Price School of Policy, Planning, and Development
University of Southern California

PPDE 646: Grant Writing Practicum
Fall 2014

Time/Day: weekly online discussions from Monday, August 25th – Thursday, December 4th and four all-day, in-person classes on the Saturdays of September 6th, September 20th, October 25th, and November 1st at the locations indicated below.

Locations:

- Saturday, September 6th: RGL 209
- Saturday, September 20th: RGL 209
- Saturday, October 25th: RGL 209
- Saturday, November 1st: RGL 215
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Instructor: Kimberly Tso
Office Hours: By appointment only. Please request by email.
Contact info: tsok@usc.edu

Course Description
The purpose of this course is to teach students how to write strong grant proposals for nonprofit organizations to private foundations. High-quality grant writing includes well-researched prospects, practical programs with clear and measurable benefits to the community, well-articulated statements of need, and jargon-free writing. During the course, students will learn specific skills to strengthen these core elements of a written proposal, and then they will practice applying those skills to an organization arranged by the instructor. By the end of the class, students will write an analysis of prospective funding opportunities, one proposal, and a letter of inquiry.

Students should note that this class is a writing class; therefore, online and in-class exercises will include weekly writing activities and critique, and college-level command of written English conventions is expected.

Please also note that due to required changes in the format of all University intensive courses, this intensive is structured as four in-person classes supplemented by weekly online writing assignments based on brief video lectures or readings. Use of Blackboard is required.

Learning Objectives
The overall objective of this course is to learn how to construct a high-quality grant proposal for a nonprofit organization to a private foundation. Many of the skills are applicable to government grants, but government grants will not be covered in the course.

Students will learn to:

- Assess organizations for their strengths and needs;
- Identify measurable program outcomes that can be used to as goals and evaluation measures for the grant;
- Research potential funding opportunities;
- Analyze and prioritize grant opportunities for highest compatibility and likelihood of success;
- Understand other aspects of successful grant writing such as researching funders, writing letters of intent, working successfully within the philanthropic culture, and how to communicate with funders; and,
- Improve the quality and clarity of their writing in ways that will help provide critical funds for their efforts.

Prerequisites: none
Co-requisite/Concurrent Enrollment: none
Recommended Preparation: none

Course Notes:
This two-credit intensive course will meet weekly through Blackboard and in-person four times during the semester. All course materials will be provided through Blackboard.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required
Students must be able to access Blackboard on a weekly basis.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials:
All required reading or video links will be posted on Blackboard. No purchase of books is necessary.

Description and Assessment of Assignments
Thanks to a collaboration with USC Joint Educational Project's service learning program, students will be introduced to three to four organizations that will serve as live case studies. Students will use these organizations as the basis for class discussion, and they will develop their proposal and other assignments based on one of these organizations. Student can arrange for a site visit to the organization on his or her own time; this site visit is optional and encouraged. In exchange for their time and effort, the organizations will receive copies of the Funding Research memos, the final draft of the Grant Proposal, and Letters of Inquiry for their own use.

Throughout the course, students will be expected to participate in written assignments, both on Blackboard and in class. Only two of these assignments are assessed for grades,

and they are described below. Scoring rubrics for grades will be provided to students at the beginning of the class. Weekly written assignments completed on Blackboard will be graded for participation.

Funder Research Memo, due October 3rd: For this assignment, students will write a three- to five-page memo to the instructor that describes the search for a funder for the selected organization. The memo should be written as a first-person, reflective narrative of the student's thinking process as he/she researched funders and attempted to determine their theory of change and the organization's "fit" with the theory of change. Students may draw on written materials from foundation search engines, general internet searches, the foundation's website, conversations with colleagues regarding past experiences with the funder, and personal experiences and observations.

The memo should begin with a description of how the student began to search for potential funders. The main body should include a summary of at least three potential "good fit" funders, followed by the student's rationale for how the organization can fit within the funder's theory of change. By the end of the memo, the student should sum up how his/her ideas evolved during the process of research and reflection. Students will be rewarded for the quality of research, exploration, and thinking processes. In other words, the goal is not only to find potential funders for the organization, but also to report on the process of researching the funder and analyzing the prospects for a match.

Final Grant Proposal, due November 7th and December 2nd (second date is optional): Students are required to submit an electronic copy of the grant proposal to the instructor and according to all of the instructions. The grant proposal will be assessed according the criteria laid out in the assignment instructions.

Throughout the course, students will be writing sections of the proposal (as the weekly writing assignments), compiling these sections into a full proposal, and revising their final proposal. Opportunities to write drafts and receive feedback will be incorporated into the class frequently. On November 7th, students are to turn in their proposal for the professor to review and grade. Students will receive their proposal with comments and their preliminary grade by November 22nd. If the student is satisfied with the grade received, the instructor will submit that grade as final. If the student is not satisfied with the grade received, he/she may revise the paper and resubmit by Tuesday, December 2nd. The instructor will re-grade the proposal as if receiving it for the first time; this grade will be final.

Weekly Class Assignments: During the weeks when there is no in-person class, students are expected to participate in short, weekly online assignments and view online lessons. These assignments are sections of the full grant proposal and are intended to help spread out the writing task over several weeks by doing them in discrete chunks. New online assignments will be posted on the Saturday of that week (unless otherwise

indicated), and students have until Thursday of the following week to respond substantively for credit.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Funder Research Memo	30	30%
Final Grant Proposal	50	50%
Weekly Online Written Assignments	20	20%

Assignment Submission Policy
All assignments are to be submitted electronically to the instructor by email by 5 pm PST on the dates noted or unless otherwise indicated. *Late assignments are docked one point for every quarter of an hour (fifteen minutes) they are late*. Weekly Online Written Assignment points earned through Blackboard participation (10 instances) may be earned *only during the week they are current* (responses must be posted by 11:59 pm the Thursday after the Saturday that they are made available). For the Weekly Online Written Assignments, one point will be awarded for the written assignment and one point for the critique. If no critique is required, then two points will be awarded for the written assignment.

Course Schedule: A Breakdown by Class
Each session will include exercises that will give students opportunities to learn and practice their skills and to ask questions as challenges arise. The emphasis of the course is on hands-on, real-time learning, and all activities will produce information that is necessary for subsequent assignments. Weekly attendance and active participation is critical. Readings and order of topics are subject to change.

Monday, August 25th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Introduction to Class, Rules for Writing Critique, What Grant Writers Do
Activities: Online discussion and video lecture
Reading: TBA, links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation (note that this week is not included in the weekly online written assignment grade since some students will still be signing up for the class)

Saturday, August 30th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Getting to Know the Organizations

Activities: Background research on organizations; reflective writing exercise
Reading: TBA, links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, September 6th
Time: 9 am – 4 pm (with a one-hour lunch break at noon)
Format: in-person class
Topic: Meet the Organizations, Intro to Theory of Change
Activities: presentations by nonprofit organizations, lecture, and in-class writing assignments
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard

1. Clark, Helene and Taplin, Dana. (2012) "Theory of Change Basics: A Primer on Theory of Change." ActKnowledge.

Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, September 13th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: History, Mission, and Accomplishments sections
Activities: online written assignment and critique
Reading: none
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, September 20th
Time: 10 am – 3pm (with a one-hour lunch break at noon)
Format: in-person class
Topic: Researching Funders and Finding a Match, How to Read an RFP, Developing Needs Statements
Activities: evaluate funding opportunities in class
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard

1. "Giving USA." 2014 edition. The Foundation Center.
2. Demystifying the 990. Online tutorial by the Foundation Center.
3. Lynn, Elizabeth and Wisely, Susan. (2006) "Four Traditions of Philanthropy." *The Civically Engaged Reader*, ed. Davis, A and Lynn, E, Great Books Foundation.

Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, September 27th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Needs Statements
Activities: online written assignment and critique
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

****Funder research memo due on Friday, October 3rd, 5 pm PST****

Saturday, October 4th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Collecting Data for Needs Statement
Activities: online written assignment
Reading: TBA, links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, October 11th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Program Planning with Grant Proposals (Developing Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables)
Activities: online written assignment
Reading: TBA, links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, October 18th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: The Sustainability Question
Activities: online written assignment
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard

1. Foster, William, et. al. (Spring 2009) "Ten Nonprofit Funding Models." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. SSIReview.org.

Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, October 25th
Time: 10 am – 3pm (with a one-hour lunch break at noon)
Format: in-person class
Topic: Writing the Full Proposal
Activities: Writing Clinics, last meetings with organizations
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard

1. Proscio, Tony K., (2005). *When Words Fail: How the Public Interest Becomes Neither Public Nor Interesting*. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.
2. Cook, Claire K., (1985). *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*. Modern Language Association of America. Chapter 1.

Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, November 1st

Time: 10 am – 3 pm (with a one-hour lunch break at noon)
Format: in-person class
Topic: Funders' Perspectives; Funder Relationships; Grant Writing as a Career; Budgets
Activities: guest speakers and lecture
Reading:

1. Wells, Michael. "Using the Budget to Tell Your Story." (July 21, 2004) CharityChannel.com.

Assignment Due: participation

****Proposal due on Friday, November 7th, 5 pm PST****

Saturday, November 8th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Writing Summaries
Activities: online writing assignment and critique
Reading: none
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, November 15th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Letters of Intent
Activities: online writing assignment and video lecture
Reading: TBA, links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

Saturday, November 22nd
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Letters of Intent, continued
Activities: critique
Reading: none
Assignment Due: participation

****Students will receive proposal comments by Saturday, November 22nd, 10 am PST and may choose to submit optional re-writes by Tuesday, December 2nd, 5 pm PST****

Tuesday, December 2nd
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Critiques of Grant Funding Process

Activities: final reflective writing exercise
Reading: link provided by instructor via Blackboard

1. Gregory, Ann and Howard, Don. (Fall 2009) "The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. SSIReview.org.
2. Kivel, Paul. (2000) "Social Service or Social Change? Who Benefits from Your Work." *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*. Edited by Incite! Women of Color Against Violence.

Assigment due: participation

****Optional Assignment Due: Optional re-writes must be submitted to instructor by email on December 2nd by 5 pm PST.****

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:
http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, (www.use.edu/scampus or http://scampus.usc.edu) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/. Information on intellectual property at USC is available at: http://usc.edu/academe/acsen/issues/ipr/index.html.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis
In the case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their

residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Please activate your course in Blackboard with access to the course syllabus. Whether or not you use Blackboard regularly, these preparations will be crucial in an emergency. USC's Blackboard learning management system and support information is available at blackboard.usc.edu.