

Spring 2019

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: Ingraham 122

Instructors:

J. Michael Collins jmcollins@wisc.edu PA 869 (Section 001)

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General Course Information

The La Follette Workshop in Public Affairs is an opportunity for La Follette School students, under the supervision of a faculty member, to work within teams for clients in the public, nonprofit, 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 instructors 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. Students are expected to meet in teams and/or with their consulting instructor regularly outside of assigned class times.

Be prepared to work: the workshop is demanding and fast-paced from the start. In December, 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. **In consultation with the instructor, before we meet on January 28, students are expected to make initial contact with their client and further refine the project aims.**

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 be passed on to any third party, either directly or indirectly, without the prior consent of the Workshop instructor and 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 The report should be approximately 25 pages, plus no more than 25 pages for 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. 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. All projects must also be accompanied by a synopsis for the public that will be posted on the website alongside the final report and policy brief.

Writing quality matters. And it takes work. To that end, each team is expected to have at least one consultation meeting with UW-Madison’s Writing Center before turning in its final report.

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 of 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. Criteria include:

- 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 to help guide the group and diagnose potential problems.

Key Assignments, Grading Allocation and Deadlines

Confidentiality Form	(individual)	Jan 28
Review of Last Year's Projects	(individual)	Jan 28
CITI Human Subjects	(individual)	Jan 28
First Take: 5 Min Briefing	5% (group)	Jan 28
Outline	10% (group)	Feb 18
Peer feedback 1	(individual)	Feb 18
1 st draft & Style Sheet	5% (group)	Mar 15
In-class Briefing	5% (group)	April 15
Policy Brief 1 pager	5% (group)	April 15
Presentations	10% (group)	April 22 and 29
Peer Feedback 2	20% (individual)	May 6
Project Report Final	40% (group)	Mar 15, Apr 15, May 10

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 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

Credit Standard.

45 Hours Per Credit: Learning takes place in at least 135 hours of learning activities, which include time in lectures and meetings, presentations, faculty tutorials, analysis, writing, group meetings and preparation for any of these activities. This course requires **substantial** meeting time and out-of-

class work.

Instructional mode: Face-to-face, group meetings and online using Canvas.

Learning Objectives

I. Knowledge

A. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills. They will retrieve and examine the policy literature and evaluate evidence for and against hypotheses, identify knowledge gaps, strengths and weaknesses in existing literature, synthesize knowledge, and develop conclusions.

II. Applied Research

B. Students will effectively summarize data for a general (non-academic) or policy audience.

III. Communication

A. Students will communicate in clear written language: a real-world policy problem, relevant scholarly studies and practical applications, a policy-analytic method to investigate the problem, and client-oriented advice to mitigate the problem.

B. Students will communicate substance of point 1 highly concisely and in language understandable to a non-specialist.

C. Students will communicate substance of a real-world policy problem, relevant scholarly studies and practical applications, a policy-analytic method to investigate the problem, and client-oriented advice orally.

IV. Professional and Ethical Conduct

A. Students will identify and appropriately respond to scenarios involving the ethical and professional responsibilities of public administration.

B. Students will demonstrate the ability to maintain human subjects protections when designing studies, collecting data and reporting results.

C. Students will know and adhere to high levels of professional conduct, ethical decisionmaking and legal and regulatory compliance.

D. Students will demonstrate the ability to maintain fidelity to objective social science-based research methods.

V. Professional Skills and Career Preparation

A. Students will complete high quality group projects, including demonstration of effective project management and teamwork

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 is usually caused by mistaken or unclear expectations on the part of the client or the team. As part of the Workshop Course, you are expected 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. Your client will be providing 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 quotation marks. 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 the assignment, fail the course, or suffer even more extreme consequences. Consult http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html, the UW–Madison Writing Center website, for subtleties about plagiarism. Ask us if you are uncertain in any instance.

Learning Accommodations. 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 UW–Madison’s McBurney Center 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 with your instructors.

Graduate School Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)

All students must complete human subjects training on UW–Madison’s website: UW-Madison Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Portal on Human Subjects Protection for Education, Social & Behavioral Science Researchers.

You must complete the online “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.

Monday January 28 Class Meeting: Introduction, Discuss Syllabus and Projects:

All sections meet together.

Assignments:

Your group should be prepared to present your client and topic in a 5-minute presentation, without visuals.

Read: Frances Cole Jones, *How to Wow*, Ch 3 Maximizing Meetings

Review Confidentiality Agreement, sign and turn in ONLINE

Complete CITI Human Subjects Training 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.

Set up time to meet with instructor.

Monday February 4: Team Meetings

Monday February 11: Team Meetings

February 18: Class Meeting, Production

All sections meet together.

Assignments:

Report Outline Due to Instructor

Read: Journal of Economic Perspectives 28(1): 209-234

Monday February 25: Team Meetings

Monday March 4: Team Meetings

Monday March 11: Team Meetings

Friday March 15 **Near-Full Draft Due.**

Assignment:

“Near-Full Draft” due to instructor.

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. Groups must also turn in a ‘style sheet’ for their report.

March 18-22 No class. Spring break

Monday March 25: Team Meetings

Revised draft to be submitted to client by end of this week for feedback.

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

Monday April 1: Team Meetings

April 8-30 Editing with Lisa Hildebrand (lhildebrand@lafollette.wisc.edu)

When your advisor approves, your draft will be reviewed by Lisa. Reports will be forwarded to Lisa AFTER the team has met with UW-Madison’s Writing Center and incorporated all feedback.

Monday April 8: Team Meetings

Scheduling: *Coordinate times/locations with the client and your faculty advisor for final presentations in May 1-11th.*

Monday April 15

Class meeting: Presenting your findings.

Presentation skills will be practiced and discussed.

Your group should be prepared to present your recommendations in a polished 5-minute presentation, *without visuals*.

Group Report Brief: one-page summary using LFS template

Monday April 22 & 29

Class meeting: Presentations of Projects

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. Location TBD.

The student teams will generate 20-minute presentations of their report and findings and will take up to 15 minutes of audience questions.

Presentations will be recorded on video, which you will be asked to view and give feedback on. These presentations, including the transitions between speakers, should be well-practiced.

April 30- May 10

Client Presentations.

Coordinate times/locations with the client and your faculty advisor.

May 10

Peer evaluations due

Client evaluations due

Final Reports due

Each team must designate one person who will stay in contact with Lisa & instructors until report is finalized and posted online. Submit final brief and report for online posting to Lisa Hildebrand (lhildebrand@lafollette.wisc.edu).