

School Of Liberal Arts

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

LAW-4XX: Senior Capstone: Public Policy Advocacy

To: Undergraduate Education Committee
From: Curriculum Committee of the School of Liberal Arts
By: Evan Edward Laine, MA, JD
Re: LAW-4xx: Senior Capstone: Public Policy Advocacy
Date: September 20, 2010

2. Approval Statement

LAW-4xx: Senior Capstone: Public Policy Advocacy has been approved by the curriculum committee of the School of Liberal Arts and passed by 100% of the school's faculty.

Signature of the Chair of the School Curriculum Committee

Date

3. Background

This Law and Society Capstone Seminar is a required core course scheduled for the fourth year curriculum in the Law and Society major. It is designed as a combined classroom and real-world laboratory for students to apply their leadership, oral advocacy, writing, and public policy skills in an environment where they would be giving back to the community by volunteering for a public policy organization or by a self-directed advocacy project such as a fund raiser, blog, or interest group.

4. Purpose

This course is intended to provide senior students in the Law and Society program with an opportunity to integrate and apply the practical and theoretical training that they received in their major while also contributing to the community. This course will function as a combined instructional seminar and real world workshop. By creating a public policy organization/entity or event/project, students will be given the opportunity to apply their leadership skills and oral and written advocacy training in a non-academic environment.

5. Catalog Description

Law 4XX Senior Capstone: Public Policy Advocacy

1-2-3

[writing intensive]

This capstone course for the Law and Society major combines a classroom seminar (50 minutes per week) on advocacy skills with a real-world public policy advocacy project within either a self-selected pre-existing organization or an initiative of the student's own creation and design. Students will also receive 100 minutes per week of designated instruction time, via the web, during which their E-Reports will be reviewed and the status of their projects will be discussed. Students will review and integrate the skills and knowledge they developed during previous courses in the Law and Society curriculum while also applying the principles of public policy theory and oral and written advocacy to the student's selected project.

Prerequisites: LAW-411 (Senior Seminar)

6. Relation to Existing Curricula

- a. Does this course replace an existing course?
No
- b. Who is required to take the course? Who can take the course? (Is the course open to students in other majors? Is the course restricted to students in a particular major?)
This course is required for all Law and Society majors, and only available to those majors, except under special circumstances.
- c. Is the course an elective or a requirement for a particular curriculum or major?
It is a requirement for Law and Society students.
- d. What are the prerequisites or other restrictions?
LAW-411 Senior Seminar

- e. How does the course contribute to the curriculum's programmatic learning outcomes?
The course contributes to the fulfillment of the following outcomes in the Law and Society curriculum:

I. a rigorous education experience in the broad interdisciplinary major;

II. an integrated understanding of the historical, philosophical, political and social foundations of law and its role in society, and of its relationship to the economic, political, social and cultural structures and values in the contemporary world;

V. the ability to apply their understanding and skills to the recognition and resolution of complex problems in contemporary society

- f. Does the course contribute to the learning outcomes set for Information Literacy?
Because this is a 400-level, capstone course, students will be expected to use all previously acquired information literacy skills and abilities to solve real-world problems relating to their particular public policy project. In the completion of their coursework, students will demonstrate the critical analysis, appropriate application of information and other higher-order thinking skills appropriate to students at this level. Students will be expected to add to their personal knowledge base about on how public policy oriented entities exist and succeed within the local and national political, social and cultural theatre. Successful completion of this course requires the student to *independently and proficiently* use resources appropriate to upper-level research within the disciplines related to this program.

Other skills and abilities include ethical use of information (consistent and proper use of citation and documentation), proficient use of services available via Gutman Library (for example, interlibrary loan and Refworks), a familiarity with the scholarly and trade publications relating to their major, and efficient use of the free, public web to locate and access information (for instance, governmental, association and organization websites, blogs and podcasts). Students in this capstone course will also be expected to consult and draw information from practitioners and experts in the field, as well as through library and web-based resources.

- g. Does the course contribute to the school's learning outcomes for writing and/or the University's "Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses"?

Yes, pursuant to the University guidelines for writing-intensive courses,

- 1) **Students will practice forms of writing typical of the field by preparing their bi-weekly E-Report and the culminating final report on their project. These writing assignments are designed to test both their content knowledge concerning public advocacy organizations and their communication skills.**
- 2) **The professor will devote class time to discussing essential qualities of field-specific professional writing, sometimes with the aid of real specimens from the work world.**
- 3) **The professor will require students to produce multiple drafts of their final capstone report, to give students the opportunity to improve their writing skills.**
- 4) **The professor will make sure the students receive individual help on their final written capstone report from the Learning Center's professional writing tutors**
- 5) **The professor will make sure students value the time and attention given to writing by basing a significant portion of the final grade (30-40%) on the final written Capstone report**

h. If this course replaces an existing course how does it differ from that course's objectives, material covered etc.?

NA

i. If the course is an elective, how does it enhance the curriculum?

NA

j. Is this course similar to another course offered by the university? If it is how does it differ and why could not the other course be a suitable substitute?

NA

7. Course Goals

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain how and why public policy advocacy organizations/entities are created, and how they are marketed, maintained, structured, and funded.
- Create, and/or support and maintain an organization/entity that advocates a policy position.
- Demonstrate their leadership skills and their abilities to effectively articulate a public policy position, whether orally or in writing.
- Comport themselves appropriately in a non-academic professional environment.
- Identify the numerous types of public policy and advocacy directed opportunities available to graduates in the major and describe the role that such organizations play in American political and social culture.

8. **Proposed Implementation Date:**
Spring semester 2011

9. **Impact Statements**

a. **Impact on Staff**

LAW-4xx Senior Capstone will require the services of one full-time or adjunct faculty member each year.

Signed by the Dean of the School:

Date

b. **Impact on Facilities**

LAW-4xx Senior Capstone will require one standard classroom each year.

Signed by the Dean of the School:

Date

c. Impact on Library and the Philadelphia University Information Literacy Plan

1. The Director of Gutman Library has been made aware of the possible library and information service needs for LAW-4xx confirms that the Library can support the resource demands of this course.

2. The Director of the Library (or his or her designee) has been consulted to determine how, if at all, the proposed course will integrate Information Literacy skills as listed in the University Information Literacy Plan and how such skills, if any, will be assigned, supported, and taught.

Signed by the Director of Gutman Library

Date

d. Impact on Computer Facilities: I have been made aware of the possible direct or indirect computer usage by LAW-4xx.

Signed by the Vice-President for Information Resources

Date

e. **Impact on Writing Across the Curriculum Program:** Before submitting course proposal to the school curriculum committee, the proposer has consulted with the Director of Writing Across the Curriculum and a) established targeted writing skills, if any; b) identified how writing skills will be assigned and taught; and c) indicated whether or not this course meets the criteria to be designated a writing intensive (WI) course. (See the Public Folders—Academic Affairs—for Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses, or consult the Writing website: www.philau.edu/writing.)

Signed by Director of Writing Across the Curriculum

Date

Senior Capstone for Law and Society Major

Public Policy Advocacy

Law 4xx

Philadelphia University

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the role of the public policy organization/entity in the American political and cultural environment through a combined academic and hands-on practical application. The student will be required to participate actively in a public policy advocacy oriented organization/entity while carefully documenting that experience through the keeping of an E-Report (see Rubric attached hereto for further descriptions). The student can create their own organization or join a pre-existing entity where the **role** of the student within and the organization itself are preapproved by the professor. Each student will be responsible for class presentations delineating what that they wish to accomplish in their organization and just how successful they were in implementing their goals. Analysis will be on all aspects of the public policy organization from policy formulation, funding, the impact of politics, staffing, marketing, and challenges of the future. The class will meet once a week for 50 minutes to discuss the various topics as indicated below. Each student will be responsible for keeping an extensive E-Report documenting his or her experiences and how effectively they met the goals of the course. (See below for complete description.) This Report will serve as a primary source for the student's final capstone paper, which details their experience in their project. Students will also receive 100 minutes per week of designated instruction time, via the web, during which their E-Reports will be reviewed and the status of their projects will be discussed.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Explain how and why public policy advocacy organizations/entities are created, and how they are marketed, maintained, structured, and funded.
- Create, support and maintain an organization/entity that advocates a policy position.

- Demonstrate their leadership skills and their abilities to effectively articulate a public policy position, whether orally or in writing.
- Comport themselves appropriately in a non-academic professional environment.
- Identify the numerous types of public policy and advocacy directed opportunities available to graduates in the major and describe the role that such organizations play in American political and social culture.

Texts

Jansson, Bruce S. Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate: From Policy Practice to Social Justice. Brooks/Cole/Thomson Learning, 2003.

Additional readings include articles to be posted on Blackboard (BB on the syllabus) and their fellow students' E-Journals

Grading

Weekly E-Reports (25%): The weekly E-Report is a record of your experience in creating and implementing your selected project or a record of your experiences and accomplishments within the pre-existing organization. This report will be published on the course Blackboard site. You are to consider this a record of your experiences, listing your functions, interactions with others, and your accomplishments and frustrations during your endeavors. The reporting is to be done, at a minimum, twice a week. More specifically, you are to create a template for your project with the goal that someone could reproduce your effort in the future. In these reports, you must to address the goals of the course as they are relevant for that moment. For example:

- 1) Why did you create this particular project?
- 2) What are you doing to get it going?
- 3) How are you marketing or publicizing it?
- 4) How have you structured it organizationally?
- 5) How are you funding it?
- 6) How effectively are you demonstrating leadership skills?
- 7) How effective are you in articulating your public policy position, whether orally or in writing?
- 8) How are you comporting yourself in a non-academic professional environment?
- 9) Did the project meet or exceed your expectations, and if not, why not and what did you learn?

The E- Report will start at the beginning of the semester and must be updated throughout the entire semester. Your grade will be based upon how thoroughly and honestly you address the above goals.

Oral presentations (20%): You will be responsible for making two particular oral presentations (worth 10 points each for a total of 20% of your grade) on the topics as listed in the syllabus below.

Self Evaluation (10%): This self evaluation will focus upon your initiative, resourcefulness, creativity, dependability, and ability to complete tasks/projects. This evaluation will be performed by the student with professor involvement and input. The grade will be based upon a private conference where the student and Professor will revisit the course goals, as stated under the E-Report grading section, and discuss how adequately and thoroughly they have been reported and whether these goals have or have not been met and why.

Internship Capstone Paper (30%): This is a report of your experiences within your organization, focusing on how effectively you accomplished your goals. Most importantly, the core of the report should be what you learned, from both your successes and missteps during the project implementation and execution. In addition to your personal experiences as documented by your E-Report, you must cite to academic literature to support conclusions that you have in your capstone paper concerning your project. See rubric to be supplied in class for further instruction.

Class Participation (15%): This consists of your classroom attendance and the quantity and quality of your participation in evaluations of classmate projects and E-Reports.

In line with the school of Liberal Arts policy, the following grading scale will be used:

A	93-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-92%	C	73-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%
B-	80-82%	D	60-66%
F	59% and below		

E-Mail Policy

I will rely very heavily on e-mail communication and will only correspond to your university address. You must check your e-mail **every day!**

Attendance

This class is based on class participation; therefore, students who do not come to class on a regular basis are in serious danger of failing. If you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure I have marked you present. However, students who repeatedly come late to class will be marked as absent. If the student has more than 3 absences as defined aforesaid, the student must provide a reasonable excuse for those absences to avoid a grade related penalty. It is the student's responsibility to inform the professor by e-mail of any problem that might or does interfere with their ability to attend class.

Participation

To do well and keep pace, it is essential you meet deadlines and carefully consider what you read and write. Preparation for meaningful participation is required for all course activities. Please be aware that this course is a working seminar. This means that everyone must come to class having read the assigned readings, prepared to discuss them fully, raise questions and perhaps to rethink the issues involved. The class is interactive and not lecture-based; most of your learning will come from ideas you exchange with your fellow students. By joining this class, you are making a commitment to participate fully.

Technology Statement

Please be considerate and make sure that for each class you have turned off your cell phone, pagers, all types of "berries" and other potential distracting gadgetry. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TEXT MESSAGING OR PHONE CALLS ALLOWED DURING CLASS.**

Electronic Communication

You are required to use the university e-mail account to communicate with me. You will receive assignments via Blackboard; therefore, you are responsible for checking the Blackboard site and your e-mail on a regular basis. Make sure your university e-mail account is in working order.

Course Policies

Academic integrity: I draw your attention to the University's policy on plagiarism as outlined in the student handbook. Plagiarism is illegal in the world outside college, and will not be tolerated in the academic world either. College-level writing frequently requires you to use a variety of sources. In this course, you will often use evidence from books, articles, and electronic resources to support points in your papers. If however, you use language, ideas, or information from another source without properly giving credit to that source, you have plagiarized. You must learn to cite sources correctly. Any idea that is not your own must be cited (including those from class readings), giving the author and the page number (or website and date access), even if you do not quote the author. If you do not quote directly, you must learn to paraphrase the words of the author properly as well as providing correct documentation for his or her idea. Any papers that contain plagiarism will receive a zero. In addition, a letter documenting the incident may be placed in the student's file in the office of the Dean of Students. Plagiarism may also result in a failing grade for the course or the student may be reported to the student conduct committee. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense that can result in expulsion from the university. Be sure you have read and understand the Philadelphia University academic integrity policy, available in the student handbook.

Revisions

To help you improve as a writer, I may require you to rewrite any or all of the research papers you are responsible for in this course. Your rewrite is due one week from the day I hand it back to you with comments. If it is not resubmitted in person to me in class one week from the date it is handed back to you with revisions, I will assume that you have waived the rewrite. To be eligible for a re-grade you must seek help from the Learning and Advising Center to assist you with your rewrites.

Make sure you bring the exact assignment to your tutor for that particular position piece along with this syllabus AND THE RUBRIC so that you can be properly advised.

Academic support services

Gutman Library (www.philau.edu/library)

The home page of the Gutman Library provides students with a variety of information resources, including databases and research guides. Librarians are available online and in person at the information desk to help students with research.

The Learning and Advising Center (www.philau.edu/learning)

The Learning and Advising Center provides one-on-one tutoring assistance for writing, study strategies, test taking, and specific Philadelphia University courses. To make a tutoring appointment, students should stop by the Learning and Advising Center in Haggar Hall or call (215) 951-2799. Academic resources, including information on citation and documentation, note taking, and study strategies are available on the Center's website.

Technology assistance (<http://www.philau.edu/OIT/>)

For assistance with technology issues, students should contact the Technology Help Desk at (215) 951-4648 or send an email to helpdesk@philau.edu. General purpose computing facilities are available in Search Hall and Gutman Library.

Course Format and Description

Week One

There will be an introduction to the "E-Report," its purpose and function and a short presentation by each student of their selected/created organization and its purpose, per instructor's approval. Approval will be based upon the "Rubric" for selection of project, which is attached hereto.

Week Two

We will discuss what defines a public advocacy/policy organization and their role in the U.S. socio/economic fabric.

Readings: Jansson, chapter 1

Week Three

We will analyze how public advocacy/policy organizations are funded.

Reading: Jansson, chapter 7

Week Four

There will be student presentations summarizing their experience to date by citing to their Journal. Further, at this time each student must develop a particular goal for their project and articulate that to the class. This will be the first of your required oral presentations.

Week Five

This class will look at the inner functioning of each student's public advocacy/policy organization with each student presenting to the class how its organization receives funding and how it is staffed.

Reading: Jansson, chapter 3

Week Six

Referring to their student journal, each student is responsible for an oral presentation regarding the following elements (this is the second of the two required oral presentations):

- A) Describe the individual responsible for supervising or mentoring you and how they have helped you adapt to the organization or how have they failed to efficiently exploit your skills. If your project is self-created, describe your project's organization framework
- B) What can you do to make yourself a more valuable member of the organization and how do you communicate these ideas, or, if self-created, what can you do to improve your project's chance of success?

Week Seven

Here each student will present their ideas regarding how efficiently and effectively their organization markets itself and its services to the community. Each student is to discuss the most effective approaches of their organization and provide a least one suggestion on how their organization's services can be better provided or marketed to the public.

Reading: Jansson, chapter 5

Week Eight

During this session each student will provide a review of their project to date and whether they have been able to keep to the initially stated goal and if not, whether they intend to change it, why and to what.

Week Nine

This week's focus will be on learning effective advocacy strategies and how to employ them in the student's project.

Readings: Jansson, chapter 9

Week Ten

Here analysis will focus on "the Big Picture" or how public policy organizations function in and with governmental, community and agency settings.

Readings: Jansson, chapter 4

Week Eleven

During this meeting, each student will inform the class of their particular final capstone topic for class approval and input. In addition to describing their general experience must include, but is not limited to; how successfully the student performed their project goals; a review of the efficiency of the student's organization; a review of the marketing and/or funding strategies of the organization; and suggestions for more efficient funding and marketing. **It is during this class that the first draft to the final Capstone report is due.**

Week Twelve

During this class, each student will be assigned to report on another classmate's E-Report by commenting on its contents by analyzing whether the nine goals, defined under the grading section above, have been adequately reported. During class student will receive their first drafts back from the professor.

Week Thirteen

During this class, we will study the complications involved when the public policy organization gets involved in the Congressional lobbying process. **It is during this class that the next draft to the final Capstone report is due along with written proof that the student has sought and received instruction from the learning center**

Reading: Davis, Julie. "Getting Started at the State House." Snelling Center for Government. <http://www.snellingcenter.org/npadvocacy.html#FedLobReg>

Week Fourteen

Student presentations of final paper and the Final version of the Capstone report must be turned in.

Week Fifteen

Remaining student presentations of final paper

Please note: the syllabus and assignments are subject to change at the instructor's notification.

RUBRIC FOR CREATION AND DESIGN OF THE PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY ORIENTED ORGANIZATION/ENTITY OR EVENT

A) Organization/Entity or Event Type:

The event or organization /entity, which must be preapproved by the Professor pursuant to the syllabus, must be one that advocates and/or supports a political position or view to the public. The below is provided as examples but you are not limited by it; the only limitation is your own imagination.

Fund Drive: You can create an organization or event that raises money for a political candidate, or a public policy organization such as PennPIRG, ACLU, Planned Parenthood, NJ Equality, NORML, NOW, etc.

Membership Drive: You can create an organization or event soliciting membership or volunteers for a political candidate, or a public policy organization such as PennPIRG, ACLU, Planned Parenthood, NJ Equality, NORML, NOW, environmental causes, Greenpeace, Amnesty International, etc.

Publication: You can create a web based Report or blog that advocates a political or social position by the publishing persuasive self-authored articles and/or editorials on topic

Event Creation: You can stage an event that advocates a political or social position, i.e., a rally, public canvassing and/or symposium.

B) Members Involved:

You are permitted to collaborate with other students in the Capstone on your project or carry on individually.

C) Time Required:

You are expected to expend at least 70 hours on your project during the semester.