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

PPDE 646: Grant Writing Practicum
Fall 2019

Time/Day: This two-credit, hybrid in-person/online practicum runs from Friday August 30 through Friday, December 6th. It consists of five half-day, in-person classes on August 30, September 14, October 5, October 26, and November 16 at the times and locations indicated below, supplemented by weekly online exercises during the weeks in between classes.

Locations:
Class 1: Friday, August 30 from 12-3pm in VPD 112
Class 2: Saturday, September 14 from 10-1pm in VPD 112
Class 3: Saturday, October 5 from 10-1pm in VPD 112
Class 4: Saturday, October 26 from 10-1pm in VPD 112
Class 5: Saturday, November 16 from 10-1pm in VPD 112

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 grant proposals for nonprofit organizations and provide opportunities to practice grant writing skills. High-quality grant writing requires well-researched prospects, the ability to describe 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 case studies arranged by the instructor. By the end of the class, students will write an analysis of prospective funding opportunities, one letter of inquiry, and one full proposal.

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

Please also note that this intensive is structured as five in-person classes supplemented by weekly online writing assignments. 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.

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 five 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

Throughout the course, students will be expected to participate in written assignments, both on Blackboard and in class. Through the Weekly Online Written Assignments, students are strongly encouraged to write first drafts of sections of their proposal for instructor feedback. These Weekly Online Written Assignments will be graded for participation only, thus providing a low-stakes opportunity for students to receive direct feedback on their writing. The three main written assignments (Funder Research Summary, Letter of Intent, and Full Proposal) are graded and described below. Scoring rubrics for graded assignments will be provided to students at the beginning of the semester.

Funder Research Summary, due Saturday, October 4th: For this assignment, students will write a two- to three-page memo to the instructor that describes the search for a funder for the case study 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 summary should begin with a description of how the student began to search for potential funders. The main body should include a summary of two potential "good fit" funders. This section should be followed by the student's rationale for how the organization can fit within each funder's theory of change. Lastly, the student should include a third funder that initially appeared to be a good fit but was ultimately not, followed by a rationale for why it began as a good fit, but was deemed not one upon further research. 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.

Letter of Intent, due Friday, October 25th by 11:59 pm: Students are required to submit a two- to three-page letter of intent via electronic copy to the instructor according to all of the instructions. The letter of intent will be assessed according the criteria laid out in the assignment instructions. The letter of intent will be based on the case study organization.

Full Grant Proposal, due Saturday, December 7th by 11:59 pm: Students are required to submit an electronic copy of the grant proposal to the instructor according to all of the instructions. The grant proposal will be assessed according the criteria laid out in the assignment instructions. The full proposal will be based on the case study organization.

Weekly Online Written Assignments, due as assigned and indicated in Blackboard by 11:59 pm: During the weeks when there is no in-person class, students are expected to participate in short, weekly online assignments. These assignments are located in the Content section of Blackboard and are organized by week. Weekly online written assignments will be sections of the letter of intent or full grant proposal and are intended to help spread out the writing task over several weeks by doing them in discrete chunks and to receive direct feedback from the instructor. They are graded only for participation, so as to encourage learning through a low-stakes writing environment. Assignments are due as indicated in Blackboard.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Funder Research Summary	20	20%
Letter of Intent	25	25%
Full Grant Proposal	35	35%
Weekly Online Written Assignments (8 total, each worth 2-4 points)	20	20%

A = 93+ points
A- = 90-92 points
B+ = 88-89 points
B = 83-87 points
B- = 80-82 points
C+ = 78-79 points
C = 73-77 points
C- = 72 points or fewer

Assignment Submission Policy
All assignments are to be submitted electronically through Blackboard by 11:59 pm PST on the dates noted or unless otherwise indicated. _Late assignments (Funder Research Summary, Letter of Intent, and Full Grant Proposal) are docked one point for every hour (including fractions of an hour) they are late_. Weekly Online Written Assignment points earned through Blackboard participation (8 instances) may be earned _only during the week they are current_ (responses must be posted by 11:59 pm of the day they are due). Students who submit on time can expect to receive feedback in a timely manner. Students who submit late work are subject to receiving feedback according to the instructor's availability.

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.

> Week One - Friday, August 30th
> Time: 12 pm – 3 pm
> Format: in-person class
> Topic: Introduction to Class; Grant Writing Processes, Norms, and Practices; Intro to Case Study – OneJustice; Thinking Like a Funder; Common Grant Proposal Questions.
> Activities: lecture and in-class exercises

Reading: background documents and links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: participation

Week Two - Saturday, September 7th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Organization History/Mission/Accomplishments and Program Description sections
Activities: weekly online written assignment
Reading: background documents and links provided by instructor via Blackboard
Assignment Due: writing sample worth 4 points

Week Three - Saturday, September 14th
Time: 10 am – 1 pm
Format: in-person class
Topic: Funding Landscape, Researching Funders, Theory of Change/Logic Model, What OneJustice Needs
Reading: links provided by instructor via Blackboard
1. Demystifying the 990. Online tutorial by the Foundation Center.
2. Lynn, Elizabeth and Wisely, Susan. (2006) "Four Traditions of Philanthropy." *The Civically Engaged Reader*, ed. Davis, A and Lynn, E, Great Books Foundation.
3. Mackinnon, Anne and Amott, Natasha. (2006) "Mapping Change: Using a Theory of Change to Guide Planning and Evaluation." Grantcraft Guides.
Assignment Due: participation

Week Four - Saturday, September 21st
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Keywords and Search Terms
Activities: weekly online written assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: journal entry worth 2 points

Week Five - Saturday, September 28th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Open Q&A
Activities: weekly online written assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: journal entry worth 2 points

Funder research summary due on Friday, October 4th by 11:59 pm PST

Week Six - Saturday, October 5th
Time: 10 am – 1pm
Format: in-person class
Topic: How to Write a Letter of Intent (LOI); Writing Needs Statements; Defining Goals and Deliverables
Activities: in class activities
Reading:
- Sample LOIs provided by instructor on Blackboard
- Information provided by OneJustice
- Sawhill, John and Williamson, David. "Measuring what matters in nonprofits." The McKinsey Quarterly. 2001 Number 2.
- The Foundation Center. "Evaluation Key Facts 2017: What we know about how foundations use and share evaluations." Infographic, 2017.
Assignment Due: participation

Week Seven - Saturday, October 12th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Needs Statement
Activities: weekly online written assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: writing sample worth 3 points

Week Eight - Saturday, October 19th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Project Goals and Deliverables
Activities: online written assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: writing sample worth 3 points

Letter of Intent due on Friday, October 25 by 11:59 pm PST

Week Nine - Saturday, October 26th
Time: 10 am – 1 pm
Format: in-person class
Topic: Writing Full Proposals; How to Read RFPs, Government Grants
Activities: in-class exercises
Reading:
- LA Justice Fund: Request for Proposals. 2017
Assignment Due: participation

Week Ten - Saturday, November 2nd
Time: 1 hour

Format: online
Topic: Evaluation
Activities: Weekly online writing assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: writing assignment worth 2 points

Week Eleven - Saturday, November 9th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Open opportunity for written feedback
Activities: Weekly online writing assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: writing sample worth 2 points

Week Twelve - Saturday, November 16th
Time: 10 am – 1 pm
Format: in-person class
Topic: Meet the Funders, Careers in Grant Writing, Budgets and Sustainability, Advocacy Funding
Activities: Guest speakers, in-class exercises
Reading:
- Bolder Advocacy. "Foundation Advocacy Grants: What Grantees Need to Know."
- Grant Professionals Certification Institute: Validated Competencies and Skills.
- Foster, William, Dixon, Ben and Hochstetler, Matthew. "In Search of Sustainable Funding: Is Diversity of Sources Really the Answer?" Nonprofit Quarterly, March 21, 2007.

Assignment Due: participation

Week Thirteen - Saturday, November 23rd
No class due to Thanksgiving Holiday.

Week Fourteen - Saturday, November 30th
Time: 1 hour
Format: online
Topic: Sustainability
Activities: Weekly online writing assignment
Reading: none
Assignment Due: writing sample worth 2 points

Final proposals due to instructor via Blackboard on Saturday, December 7th by 11:59 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 Grace Ford Salvatori Hall, 120 at 3601 Watt Way 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) 814-4618 (Video Phone), (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.