

Advocacy in Public Administration: Policy, Planning & Development 658 (PPD 658)
A Graduate Seminar in Legislative Advocacy

University of Southern California, Price School of Public Policy, State Capitol Center
1800 I Street, Sacramento, California

Professor: Dr. Matthew Wheeler

Contact information:

Email – mwheeler@usc.edu

Office Phone – 916-442-3245

Course Dates: June 9-11 & July 8-10, 2016*

* Please note the interim contact assignments throughout the Summer Semester as explained in detail within this Course Syllabus.

Summary: This course is designed to give students a working knowledge of the legislative practice, specifically at the state level. The assignments within the course are designed to provide a tangible project, or “bill binder,” that can be used to stimulate and further a student’s career in the applicable advocacy professions. Areas of interest that parallel your current professional endeavors are highly encouraged to be integrated into the course assignments. The course website is on Blackboard. (blackboard.usc.edu)

Course Objectives: At the end of this course, successful students will have acquired the following skills and knowledge:

1. A working knowledge of the processes for adopting legislation in the California State Legislature and in the United States Congress. This working knowledge will entail all of the following:
 - a. Ability to track legislation at both levels.
 - b. Basic analytical skills for understanding and analyzing legislative proposals.
 - c. Skills to discover other sources of legislative information enabling students to complete independent research on legislative issues.
 - d. A working knowledge of the legislative process in Sacramento and Washington.
 - e. An understanding of the informal processes of legislating.
2. A working knowledge of the skills and techniques in negotiating a public policy issue.
3. Practical knowledge as to how interest groups work both independently and in common practice.
4. An understanding of the principles established in the *Federalist Papers* on legislating.
5. New perspectives on the influences that affect the legislative process.

Academic Accommodations: 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 as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number is 213-740-0776.

Required Texts: You are required to have copies of the *Federalist Papers*, the *California State Constitution*, and the *United States Constitution* at your disposal for course discussions. Complimentary copies of both Constitutions are readily available in legislative offices, and online, while the *Federalist Papers* is available at any bookstore.

Suggested Background: This course will be adapted as we meet based upon the backgrounds, skillsets and interests of the class. Each morning we will begin with a brief discussion of “hot topics” and news and discuss through the lens of legislative advocacy. Reading the morning newspaper, political blogs, or even Facebook will help students start the day with a stimulated discussion.

Course Schedule & Contact Assignments: This course is presented in the intensive format. On the first day please be ready to start class promptly at 9:00am. We are likely to adjust times of the class for the remaining sessions, which is likely to mean meeting earlier on the remaining days so that we can end class a bit after midday on each Saturday/Sunday.

Additionally, new regulations require that all students enrolled in intensive courses receive a single contact hour of material each week throughout a semester. In order to meet these requirements, we will be utilizing Blackboard to complete a series of Contact Assignments. Contact Assignments will be given on seven Monday mornings commencing with May 23 and will be due the following Sunday. Assignments will include relevant and topical literature, articles, and news items meant to stimulate learning, thinking and critical analysis as a class. Assignments will take no more than one hour to complete each week and are to be completed at your convenience and pace over the week. Completion of these assignments is a mandatory requirement of this course.

Contact Assignment One will be emailed by the instructor no later than 9:00am on Monday, May 23 and will be due no later than 11:30pm on Sunday, May 29. Subsequent assignments will be given on May 30, June 20, June 27, July 18, July 25 and August 1 following the same format and Sunday due date. It will be the student’s sole responsibility to check University provided email and complete the assignment.

Course of Study & Class Meetings

[Contact Assignments emailed by May 23 & May 30](#)

Module One: June 9-11, 2016

June 9, 2016 (Thursday) – Orientation, Legislative Processes, Legislative Ethics & Political Fundraising

Morning: Discussion of course objectives, guest speakers, assignments, student background and individual issue areas. Discussion of current legislative endeavors, the legislative process, the suitable role of advocacy, the three branches of government, differences in state and federal processes, and the role of legislative advocacy.

Afternoon: This afternoon we will meet in the State Capitol to discuss the role of legislative ethics in advocacy and the prevailing state and federal laws that govern the practice. A panel of invited guests from the political fundraising community will join us. As a class, we will discuss the role of politics, representation, political giving and elections within the practice of legislative advocacy.

Legislative proposal ideas will be discussed this afternoon in preparation for the Proposal Letter due on Friday, June 10.

Assignment: Prior to the first day of class, give thought to a specific area of concentration or legislative proposal that you wish to pursue in order to complete the course assignments.

June 10, 2016 (Friday) – Organizations & Employers of Legislative Advocates/ Grassroots Efforts & Initiatives

Morning: This morning we will again meet in the State Capitol to discuss the different types of lobbyists, who employs lobbyists, and the corresponding role of the advocate. These discussions will take place in a committee room at the State Capitol. You should plan to be in the room, through security, no later than 9:00am.

Afternoon: This afternoon we will discuss the dynamics of “bottom down,” or “grassroots” efforts to provide collective political action. Labor unions, trade associations, constituents, and political interest groups will all be discussed.

Assignment: Legislative Proposal Letter at the start of class.

June 11, 2016 (Saturday) – Legislative Counsel & Drafting Legislation

Morning: This morning we will discuss how to research and interpret current law, how to make corresponding changes, and the role of the State Legislature/Legislative Counsel in drafting change proposals (bills).

Afternoon: This afternoon, we will research and draft your legislative proposal. Class time will be taken to break into teams and sufficiently research your legislative proposal. By the end of class and the weekend, you will have drafted your bill and it will be assigned to a corresponding policy committee.

Assignment: Mock-Up/Draft Legislation at the end of class.

Contact Assignments emailed by June 20 & June 27

Module Two: July 8-10, 2016

July 8, 2016 (Friday) – Day at the State Capitol

Morning & Afternoon: Today we will host four panels of invited guests. Each panel will come to discuss current and ongoing issues with the California State Legislature and provide realistic feedback on your legislative proposals. Topics may include contract -vs- in-house lobbyists, political fundraising, contemporary political issues, the upcoming election and legislative ethics. These discussions will take place in a committee room at the State Capitol. You should plan to be in the room, through security, no later than 9:00am. This day we will also tour the State Capitol.

Assignment: Committee Analysis at the start of class.

July 9, 2016 (Saturday) - Legislative Session/In-Class Advocacy

Morning & Afternoon: Today will be completely devoted to in-class advocacy presentations.

Assignment: In-Class Advocacy & Signature/Veto Letters

July 10, 2016 (Sunday) – The New Advocate

Morning & Afternoon: Today we will wrap-up the course and discuss the future of the advocacy profession. Our discussion will include the upcoming Presidential

election, barriers to future political initiatives, and how the role of the Legislative Advocate has been transformed into what it is today.

At the end of class, your bill will be SIGNED or VETOED by the Governor, which will provide direction as to how you should complete the final assignment: the Legislative Strategy Proposal.

Contact Assignments emailed by July 18, July 25 & August 1

ASSIGNMENTS LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY & PROCESS SIMULATION

SUMMARY: As students of public policy and advocacy, there is an expectation that you be able to articulate your thoughts orally, as well as in a written format. This course-long simulation is designed to highlight the California legislative process from thought inception to policy implementation. In order to successfully complete this course, ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME – NO EXCEPTIONS. This simulation is progressive; therefore, if preceding assignments have not been completed, moving on to next steps is not possible. At the end of class, you leave with a complete “bill binder” that show your knowledge and expertise of the legislative process.

SIMULATION: In teams of two (one team of three will be permitted if there is an odd-number of students enrolled in the course), you will choose a specific public policy that you wish to change through the legislative process. As a team, as well as individually, you will research, propose and lobby your legislative proposal to your peers, in addition to registered California lobbyists. On the final day of class, your bill will either be signed into California State Law, or vetoed by the Governor. Your final course assignment will be based upon the Governor’s decision.

MECHANICS: All assignments are expected to be posted on Blackboard and/or emailed to the instructor, in addition to turned in (hard copy), on time, in class. Creativity is encouraged; however do not dismiss the parameters of each assignment. Please follow the directions for each assignment with regards to length and grading criteria. Please use either a Times New Roman, Ariel or Cambria font, no greater than 12 point. All papers are expected to be double-spaced (or its equivalent with regards to length) with one-inch margins on all sides.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Contact Assignments

Due Date(s): Sundays by 11:30pm – May 29, June 5, June 19, June 26, July 17, July 24 & July 31

Value: 10% of course grade

Summary: Contact Assignments will include relevant and topical literature, articles, and news items meant to stimulate learning, thinking and critical analysis as a class. Assignments will take no more than one hour to complete each week and are to be completed at your convenience and pace over the week.

Assignment: Will be posted emailed each Monday of a Contact Assignment week by 9:00am to all students via University email. Specific Instructions will be given each week on the completion requirements of the assignment.

2. Legislative Proposal Letter

Due Date: Friday, June 10, 2016: BEGINNING OF CLASS

Value: 10% of course grade

Summary: Prior to the first day of class, give thought to an area of California public policy that you wish to change. Be creative, and think of contemporary issues that are affecting California and the State Legislature. Feedback will be given by the Instructor prior to the first day of Module One. On the first day of class, we will meet briefly to discuss your proposal and strategize as to the next steps. If you are unsure of what area you wish to concentrate, do not worry, as we can work on this together in class.

Assignment: In your team of two (one paper for you both), compose an original 4-5 page legislative proposal to a sitting, or former, member of the California State Legislature. Be sure to include whom you represent (organization), why you have a vested interest in proposing the legislation, and why you think this member would benefit from authoring the legislation. Be creative. Assignment will be evaluated based upon your persuasiveness, detail, organization, and overall strategy.

3. Mock-up/Draft Legislation

Due Date: Saturday, June 11, 2016: END OF CLASS

Value: 10% of course grade

Summary: Now that you have proposed your bill to the author, you need to assist Legislative Counsel in drafting your bill language. Through in-class research, you will study current California State Law and “mark-up” what needs to be changed in order to implement your proposal. As an example, if you were proposing to allow California State Universities to confer doctoral degrees, you would most likely change the Education Code.

Assignment: Clearly research California State Law and find the areas that need additions or omissions in order to implement your bill. As a team, propose language to current law through strikethroughs and italicized new language to provide a “mark-up” of your bill language (one “mark up” per team). This exercise will be done in class to provide guidance and clarity.

4. Committee Analysis

Due Date: Friday, July 8, 2016: START OF CLASS

Value: 15% of course grade

Summary: In the interim between class meetings, your bill has been assigned to a legislative committee with policy oversight. For example, if you were proposing to allow all citizens in California to carry firearms, your bill would most likely be sent

to the Committee on Public Safety. As the consultant to the committee, you will analyze the proposed legislation and provide applicable background and findings.

Assignment: In no less than eight pages, as a team (one paper per team) prepare a committee analysis of your proposed bill from the perspective of the assigned committee. Be sure to include previous legislation that covered your issue, current legislation, an author's summary of the need for the legislation, and organizations who have registered support or opposition. You will be graded upon your expertise, research on previous and current legislation, and overall creativity in completing the assignment. Examples of committee analyses will be provided in class.

5. In Class Advocacy

Due Date: Saturday, July 9, 2016: START OF CLASS

Value: 20% of course grade

Summary: Based upon your committee analysis, you now must present your bill and findings to the legislative committee and convince the members to support, or oppose, your legislation. One member of the team will provide a supporting argument, while one member of the team will provide an opposition argument. Your classmates, in addition to invited guests, will act as members of the committee and choose to either move your bill forward, suggest amendments, or hold your bill in committee.

Assignment: Prepare two 10-15 minute arguments relative to your legislative proposal. One argument will be in favor of your bill, the other in opposition.

Remember: *it is the role of the Lobbyist to know all arguments relative to your bill. As a successful advocate, you should be able to play either side of the issue based upon your subject matter expertise and knowledge of the process.* Include two, one-page draft letters for the Governor: a signature letter, as well as a veto letter. You will be graded upon your persuasiveness in class, knowledge of the issue area, creativity, and ability to simulate a realistic situation.

6. Legislative Strategy Outline

Due Date: Monday, August 1, 2016: By 10:00pm

Value: 20% of course grade

Summary: Based upon your in-class advocacy and completed assignments, the Governor will choose to sign your bill into law, or veto. From this outcome, you must provide a strategy for the next steps.

Assignment: This is an individual assignment; therefore, every student is expected to submit a separate paper. In no less than eight pages, provide a strategy relative to your bill and what its next steps may be. Make the membership or organizational leadership your audience, and provide a policy memo to them based upon the outcome of your bill. If your bill was signed into law, how do you propose implementing your public policy? What will the public's reception be? What steps will your opposition now take to possibly overturn your policy? If your bill was vetoed, why did it fail? What steps could have been taken to ensure its success? How will you address these steps in the future? How can you defend yourself as the advocate tasked with the bill's success? Remember: the audience of this memo is the organization that has hired you, so be persuasive, as well as realistic. You will be

graded upon your ability to articulate the overall process that your bill underwent, future strategies, and subject matter knowledge in terms of the specific bill.

7. Course Participation

Ongoing

Value: 15% of course grade

Assignment: As a Graduate Student, you are expected to be thoughtful and engaging throughout the entire class. Further, as a student of legislative advocacy, participation is critical for the successful completion of this course. There is no need to “overdo” it, but it is expected that all students will show up to class, on time, and participate in all assignments. The Instructor holds the SOLE right to detract participation points at any time due to tardiness, incomplete assignments, in-class distractions (computers, cell phones, etc) and lack of overall thoughtful participation.