Spring 2017

University of Wisconsin-Madison
La Follette School of Public Affairs

PA 869 I & II: Workshop in Public Affairs-Domestic Issues (Collins and O’Brien)
PA 860: Workshop in Public Affairs- International (Smeeding)
Time: Mondays 8:50AM - 10:45AM

Location:
SOC SCI 5231 (Both Courses – All Sections for Lecture days)
(Note: if we meet at alternate locations you will be notified via the course website)

Instructors:
J. Michael Collins jmcollins@wisc.edu PA 869 (Section 001)
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Timothy Smeeding, smeeding@lafollette.wisc.edu PA 860

General Course Information
The La Follette Workshop in Public Affairs is an opportunity for La Follette students, under the supervision of a faculty member, to work within teams for clients in the public, non-profit, or private sectors. Traditionally, clients approach the La Follette School with a particular policy-related issue or problem facing their organization. After some initial negotiations, the Workshop instructor assigns one of the student teams to investigate the issue, formulate a report, and present their findings in front of the client. The entire project—from inception to finalized report—is completed within a single semester. The main goal of these reports is to generate a useful and easy to understand piece of original research, which answers the specific policy-related question(s) of a “real client.”

The Instructor’s Role
As instructor for the Workshop Course, it is our responsibility to set-up the projects, provide structure for the course, provide targeted feedback, and evaluate the end products. Thus, while we provide general oversight for the projects, the students devise and implement the evaluation project.

We will provide basic guidance on project management, report format, the use of visual data, and presentations in a classroom setting. We will not meet every week as a class, and there will be relatively few lectures. On weeks where there is not a meeting in a classroom, we expect that each group will have a standing meeting with their instructor. Please let us know if there are any unexpected and/or important developments during project implementation. We will be as supportive as possible and will work to resolve issues as they arise.

Be prepared to work: the workshop is demanding and fast-paced from the start. Before we first meet on January 23, students will be asked to choose a project and be assigned a team to work together throughout the semester to produce an analytic policy report. Students are expected to meet in teams and/or with their consulting instructor regularly outside of assigned class times.
Reading
Required reading materials beyond those required for team projects will be posted at the course website. There is one required reading—it is a paperback that costs around $15: *Stone, Douglas, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen. Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most. Penguin, 2010.*

Ethics and Confidentiality
The La Follette School requires that the student teams maintain the highest level of ethics and integrity throughout the Workshop Course experience.

To participate in the Workshop Course, students must sign a “Confidentiality Agreement.” This agreement will be strictly enforced. This agreement states: “The ideas, concepts, data, and recommendations generated within the Workshop Course are confidential and are to be used for the purposes of the client and for the educational experience provided within the Workshop Course only. Accordingly, they may not 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, all project-related documents must be secured on password-protected computers or password-protected Internet-based websites.

The La Follette School requires that students observe University research ethics, including meeting human subjects requirements for research. If you have not completed the human subjects module and test at the university’s IRB website, please do so.

A La Follette Student Experience
The Workshop Course will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about program and policy analysis by conducting a policy analysis (or program evaluation) for an actual client. Students will, in effect, put their policy analysis skills into practice and learn more about completing a project for a real 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.

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 us if you have not fulfilled all the course prerequisites. The vast majority of the class will be spent working in teams on projects, and we will meet separately with each team on a regular basis to ensure proper progress. In addition to the reports, students will be required to complete a number of other individual assignments and readings.

The final report Approximately 25-pages shall be allocated to the report itself, while no more than 25-pages shall be allocated to report appendices. Appendix information should be of as high of quality as the main report, and contain information that substantially supports and enhances the main report. All reports must be formatted as indicated by the La Follette Publication guidelines.
Reports of insufficient quality or content, as assessed by the instructors, will not be distributed to clients. Projects that do not conform to the La Follette School’s high standard of ethics or the class’s confidentiality agreement will not be distributed to the clients. Some group projects may be posted on the La Follette School webpage, while others may not.

**Self and Peer Evaluations.** It is the responsibility of each group member to encourage and maintain strong group membership and participation throughout the semester. At the end the course, 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, as interpreted by us, will be included in your final grade.

When evaluating contributions, consider the following:
- Involvement: attending and participating in meetings,
- Contributions: planning the project, specifying work, ideas, research, analysis, writing,
- Reliability: meeting deadlines, completing work, and
- Collegiality and respect for others.

If we observe team consensus about significant differences in contributions, we will raise or lower the relevant individual’s grades. We will also not serve as a positive reference for any student whose peer evaluation indicates poor performance. We may request peer reviews prior to the end of the semester in order to help guide the group and diagnose potential problems.

**Key Assignments, Grading Allocation and Deadlines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade Allocation</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality Form</td>
<td>(individual)</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Last Year’s Projects</td>
<td>5% (individual)</td>
<td>Jan 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITI Human Subjects</td>
<td>(individual)</td>
<td>Feb 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of Work Activities Memo</td>
<td>5% (group)</td>
<td>Feb 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualization Assignment</td>
<td>5% (individual)</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class Briefing</td>
<td>5% (group)</td>
<td>April 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Brief for your project</td>
<td>5% (group)</td>
<td>April 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer-to-Peer Presentation April 28th</td>
<td>5% (group)</td>
<td>April 28th (Friday- all day)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What I Learned from April 28</td>
<td>(individual)</td>
<td>May 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer and Self Evaluation</td>
<td>20% (individual)</td>
<td>May 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Report</td>
<td>50% (group)</td>
<td>Mar 17, Apr 17, May 3</td>
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**Note:** Grading on the group projects will be based upon both process and outcome. The process component of the grade includes the meeting of deadlines, attendance at team meetings, attentiveness to draft requirements, responsiveness to our suggestions and to the suggestions of others, as well as the sheer effort put forward by the team to produce an excellent product. The outcome component of the grade focuses on the overall quality of the report, including whether or not the team was able to satisfy client expectations. As a result, the mere completion of a report does not guarantee a strong grade; teams must complete an excellent report to receive an excellent grade.
**Grading Standard.**

93-100 = A  
88-92 = AB  
83-87 = B  
78-82 = BC  
70-77 = C  
70-60 = D  
<60 = F

**Working with Clients.** Working with “real” clients is often a rewarding experience. In some cases, it can also be a frustrating experience. When frustration occurs, it usually caused by mistaken or unclear expectations on the part of the client or the team. As part of the Workshop Course, it is your job to understand and appreciate your client’s expectations, and to correct any mistaken expectations early in the semester.

We require frequent communications between you and your client. For instance, we have required your team to communicate with your client seven times during the semester: (1) our initial meeting, (2) the early memo, (3) in the first draft, (4) in the second draft, (5) in the “near final” document, (6) final document, and (7) at the final presentation. Your team should have many other conversations with your clients outside of these events, as well. Your client will be providing you feedback during these communications. It is your team’s responsibility to integrate this feedback into your reports, when possible, while still retaining the integrity of the policy analysis process. When it is not possible to integrate client feedback, it is necessary to communicate with the client to ensure appropriate expectations. All interactions must be completed in a professional and timely manner. Clear communication and coordination within the team and with the client will be crucial for success.

**Expectations for Academic Integrity.** We expect a full adherence to UW’s code of academic integrity. We 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. Plagiarism or any other form of falsification is cheating and will not be tolerated. Students who do not adhere to the highest levels of integrity may receive no credit on assignment, fail the course, or suffer even more extreme consequences.

- Consult [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html), the UW Writing Center website, for subtleties about plagiarism. Ask us if you are uncertain in any instance.

**Disabilities.** People with disabilities will be fully included in this course. Please inform us 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 Center

[mcburney.wisc.edu/](mcburney.wisc.edu/)

**Collaborative Team Work.** The teams are encouraged to set up systems to manage their collaborative team work. If you need help, please talk to your instructors.

**Graduate School Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)**

All students must complete human subjects training:

- For an overview see: "Instructions for Completing CITI Human Subjects Research Training" [https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminklb/page.php?id=32559](https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminklb/page.php?id=32559)
Tentative Schedule of Activities

*** – date for assignment or team meeting with instructor, not class session

Monday January 23  Class Meeting: Introduction, Discuss Syllabus and Projects:
All sections meet together in Social Science 5231, discuss take-aways from last year’s students and tips on running a project.

Assignments:
- Review Confidentiality Agreement, Sign and Turn-in ONLINE
- Note: ALL STUDENTS will need to confirm their course registration to the appropriate section based on the consulting instructor assigned to the project.
- Listening Assignment: Listen to the “Prologue” [or first ~14 minutes...but not Acts 1-3] of This American Life episode. These first 14 minutes of the show deal with new research regarding group dynamics. The full show aired on 12/19/2008, and is called “Ruining it for the Rest of Us.” You should be able to stream the audio for free: http://www.thislife.org

*** Jan 17-Jan 30:
- Meeting with consulting instructor (please confirm at first class session)
- Prior to this meeting, your group should email your instructor any initial questions regarding group project.
  - What is unclear?
  - What do you need to know to get started?
  - What do we need to talk to your clients about before you start?
- Schedule initial client meeting
- Verify plans for data sharing and any agreements are in place

Monday Jan 30  Class meeting: Project Management
Darin Harris, Office of Quality Improvement, (tentative)

Assignments:
- Report Reviews: Read one report written last year. The reports can be found on the LFS webpage. Complete a 1 page written review/critique of one report from last year.

Reading Assignments:
- JPAM 2002 Article – Educating the Client
- Frances Cole Jones, How to Wow, Ch 3 Maximizing Meetings

*** Monday February 6  No class meeting, meet instructor at prearranged times

Assignments:
- Individual assignment: Complete student version of working with human subjects course online. Go to https://my.gradsch.wisc.edu/citi. Login with your UW netid. Identify the human subjects course (in the social and behavioral sciences) – this can be a little tricky. You want to complete the on-line “Students in Research Module” (only), which should take about 30 minutes. There will be quiz at the end of the module. Upload a PDF copy of
the completion page as evidence of your completing the course into the DROPBOX at
course website.

- **Team assignment:** A memo (2 pages or less) to detail the research question(s) and planned
data collection strategy. This memo will also contain a “Schedule of Work Activities” with
target dates and people assigned to action steps. The purpose of this memo is to update the
client on student research activities, project timing and facilitate any necessary redirection
of and feedback on the project. Bring a hard copy to instructor for feedback.

- After feedback from instructor email a revised copy of this document to your client and cc
your instructor. This must be sent by **5 pm CT Friday February 10.** Remind the client of
your deadline for feedback (approximately 1 week).

*** Monday February 13 *** No class meeting, meet instructor at prearranged times

Reading Assignments

- Musso, JPAM 2000 – Writing as Problem Solving
- Shirley Gatenio Gabel and Sheila B. Kamerman “Getting Policy Messages Across” in The

February 20

Class Meeting: Presenting Data

Reading Assignments

Economic Perspectives* 28(1): 209-234

Assignment:

- Critiques of Tables/Figures: Examine the Tables and Figures in presentations of last year’s
report (or summary set of slides available online). What did the authors do well in terms of
displaying data? What could have been better?
- Using data provided by the Professors generate a visualization and upload to the course
website. A selection of these will be displayed during class.

*** Mon February 27 *** No class, meet instructor at prearranged times

Note: Teams should be writing and collecting data.

*** Mon March 6 *** No class, meet instructor at prearranged times

*** Mon March 13 *** No class, meet instructor at prearranged times

Note: Major components of Near-Full Draft should be completed.

*** Fri March 17 *** Near-Full Draft Due.

Assignment:

- “Near-Full Draft” due. Provide to instructor and to client.
  - Client has one week to provide feedback.
- The near-full draft of the student report will be a preliminary document, and major
components of the final project may not be completed/included [such as, final
recommendations].
This draft will contain full information regarding the project’s introduction, research question(s), policy background, data analysis strategy, initial data collection, and preliminary recommendations.

- Client feedback will ensure that the student teams are on the correct track and are conceptualizing the research question(s) and information correctly.

March 18-26  No class. Spring break

*** March 27  No class, meet instructor at prearranged times

*** Mon April 3  No class, meet instructor at prearranged times.

Monday April 10  Class meeting: Presenting your findings.
Presentation skills will be practiced and discussed.

Readings
- Chris Anderson, Harvard Business Review, 2013 “How to Give a Killer Presentation” (Posted at LEARN@UW)
- Frances Cole Jones, How to Wow, Ch 6 Presentations (Posted at LEARN@UW)
- Frances Cole Jones, How to Wow, Ch 9 Answering Questions (Posted at LEARN@UW)

Group Presentation. Your group should be prepared to present your recommendations in a polished 5-minute presentation, without PowerPoint. Each team will present, receive feedback, then have a break to revise the presentation and present an improved version.

*** Mon April 17  No class.

2nd Draft due to instructors LEARN@UW

Team Assignment:
- Second major draft due, share with client. Client has one week to provide feedback. The second draft will be the most important draft document of the semester. All major substantive components will be included in this second draft, including (draft) final recommendations will be made. The client should read this draft very carefully because this is the client’s main opportunity to provide substantive feedback to the student team on their work. Please look at several past reports to make sure all necessary materials are included.
- Group Report Brief Due – 1 page
  - Prior year briefs can be found on the LFS webpage. See also the GAO brief for good models (example: http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/667783.pdf)

Friday April 28  Class meeting: Presentations of Projects – Location TBA
Note 8.30am start until mid-afternoon
- In-class presentations precede presentations to client, and will be critiqued by instructors and fellow students. Presentations will also be recorded and made available to students.
- The student teams will generate 25-minute presentations of their report and findings and will take up to 15-minutes of audience questions.
- All teams will use a similar PowerPoint “template” for their presentations (see template
from presentation slides attached to last years report).
• Presentations will be recorded on Video which you will be asked to view and give feedback on.
• We will have invited guests to provide feedback.
• These presentations, including the transitions between speakers, should be well practiced and near flawless in their execution. (We want to impress.)
• Please arrange additional time for presentation feedback from your advisor before the formal presentation as necessary.

*** Monday May 1
Individual assignment: Upload a half-page memo – “what I learned about how from watching my team’s presentation” (not graded)

*** Wednesday May 3
Draft due (final, edited for style)
copy-edit your drafts prior to being posted online, submissions will lose points if failing to follow formatting guidelines

*** Friday May 5
Individual assignments:
  o peer and self-evaluations due
  o client evaluation forms due

*** [May 1 to May 12]
Client Presentations. All students must participate in the development of client presentations and all must attend the presentation. Typically 2-3 students formally present, although this may range from 1 spokesperson to all members. Consult with faculty when scheduling presentation time.