



Community Partner Information

Community Engaged Learning Project

Public Administration 6540/Political Science 5540
Nonprofit Advocacy and Public Policy

Thank you for being a community partner with this semester's University of Utah Nonprofit Advocacy and Public Policy course. We hope this will be a meaningful contribution to further the advocacy and public policy work and mission of your organization while helping students enrich their understanding of course material.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND EXPECTATIONS:

- Community engaged learning provides practical application of theoretical classroom principles to real-world work.
- This project meets the objectives of the course by allowing students to apply what they are learning and to critically reflect on their experiences working with your organization.
- Students in this course receive credit for their work and earn a grade for the work they do in partnership with you. Because they are different from other volunteers you may have worked with, it is important to think about the learning experience the students will gain from working with your organization (see course objectives and project requirements below).

The students will be working with you to learn about your organization's advocacy & public policy process and to create an advocacy plan for issues with which you are dealing.

- You will work with them to put forward a cogent position on a key policy issue, describe the resources needed to advocate that position, and provide tools and a roadmap for doing so.
- The advocacy plan may include developing a strategy to enhance or expand your organization's capacity to advocate on policy matters.
- Thinking about the following questions will help you prepare for working with your students:
 - What are the areas in which you could use public policy assistance?
 - What are some specific projects you could use help with in your existing advocacy plan?
 - How could they help you move your advocacy & public policy work forward?

There will be a group of three or four students working with your organization. The students will contact you to determine an initial time to meet with you at your organization. It will be important for you and the students to clearly understand the intended outcomes and expectations of the project during that meeting.

CONTACT:

Gideon Tolman, the teaching assistant for this course, will track project progress and will answer any questions or concerns you or the students have about the project. He will be following up with you to make sure things are going well, and he will be your principal contact. Feel free to contact him at any time.

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TIME FRAME:

Think of projects that can be completed within 12 weeks (the semester time frame) and on the students’ own time (besides their meetings with you).

The class meets Tuesday evenings, which is why the calendar is based on Tuesday dates.

Date	Student Responsibility	Your Responsibility
Week of January 21	Students contact you to set up initial meeting and meet with you to begin project	You and students meet to begin project
Week of February 18	Students report project progress to you	You provide feedback to students
Week of February 25	Students incorporate your edits, continue research	
Week of March 4	Students report project progress to you	You provide feedback to students
Week of March 18	Students incorporate your edits, continue research	
Week of March 25	Students report project progress to you	You provide feedback to students
Week of April 1	Students incorporate your edits, finalize project	
Week of April 8	Students submit final project for your approval	You provide feedback on final project
Week of April 15	Students incorporate final edits and submit project	
Week of April 22	Students present final projects in class	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The following information is from the course syllabus and pertains to the community engaged project. It provides some additional information that you may find helpful as you move forward with your project:

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to explore the role and influence of nonprofit organizations in the public policy arena. During the course students will discuss how and why nonprofit organizations influence policy, the role of community organizing, the legal limitations on lobbying by charitable organizations, barriers and obstacles faced, and the methods & strategies that can help nonprofits of all types effectively communicate their policy goals.

Students will also get hands-on experience developing an advocacy plan for a nonprofit organization, lobbying each other in a mock hearing process, and spend time watching lawmakers and advocates at their work during the 2014 Legislative Session.

Project Requirements of Community Engaged Learning Advocacy Plan:

The community engaged learning project in this class is a group project that allows each student to directly apply, in a practical setting, the information learned in the classroom. The course teaches the theories and best practices in policy that influence charitable nonprofits; while the community engaged learning project will help students learn how to apply them.

Students will have the opportunity to self-select into groups they will work with. Students are asked to come to the first day of class armed with passion about one issue area – be it children, the environment, social justice, access to health care, or the arts. The ‘politics’ do not matter – only the issue. Students will work in small teams of people with shared interest to decide which organizations to approach with an offer to develop an advocacy plan for the agency. There will be a good deal of work, therefore, outside of class. The team is expected to meet with the nonprofit organization, research at least one of the issues or policies they wish to impact, and draft an advocacy plan on this issue.

As a part of the community engaged learning project and to inform the development of the advocacy plan, students will also be asked to review how the organization approaches public policy advocacy (e.g., history, obstacles/barriers, strategies & methods, etc.).

The components of each advocacy plan will no doubt be different for each group. At the minimum it should help the agency put forward a cogent position on a key policy issue, describe the resources needed to advocate that position and provide tools and roadmap for doing so, including a written position paper with excellent research behind it and an assessment of the policy body that needs to be influenced to further the issue. Depending on the organization, the advocacy plan may also include developing a strategy to enhance or expand the organization’s capacity to advocate on policy matters.

Each group is expected to hand-in the advocacy plan by the last class of the semester and will present their community engaged learning project to the class. Projects will be assessed based on the quality of the advocacy plan (e.g., relevance of material, critical thought, application of theory/practice, clarity, & grammar) and feedback from the community organization.

Thank you again for partnering with the University of Utah. We are excited to work with you!