for graduate students engaged in academic and professional research and report writing.

The Writing Center: the main web site is at: www.wisc.edu/writing. There are some excellent writing handouts at <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html>

The Library: For searching material and list of workshops: <http://library.wisc.edu/>. If any group feels they need a review of library research and information on organizing reference material, please see me as we may find we need one.

Software Training: There is free training for students. If you are not very familiar with Excel and Power point, I urge you to sign up or have at least one member of your team do so. . See <http://www.doit.wisc.edu/training/student/index.aspx>. There are several timely courses in excel and power point.

Other Information

Late Assignments. Assignments are due on the assigned date, at the class or team meeting when due on a Thursday or by 10 a.m. on non-Thursdays. All assignments not given to me on time will be reduced by half a grade automatically. Each additional day late, without my permission, will be reduced by another half a grade for each additional day late. Assignments should be delivered by email with hard copies in addition when requested.

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. This issue is **very** important. Refer to writing center web site for plagiarism subtleties.

Disabilities/conflicts. 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/>

Course Schedule and Assignments

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics and Assignments</u>
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| 1. | Jan. 24 | (both sections meet together--4308 Social Science)
All class meeting: <u>Introduction</u>
project discussion
students rank preferences |
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DUE IN CLASS: Resume to be brought to and handed in at class.

Jan 25. *Assignments made to project teams by the end of the day and assignments sent to both sections. Be sure your DoIT email is current. Arrange meeting with main client contact over the next two week, ideally Feb 7-14.*

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| 2. | Jan 31 | All class meeting: <u>What is Policy Analysis?</u>
Discussion of project goals and initial project statements
Discussion of 2007 projects |
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Read:

Juliet Musso, Robert Biller, and Robert Myrtle, "Tradecraft: Professional Writing as Problem Solving," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, vol. 19, no. 4 (2000): 636-646.

You may also wish to refresh your memory by reviewing: David Weimer, "Professional Writing: The Policy Memorandum" (September 2006).

Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, 2nd edition (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2005), 1–59.

Jan 31: Individual assignment # 1 due in class: Do the assigned readings and then read one of the reports that were written last year spring for Public Affairs 869 (domestic issues, my section). They are available online at <http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/publications/workshops.html>. Write a short (2 page) critique of it. In writing your critiques consider how closely the authors have followed Bardach's policy analysis model and Musso et al's writing guidelines.

3. Feb. 7 Team meetings in my office and group meetings.

Read:

- 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, Pentice Hall, 1991), 3-15.

February 5: Individual assignment # 2 due (10 a.m.): Write a memo describing the background and policy importance of your Team Project, key policy issues and probable important evidence. Write 2-3 pages (not including any tables you might wish to include) on this background and context for input into the group project.

4. Feb. 14 Team meetings in my office

Read: 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.

February 13th. Team assignment #1: Each team must prepare a problem statement including background justifying investigation of the problem. These should be sent to me via email by 10 a.m. By this date you should have contacted your client about meeting to review the project intent. If you have had that meeting, your statement should reflect that meeting's discussions. This statement will be first reviewed by me and then sent to your client for comment.

5. Feb. 19-21 **No class meeting this week—Individual assignment #3: 48 hour exercise.**
Tuesday 3:00 p.m. Exercise pick up, La Follette conference room
Thursday 3:00 p.m. Email deadline for exercise delivery.

6. Feb. 28 **All class meeting:** Editor's dreams
 Karen Faster discusses editorial requirements for team policy reports. These are also summarized online at <http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/publications/style.pdf>.

Read: David L. Weimer and Aidan R. Vining, "Toward Professional Ethics, in *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*, 4th edition (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005), 39–53.

Team assignment # 2: Each team should prepare a project work plan draft, listing tasks and responsibilities. The plan should be specific about project tasks and how they will be accomplished and by whom. Discuss challenges you can now identify and what assistance you expect to need and from whom.

7. March 6 **Team Meetings with instructor.**

We will go over your work plan and how you have worked with your clients.

Team assignment #3: Bring revised problem statements and work plan drafts.

8. March 13 **Team Meetings with instructor**
This is the final meeting before the first draft is due. Any issues of analysis, writing, cooperation need to be brought up and discussed. You should already be writing your draft at this point.
9. March 20 No class: *spring break*
10. March 27 **All class meeting:** Visually Displaying Data
Team Assignment #4: Analysis and display of data. "Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words?"
- Read:
- Howard Wainer, "Understanding Graphs and Tables," *Educational Researcher*, Jan./Feb. 1992. <http://www.jstor.org/view/0013189x/ap040209/04a00040/0>
 - Jack Hartley, "A Postscript to Wainer's "Understanding Graphs and Tables." <http://www.jstor.org/view/0013189x/ap040213/04a00080/0>
 - Aaron Wildavsky, "Analysis as Art" from *Speaking Truth to Power*, pp. 1-19.
 - Bardach, Part II: Gathering Data for Policy Research and Part III: "Smart (Best) Practices" Research.
11. April 3 **Team Meetings with instructor**
- Monday April 7 **Team assignment #5: First drafts of team projects including citations**
12. April 10 **Team Meetings with instructor**
April 14 –Individual assignment #4 Peer review of team project. Submit review to authors with copy to me no later than 10:00 a.m.
13. April 17 No meeting
April 21: Team assignment #6 Second draft of team project due (with hard copy due by noon to Karen FASTER).
14. April 24 Team meetings in my office
Team Assignment #7 (send by 10 a.m.)
Power Point presentation draft due
Title and client name(s) as it will appear on front page is to be finalized.
15. May 1 In-class PowerPoint practice presentations of final reports to faculty and staff.
Team Assignment #8: Final report (at the latest by this date)
16. May 8 In-class Power Point practice presentations of final reports to faculty and staff.

Presentations to clients (as scheduled early in the semester)

(FYI: Commencement is May 17)

Note: **Individual assignment #5:** Peer evaluation of individual contributions will be emailed immediately after final presentation to clients.

More Information on content and delivery of Team Project Reports

If not scheduled due at class, all reports and assignments are due by 10a.m. on the day specified.

Preliminary problem statement. This should be submitted via email attachment (word). The statement should include the correct and complete name of the client as it will appear on the cover of the report.

Detailed project work plan, listing expected tasks (e.g., background work, data collection, analysis, writing, topic allocation), responsibility of team members, and dates for each. This should reflect feedback by instructor and client on problem statements. This document should be continuously revised over the semester as you modify your work plan. This should be submitted via email attachment (word).

First draft: This should be submitted via email attachment (word) to both me and to Karen FASTER (kfaster@lafollette.wisc.edu) plus a hard copy in each of our mailboxes.

In addition, each team must send by email the following information to both of us:

- list of team members, their phone numbers and e-mail addresses; indicate KF's main contact.
- title of report and name of client
- date, time and city of presentation. If presentation is not in Madison or Milwaukee, indicate the probable time and day of departure.
- number of reports to print for client

Second draft. This should be submitted via email attachment (word) to both me and to Karen FASTER (kfaster@lafollette.wisc.edu) plus a hard copy in each of our mailboxes.

- Reference list must be complete and punctuated correctly and consistently.
- 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.

Power Point presentation draft: This should be submitted via email attachment (word) to me.

Final report: Due date will be specified for each project or by 10 a.m. on May 1, whichever is earliest

Each team must turn in:

To both Karen FASTER and me:

- Electronic and hard copy of report
- Three to four sentences that summarize the report for the school's web site
- Acknowledgments (can be included in report's word-processing file)
- Executive summary (can be included in report's word-processing file)

To Karen FASTER only:

- separate Excel files for all figures and tables sent to Karen FASTER
- separate word-processing file with title of report, and names of client and authors as they should appear on cover to Karen FASTER
- Final electronic version of Power Point for web site.

(if this separation is too confusing, just send all to both of us).