



**Boston University Study Abroad  
Boston University Washington, DC Programs**

**CAS PO 321/COM CM 556:  
Strategies for Issue Development and Policy Change**

Spring 2019

Meeting Time: Mondays, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Course Instructor

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***Course Description and Objectives***

This course focuses on the strategies and tactics that organized interests use to influence the political and policy agenda with a focus on both “inside” and “outside” strategies. Examples of inside strategies include lobbying policy makers in Congress and the executive branch, as well as through the courts; forming political action committees; and attempting to influence elections. Outside strategies, such as mobilizing the public through advocacy campaigns to influence policy leaders, garnering free media, and attracting public support, will also be examined.

The material in this course is designed with advanced undergraduate students in mind. The course is situated in the political science literature; however, the material examined is appropriate for other students as well. Students will grapple with defining an organized interest and learning the nuances of major strategies to influence political and policy outcomes. Students will gain a better understanding about which types of groups and leaders engage in which strategies, and at what stage of the political and policy process they are most likely to be effective based upon the issue or policy goal.

Course participation and engagement is essential to the success (and your enjoyment!) of the class. Students are expected to read the course material ahead of time and engage in discussion. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify the actors who participate in the national policymaking process, analyze strategies employed to influence political debate and the direction of public policy, critically read scholarly materials, and write and present material.

## *Office Hours*

I will make myself available to students after each class session. I am also available via email for students who would like to consult with me about material or assigned work or to set up a specific time for a meeting.

A note on email: email is an important way that we will communicate with one another. When submitting work by email, you must receive a confirmation email from me (i.e., “I received your paper,”) or the work is not considered received on time.

## **Course Assignments**

The course will be graded on 100 points. The grade breakdown is as follows (see below for a detailed description):

Class Attendance/Participation: 30%  
Advocacy/Lobbying Briefing Memo: 25%  
Advocacy/Lobbying Leader Interview: 25%  
Op-Ed and Presentation: 20%

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

**30 percent**

(**Class Participation**=Prepared discussion questions and summary + discussion question presentation + class attendance + quality of participation in class + quality of questions for guest speakers.)

All students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material, this includes posing interesting questions about the material and outside, related observations based on your internships and what you are reading in various news sources. Your participation grade also includes your questions and engagement for any in-class guest speakers. You will be graded on the quality of your participation.

In addition to routine participation, each student may be asked to prepare discussion questions and a brief summary of the week’s reading for at least one class. One or two students will be called upon at the beginning of each class to begin discussion by asking 3-4 questions that are derived directly from the readings. This work will factor into your overall participation grade. Students are expected to present their ideas and questions to the class and will hand in a paper copy of their comments and questions to the professor at the beginning of the class. The participation grade will also take into account a student’s attendance and punctuality.

**LOBBYING/ADVOCACY BRIEFING MEMO**                      **25 percent**

You will attend a lobbying/advocacy event (e.g. Congressional hearing, public policy event, public protest, interest group conference, Supreme Court session, or fundraising event) and prepare a two-page, single-spaced memo describing the event (who, what, where, when, why, and how), and give your assessment of (1) the goal of each event, (2) whether or not each event had the desired impact, and (3) provide your recommendations on how to improve such events for the future. More information about this assignment will be provided and discussed once the course is underway.

**ADVOCACY/LOBBYING LEADER INTERVIEW**                      **25 percent**

You will identify, with my approval, an advocacy/lobbying leader in Washington to interview and prepare a three-to-five page 12-point font, double spaced, regular margins paper summarizing the interview with the subject. Specifically, you should ask about the subject's background, how they became involved in their issue, how they arrived in Washington, some of their successes, examples of frustrations or setbacks, and their plans for pursuing their issue goals for the future.

**OP-ED AND PRESENTATION**    **20 percent**

You will choose a topic, with my approval, of current political and policy debate and draft a 750 to 800-word opinion column advocating for or against a specific issue topic. The Op-Ed will identify a problem, provide a brief analysis of the problem, and recommend a policy proposal or solution. We will spend one class period developing a draft for review and comments by a guest instructor and a final version will be submitted and presented to the class in lieu of a final exam. If a student would like, the instructor will give guidance on how to submit the Op-Ed for publications with various media outlets. More detailed information about this assignment will be provided and discussed once the course is underway.

***BU Plagiarism Policy***

You are responsible for reviewing and understanding Boston University's policy on plagiarism:

"Plagiarism is the act of representing someone else's creative and/or academic work as your own, in full or in part. It can be an act of commission, in which one intentionally appropriates the words, pictures or ideas of another, or it can be an act of omission, in which one fails to acknowledge/document/give credit to the source, creator and/or the copyright owner of those works, pictures or ideas. Any fabrication of materials, quotes or sources, other than that created in a work of fiction, is also plagiarism. Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense that you can commit and can result in probation, suspension or expulsion."

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Any and all forms of academic dishonesty will be immediately reported to the Boston University Study Washington Academic Center program director, Dr. Walter Montano.

### ***Required Texts***

Most of the assigned reading will be taken from the following textbooks and from other required readings available on JSTOR that are noted on the syllabus. A limited number of copies of the two primary books will be available in the BUDC library. Otherwise, the books are available for purchase from the campus bookstore or Amazon.com or similar online book sellers. Readings assigned from supplemental sources and articles will be made available to you electronically.

Matt Grossman. 2013. *New Directions in Interest Group Politics*. Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-0415827553

Anthony Nownes. 2006. *Total Lobbying: What Lobbyists Want (and How they Try to Get it)*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN-10: 0521676622

In addition to these two books, other readings and informational materials—especially those related to the writing assignments—may also be assigned from various journals, books or news outlets; especially when we have guest speakers. If they are assigned, these readings are mandatory and will be discussed in class.

Students are also strongly encouraged to read a good daily newspaper so they can follow the examples used in lectures and offer their own in class. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Hill Newspaper*, *Roll Call*, and *Politico* are good places to start, but students should feel free to read which ever daily new sources they are accustomed to reading. Periodically, web readings may be assigned from these sources.

## *Course Schedule*

### **January 28 Introduction to Course, Overview, Assignments, & Expectations**

-Read course syllabus, come prepared with questions!

-Lee Drutman, "The Complexities of Lobbying: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Profession" *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 2010), pp. 834-837

### **February 4 Overview on Organized Interests and Group Action in America**

-Grossman, Ch. 1

-Nownes, Pages 1-7, Ch. 2

*NOTE: Submit proposed activity to attend for Advocacy/Lobbying Memo by start of class*

### **February 11 Organized Interests and the Policy Process**

-Grossman, Ch. 2

-Nownes, Ch. 3

-Workshop with Guest Writer on Memo Writing

### **February 18 Presidents' Day**

NO CLASS

-Attend an Advocacy/Lobbying Event

### **February 25 Internal Dynamics of Interest Groups (Organizational Development, Management, and Coalitions)**

-Grossman, Ch. 4, 6

*NOTE: Advocacy/Lobbying Memo due by start of class and submit proposed interviewee for Advocacy/Lobbyist Interview*

### **March 4 Inside Lobbying Strategies**

-Nownes, Ch. 3

Guest Speaker: TBD

### **March 11 Outside Lobbying and Electoral Lobbying Strategies**

-Grossman, Ch. 3

-Nownes, Pages 74-83

*Guest Speaker: TBD*

### **March 18 The Dynamics of Money and Influence in Washington**

-Grossman, Ch. 8, 9

### **March 25 Lobbying Congress**

-Grossman, Ch. 10

-Nownes, Pages 57-68

*NOTE: Advocacy/Lobbying Leader Interview Due*

**April 1        Lobbying the Executive Branch**

- Grossman, Ch. 11
- Nownes, Pages 68-74
- Article TBD

*Guest Speaker: TBD*

**April 8        Lobbying the Judiciary**

- Grossman, Ch. 12
- Richard L. Vining, Jr., “Grassroots Mobilization in the Digital Age: Interest Group Responses to Supreme Court Nominees” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (DECEMBER 2011), pp. 790-802

Guest Speaker: TBD

**April 15       Patriots Day**

NO CLASS

**April 22       Answering the “So What?” A Recap**

- Grossman, Ch. 14
- Nownes, Ch. 7
- Workshop on Op-Ed writing

*Guest Speaker/Writer: TBD*

**April 29       Final Op-Eds with Presentations Due**