

## Public Affairs 869: Workshop in Public Affairs

**Section 2**  
**Wed 4:00PM - 5:55PM**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**Class: Room 6116**  
**Team Meetings: 4405**

**Prof. Karen Holden**  
**Room 4407 SS**  
**Office Hours: Wed 10:00-11:00**  
**Tel: (608) 263-9283**  
**Email: [kcholden@wisc.edu](mailto:kcholden@wisc.edu)**

**Note that Team meeting will be in the CDE Conference Room 4405, next to my office**  
**NOTE: Most up-to-date Syllabus will always be posted on course website.**

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### General Course Information

The Workshop in Public Affairs is the capstone course for students in the La Follette Masters of Public Affairs (MPA) program. The course applies the tools of political, economic, and statistical analysis, acquired over prior semesters of course work, to actual problems faced by public sector clients. Students refine their skills as policy analysts by doing policy analysis. As in the public policy world, students work in teams with individuals selected based on relevant skills and knowledge in order 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 requires students to work consistently throughout the semester with the clients to discover the best way to approach the issue and write results in a format most useful for the clients' purposes while maintaining the integrity of the policy research process.

Although the term *policy analysis* covers a wide range of activities and perspectives, its essence involves the development, design, and assessment of public policies. While effort has been made to find projects consistent with the diversity of La Follette students' policy interests, the intent is not to provide students with policy experience in their own policy area, but rather to discover how to add value to an analysis using their particular skills and knowledge. A good policy analyst should be able to function as a generalist, thus the objective of the course is to help prepare students to offer useful advice to policymakers on a wide range of issues.

The first part of the course discusses how to work as a group with individuals defined by skills and interest, rather than by friendship or prior joint-research experiences and how to work with clients in defining what the group will be able to provide that is consistent with clients' expectations/needs. Subsequent classroom and individual team meetings will be spent refining some of the skills that provide the foundation for conducting policy analysis. For most of the semester, however, students will spend their time working in teams on policy analysis projects. I will meet separately with each team on a regular basis.

Although the class as a whole does not meet every week students are expected to always keep this time available for meetings with me, their clients, their project team, or with Karen FASTER, editor. The assigned classroom will always be available for team meetings when the class is not meeting together. DO NOT make any other appointments during the scheduled class period, even when no class is scheduled.

**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/>

**Section Registration:**

The project on which you work determines the PA 869 section for which you must be registered. 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.

## Course Components

**Team Project.** The heart of the Workshop is the Group Project. As the instructor for the Workshop, my responsibility is to set up the projects, provide guidance as needed, provide targeted feedback, and evaluate the end products. Thus, while I provide general oversight for the projects, the students meet with the client to decide on the specific issues to be addressed and devise a work plan and implement it.

The students in sections 1 and 2 will work on six different projects. During the first class meeting students will fill out a questionnaire asking about their experiences and skills and their project preferences among all six projects. Professor Reschovsky and I will take account of the responses in assigning students to a project team. The final product of the semester is a final report, which is closely edited by Karen FASTER and also read by Terry Shelton, before your final edits and submission to the client. As a final step the members of each team will make an oral PowerPoint presentation to the class and to your client. The syllabus specifies required drafts and components of the report.

**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. On the date indicated on the syllabus you will receive 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 are due as scheduled with no late receipt allowed except for dire emergencies.

**Other Individual Assignments.** Students will also be asked to complete several individual assignments, including two that involve review of prior and this year's project reports. These may be discussed among yourselves, but your written memorandum must be entirely by your own hand.

**Grading:** Approximately 70 percent of the course grade will be based on the team project work, 20 percent on the 48-hour exercise, and 10 percent on other individual written assignments. Each team project will receive a final project grade depending on the quality of the final report. Twice during the semester each team member will also be asked to submit confidential evaluations of the individual contributions of each of his or her fellow team members. These evaluations will occur midway through the semester and at the end of the semester. The team project grade received by an individual student reflects the overall project grade and any adjustment that may be made to reflect either particularly strong or weak contributions to the final team report.

## Other Information

**Course Materials:**

Textbooks: Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, (Fourth edition). CQ Press, 2011.

Additional required readings are available on the course web site accessible through *learn@UW*.

**Ethics and Confidentiality:** La Follette requires that the student teams maintain the highest level of ethics and integrity throughout the Capstone Course experience. This includes observing research ethics, including meeting human subjects requirements for research, and holding your work in confidence. The Human Subjects policy is posted on the Learn@UW website.

Students will also be asked to sign a “Confidentiality Agreement.” This agreement will be strictly enforced. This agreement states: “The ideas, concepts, data, and recommendations generated in the process of conducting the Workshop’s team projects are confidential and are to be used for the purposes of the client and for the educational experience provided in the Workshop only. Accordingly, they may not be passed on to any third party, either directly or indirectly, without the prior consent of the Workshop Instructor and the client. This includes any verbal discussions of the project, and any dissemination of draft or final documents.” Consequently, one topic to be discussed by each team is how project documents are to be shared and posted.

It is important you acknowledge all ideas that are not your own through proper citation. This issue is **very** important but it is not always easy to identify when rephrased thoughts and ideas must be acknowledged. Refer to writing center web site for plagiarism subtleties. In adhering to rules for proper citation it is important to be aware when taking notes in meetings, when ideas must be attributed to other individuals.

*Be sure your DoIT email is current* as all emails will be sent to the class list.

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### Course Schedule and Assignments

(Note: The team project deadlines are the latest deadlines allowed.  
These may change as each team establishes a task & presentation schedule.)

| <u>Week</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Topics and Assignments</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|

1. January 25: **Sections 1 and 2 meet together in Social Science 6116.**  
Students fill out background questionnaire and indicate project preferences.

Jan 27. *Assignments to project teams posted on Learn@UW.*

2. February 1: Individual Team meetings with KH. Read project description and begin to draft the assignment described below.

*Time of Team Meetings: DNR 4 – 4:35; DCF 4:40 – 5:15; Leg Council 5:20 – 5:55 (this is the proposed order for all Team meetings, subject to shifting if necessary for client 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, Prentice Hall, 1991), 3-15.

“Public Affairs Workshops and Human Subjects Review” available on the course web site.

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.

*Access IRB student training (see memo on Learn@UW) and send me documentation of completion of training or bring to Feb 1 meeting. Prior training suffices, but you must provide documentation..*

**Due February 3: Team assignment #1:** The team must draft a 1-2 page problem statement including background justifying investigation, key issues, and thoughts on potential tasks and

responsibilities, including individual interest in working on particular issues. These should be sent to me via email by noon. These should be done using the information provided by the client's project description and other relevant materials.

3. February 8: All class meeting: Discussion of prior PA869 projects; Ethical Issues in Research

**Read:** Bardach, Part I: The Eight-Fold Path

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

**Individual assignment # 1 due in class:** On the class web site will be posted assignment to reading one of three reports previously written for Public Affairs 869, Holden section. These are available at <http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/publications/workshops.html>. Write a short (2 page) critique. In writing your critiques consider how closely the authors have followed Bardach's policy analysis model and Musso et al's writing guidelines. Consider any human subjects issues that may have arisen in the conduct of the research. This can be joint work.

**Teams:** By this date you should have contacted your client about setting up your first meeting.

4. February 15: **Individual team meetings:** Project problem statements, human subjects issues, confidentiality concerns

**Team assignment # 2:** Based on the earlier draft and discussion with client, each team is to prepare a **project problem statement and work plan**, listing tasks and responsibilities. The plan should be specific about project tasks and how they will be accomplished and by whom. The tasks should reflect the problem statement and key issues. Discuss challenges you can now identify and what assistance you expect to need and from whom. By this date you should have the "background material" for your project well in hand. **Send to me by email attachment (not .pdf) by 10 a.m. on February 15.**

5. Feb. 22-24 **Individual assignment #2: 48 hour exercise. Assignments sent or posted on Learn@UW by noon on February 22. Memo is due no later than 3:30 on February 24.**

READ: J. Patrick Dobel, Richard F. Elmore and Laurie Werner, "Memoranda Writing," unpublished paper;  
David Weimer, "Professional Writing: The Policy Memorandum" (September 2006)

Email your Memo to KH. Send a word version. I will respond if it is not readable.

6. Feb. 29 **Team Meetings with instructor.**

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

Read Read Bardach, Part II: Assembling Evidence and Part III: "Smart (Best) Practices" Research;

7. March 7 **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>. During the second part of class we will share issues faced in dealing with client, constructing an analysis plan. This is where class members can share skills or help resolve dilemmas across projects.

8. Week of March 14 **Team Meetings with instructor.** You should already be writing your first draft at this point. Meeting to review adherence to work plans and any needed updates to that plan and outline of first draft.

**Team assignment #3** (March 12): Send KH revised problem statements and work plan drafts.

Buzz Breedlove, "The Continuing Education of a Policy Salesman," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Winter 2002.

9. March 21: **Team Meeting with instructor:** Addressing issues before the first draft is due of analysis, writing, team member cooperation.

10. March 28 **All class meeting:** Visually Displaying Data

**Team Assignment #4:** Analysis and display of data. Each team will prepare a graph and table that they are likely to use in their project presentation.

Read:

- Howard Wainer (1992). "Understanding Graphs and Tables," *Educational Researcher*, 21 (1): 14-23.
- Jack Hartley (1992) "A Postscript to Wainer's "Understanding Graphs and Tables." *Educational Researcher*, 21 (5): 25-26.
- Read "Presenting Like a Pro," adapted by Alice Honeywell from Lani Arredondo, *How To Present Like a Pro: Getting People To See Things Your Way* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1991).

11. **April 4** No class: *spring break*

12. April 11 **Team Meeting with Karen Faster followed by team meetings with instructor:** First draft discussion, checking references, visuals, tables.

April 10 (10a.m.) **Team assignment #5:** First drafts of team projects (including citations and preliminary tables, graphs)—sent to KH, KF, and individual reviewers.

April 16 (10a.m.)—**Individual assignment #3** Peer review of team project. Submit review to authors with copy to me.

13. April 18 **Team Meeting with instructor:** "how to take account of the (perhaps conflicting) critiques."

April 23: **Team assignment #6 (10 a.m.) Second draft of team project due** (with hard copy to Karen Faster).

14. April 25 No Meeting

April 27: **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 2 Team Meeting in my office.  
**Team Assignment #8: Final report (at the latest by this date)**

16. May 9 In-class Power Point practice presentations of final reports to faculty and staff.

**Presentations to clients (as scheduled early in the semester)—likely window: May 9-14**

Note: **Individual assignment #4:** Peer evaluation of individual contributions will be emailed immediately after final presentation to clients.

### **More Information on content and delivery of Team Project Reports**

**Email:** as Word or Excel attachments. Meeting email deadlines requires confirmation of receipt. All attachments should be word documents. I cannot edit a .pdf document, which you may submit if you worry about a .doc not showing consistent formatting between computers. In that case, submit both.

**Mailbox:** I have more than one, so it is important you specify in which one any hard copy assignment is placed: my La Follette mailbox or the one across from my Social Science office.

**Preliminary problem statement.** This should be submitted via email attachment (word).

**Project work plan draft,** 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 me 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). The statement should include the correct and complete name of the client as you expect it to appear on the cover of the report

**REPORT DRAFTS:** An important part of a team project is to determine draft due dates. Those on the syllabus are “required by.” Individual teams may set earlier delivery dates.

**First draft:** This should be submitted via email attachment (word) to both me and to the students assigned to critique your draft report, plus a hard copy in my La Follette mailbox. In addition, each team must send by email the following information to both Karen FASTER ([kfaster@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:kfaster@lafollette.wisc.edu)) and me:

- Full and correct name of team members as you’d like it to appear on the report, phone numbers and e-mail addresses; indicate which team member is to be Karen FASTER’s main contact for editing issues.
- Full title of report and name correct, full 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](mailto:kfaster@lafollette.wisc.edu)) plus a hard copy in each of our La Follette 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 to me.

**Final report: Due date will be specified for each project or by May 2 at 10 a.m.**

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)
- [Note: The Foreword is written by Karen Holden and sent separately]

To Karen Faster only:

- Excel files for all figures and tables

To Karen Holden and Karen Fast:

- Final electronic version of Power Point presentation.

#### ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

##### *Individual Assignments*

|                                     | <i>Due Date</i>                               |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| #1: Review of 2010 Projects         | February 8                                    |
| #2: 48 Hour Exercise                | February 22-24                                |
| #3: Peer evaluation of team project | April 16                                      |
| #4: Peer Evaluation                 | Midway in course and after final presentation |

##### *Team Assignments*

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| #1: Draft Problem Statement & Work Plan | February 3  |
| #2: Project Work Plan Draft             | February 15 |
| #3: Revised Statement/work plan         | March 12    |
| #4: Visual Display of Data              | March 28    |
| #5: First Draft                         | April 9     |
| #6: Second Draft (including citations)* | April 23    |
| #7: Power Point Draft                   | April 25    |
| #8: Final Draft*                        | May 2       |
| #9 Practice Presentation                | May 9       |

**Note: These are the latest due dates for team assignments. Earlier submissions allow for more careful feedback and response. Individual project work plans and the timing of final presentations to clients may lead to some earlier due dates.**

\* Grades on these drafts take into account Karen Faster's check sheets on team's meeting the formatting requirements and responsiveness to her questions. The final team report grade takes into account quality of earlier drafts and responsiveness to peer, client, and my feedback.