



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

Strategies for Issue Development and Policy Change

Summer 2018 Semester

Meeting Time: Tuesday and Thursday Evening, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
May 29th-July 26th

Course Instructor

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Course Description and Objectives

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

The material in this course is designed with advanced undergraduates or graduate students in mind. The course is situated in the political science literature; however, the material examined is appropriate for political science, economics, sociology, policy studies, communications, and journalism students. Students will grapple with defining an organized interest; learn the nuances of all the major strategies for influencing, and attempting to influence political outcomes; agenda setting and message framing strategies; communications and public relations strategies; public policy strategies; electoral strategies, and organizational strategies. Students will learn which types of groups and leaders engage in which strategies, and at what stage of the policy process they are most likely to be effective based upon the context and the 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 and engage the professor and each other in discussion. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify the actors who participate in the federal policymaking process, analyze strategies employed to influence the direction of public policy, critically read scholarly materials, and write and present material.

Finally, this semester we will hear from guest speakers on various dimensions of lobbying—what is like to be lobbied, what it means to be a lobbyist, and also about the various rules and structures that govern lobbying like financial regulations, constitutional considerations and the federal budget process. Students should plan to come to class prepared to engage with our class speakers.

Office Hours

I will make myself available to students for a period of time after each class in the classroom, as needed. I am also available on email, or by telephone for students who would like to consult with me about material or assigned work.

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. I would also appreciate confirmation from you when I send you important class emails about class and assignment logistics.

Course Assignments

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

Class Participation: 25%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Policy Memorandum 10%

Research Paper Outline and Critique: 15% (to be submitted to professor with final paper)

Final Research Paper and Presentation: Paper 20%, Presentation 10%

CLASS PARTICIPATION

25 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 in-class guest speakers. You will be graded on the quality of your participation.

In addition to routine participation, each student will prepare discussion questions and a brief summary of the week's reading for one class. We will determine who is doing which readings by the second class meeting (so that the second week of readings is covered by a student). Students will be responsible for leading discussion in the class they are signed up to review and will receive feedback on their reading summaries and discussion. This work will factor into your overall participation grade. Students are expected to present their ideas and questions to the class. Students should circulate their summaries and questions by 5pm the day before our class meets.

The participation grade also takes into account a student's attendance and punctuality.

POLICY MEMORANDUM

10 percent

Imagine you are preparing your boss who is a Member of Congress to meet with various stakeholders on a policy issue that is likely to be addressed by Congress in hearings and legislation. Select a policy issue of interest and write a two-page memorandum in which you provide a brief overview of the issue and then outline the various interest groups with a stake in the issue. The goal is to prepare your boss to understand all the potential constituencies with an interest in the outcome of policy debate or potential legislative action.

MIDTERM EXAM

20 percent

All students will complete a 90-minute in-class written exam that will consist of several analytical essay style questions that cover material from class readings, lectures and discussions.

FINAL PAPER OUTLINE AND CRITIQUE

15 percent

Students will prepare a substantive outline of their final paper and submit it to an assigned reviewer by November 8. The reviewer will write a two-to-three page review of the paper outline, offering suggestions, posing questions and offering constructive criticism (bullets are fine). We will discuss the reviews in class on November 15 at the writers' workshop (we will break up into groups of the outliner and reviewer).

Detailed information about this assignment will be provided and discussed once the course is underway.

FINAL PAPER

20 percent paper/10 percent presentation=30

The final paper (15 pages including references and appendices) will be the development of a plan to accomplish a specific policy change on an issue of your choosing. You must identify the issue, and make a case for the correct strategy. You can operate from the stand-point of an existing group, or from a fictitious group. Students will be expected to cite both primary and secondary sources. Students will be expected to present an oral presentation of their paper to the class. You will be evaluated both on how well-written the paper is, including grammar, typos, organization and structure; and on the quality of the analysis and the thoroughness of the information.

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."

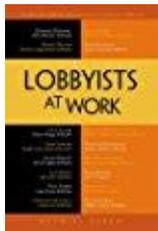
Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Any and all forms of academic dishonesty will be immediately reported to the Boston University Study Washington Academic Center program director, Dr. Walter Montano.

Required Texts

Many 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. The books are available for purchase from the campus bookstore or Amazon.com or similar online book sellers. Chapters assigned from supplemental books will be made available through the BU Washington Semester library.

Evolving Congress. Committee on Rules and Administration, United States Senate, Edited volume, prepared by the Congressional Research Service, the full volume can be accessed here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CPRT-113SPRT89394/pdf/CPRT-113SPRT89394.pdf>

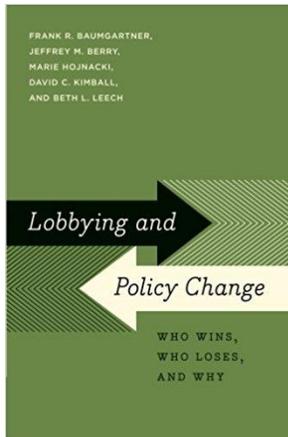
Beth Leech. 2013. *Lobbyists at Work*, Apress. ISBN: 1430245603



Anthony Nownes. 2015. *Interest Groups in American Politics: Pressure and Power*, Routledge, ISBN: 0415894263.



Frank R. Baumgartner et al. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses and Why*. ISBN: 0226039455



Additional readings may also be assigned from various journals or books. These readings are mandatory and will be discussed in class, referenced in papers, and included on the midterm exam. There are copies of all of the books referenced in the syllabus in the BU Washington Semester Program Suite library.

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

Course texts will be available for purchase on Amazon.com. Other readings will be available on in the BU Suite library and/or distributed in class. A copy of the textbooks will be available at the Boston University Washington Center Office for use at the office.

Course Schedule

May 29: **Introduction to Course Basics: Introductions, Overview, Assignments, Objectives and Expectations**

Reading Assignment:

Read course syllabus, come prepared with questions!

Objectives/Questions to be explored in class

- What impressions of the lobbying and advocacy profession do you bring with you to this class?
- Do you understand how interest groups fit into the policy making process?

- What do these terms mean and are they interchangeable?: interest group, outside interest, special interest, lobbyist, issue activist, hired gun, in house lobbyist, 501c3, issue advocacy

May 31: **Federal Budget Process Overview**
Guest Speaker, Megan Lynch, Specialist, Congressional Research Service

Reading Assignment:

Introduction to the Federal Budget Process
<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/98-721.pdf>

Objectives/Questions to be explored in class

- Why is the budget process such a hot topic in DC?
- Why do lobbyists and advocacy groups watch the budget so closely?
- When might outside influences be most effective in the budget process?
- How might we assess arguments about how well the budget process is working?

June 5: **Issue Development and Policy Change—Defining Key Terms, Rules, Concepts and Theories**

Reading Assignment:

James Madison, [*The Federalist Number 10*](#)

Total Lobbying (Nownes, 2006): Chapters 1, 2 (in BU suite library)

Read pages 81-84 on lobbying from *Evolving Congress*, [*Being a Member of Congress, Some Notable Changes During the Last Half Century*](#) (Koempel)

The Lobbying Disclosure Act at Twenty, 2015, CRS Report, (Straus)

Objectives/Questions to be explored in class

- How long has the notion of an interest group in American politics been around?
- What rules govern interest group behavior?
- What do we know about how the role of interest groups in the policy and electoral process has evolved over time?

Additional

Discuss Policy Memorandum Assignment

June 7: **The Constitution and Issue Advocacy—when and why do you lobby a particular branch or level? Guest Speaker, Ken Thomas, Legislative Attorney**

Reading Assignment:

Excerpts from Constitution: TBD

- Does the United State Constitution govern interest group activities? If so, in what ways?
- What amendments protect interest group activities in the American political and policy process?

June 12: **Campaign Finance and the Rules of Electoral Participation—Guest Speaker, Dr. R. Sam Garrett**

Reading Assignments:

Evolving Congress, Part II. Page 163. *The Unchanging Nature of Congressional Elections* (Kevin J. Coleman and R. Sam Garrett)

Garrett, R.Sam, *The State of Campaign Finance Policy: Recent Developments and Issues for Congress*

Objectives/Questions to be explored in class

- How do federal campaign finance laws and regulations govern interest group activities?
- In what ways can an interest group be involved in campaigns?
- How has the involvement of interest groups in campaigns changed over time?

June 14: **We will not meet in the classroom**—assignment is to research your topic for your policy memorandum (see below).

Objective

- **Research for policy memorandum:** Imagine you are preparing your boss who is a Member of Congress to meet with various stakeholders on a policy issue that is likely to be addressed by Congress in hearings and legislation. Select a policy issue of interest and write a two-page memorandum in which you provide a brief overview of the issue and then outline the various interest groups with a stake in the issue. The goal is to prepare your boss to understand all the potential constituencies with an interest in the outcome of policy debate or potential legislative action.

June 19: **We will not meet in the classroom**—write and submit policy memorandum by 9am June 20th.

Objective

- Submit policy memorandum to Professor Gerrity at :
jessicagerrity@gmail.com

June 21: **Theories of the Policy Process**

Reading Assignment:

- Reading Assignment: *Baumgartner and Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, Chapter 2 and Chapter 8

Objectives/ Questions for Class

- How do interest groups fit into theories of the policy process?
- Does this issue area you are interested seem to be explained by major policy process theories?

June 26: **Indirect/Grassroots Lobbying**

Reading Assignment:

Nownes, Chapter 6, Electoral Lobbying
Nownes, Chapter 7, Indirect Lobbying

Leech, Chapter 4, Julie Stewart (single-issue citizen advocate)
Leech, Chapter 5, Laura Murphy (ACLU rights lobbyist)

Objectives/ Questions for Class

- What types of groups and on what issues are most likely to use indirect or grassroots lobbying?
- What goes into building an effective indirect lobbying campaign?
- Discuss Expectations Final Paper Outline

June 28: **Direct Lobbying**

Reading Assignment:

Nownes, Chapter 5, Direct Lobbying
Leech, Chapter 8, Christina Mulvihill (Corporate Lobbyist)
Leech, Chapter 3, Nick Allard (Patton Boggs Lobbyist)

Objectives/ Questions for Class

- When should a lobbyist or group use a direct versus an indirect lobbying strategy?

- What are the key variables one should research before employing a direct lobbying campaign?
- What resources are necessary for an effective direct lobbying campaign?

July 3: Midterm Exam—exam held in class.

July 5: **The Experience of Being Lobbied, Guest Speaker: Jake Bornstein, Legislative Aide for Representative Ken Buck**

Reading Assignment:

[The Interest Group-Staff Connection in Congress: Access and Influence in Personal, Committee, and Leadership Offices](#) (Gerrity, Hardt, Lavelle); PS Political Science and Politics, Vol. 42 (4), pp. 913-917.

[The Complexities of Lobbying: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Profession](#) (Drutman); PS Political Science and Politics, Vol. 43 (4), Oct. 2010, pp. 834-836.

Beth Leech, Chapter 2 *Robert Walker, Former Congressman Lobbyist*, pg. 15-26

Objectives/ Questions for Class

- How does the experience of someone who meets regularly with interest groups match up with what our readings and other discussions have described?
- What strategies seem to be the most effective, according to our speaker?
- What are some differences in the way you might approach a committee versus a personal office about an issue of importance?

July 10: **Lobbying in the Present Political Climate, Issue Framing, and Agenda Setting, Guest Speaker, Heather Noonan, Vice President for Advocacy, at League of American Orchestras**

Reading Assignment:

NYT: How to Get Rich in Trump's Washington

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/30/magazine/how-to-get-rich-in-trumps-washington.html>

A Lobbyist Explains Why Michael Cohen Wasn't Really Lobbying

<https://www.washingtonian.com/2018/05/15/dcs-lobbyists-would-like-you-to-know-what-michael-cohen-did-wasnt-lobbying/>

Objectives/Questions for the Class

- How might the partisan and ideological climate in DC affect lobbying strategies and successes?

- What does it mean to influence the agenda—how is this done and how do we measure affective agenda setting?
- What are some of the challenges and rewards of lobbying on behalf of the arts? How might this differ from corporate lobbying?

July 12: **Writing Workshop in Class—Details to Follow**

July 17 **How do we know what influences is when we see it? Can we see it? Different Ways of Measuring Influence**

Reading Assignment:

Nownes, Chapter 9: *The Influence of Interest Groups*

Andreas Dür and Dirk De Bièvre, *Journal of Public Policy*, Vol. 27, No. 1, Interest Group Influence on Policymaking in Europe and the United States (Jan. - Apr., 2007), pp. 1-12

Objectives/Questions for the class

- Is maintaining the status quo considered influence?
- Why is it important to measure influence from a lobbyists' perspective?
- Thinking about the policy area you are interested in: how would you measure lobbying influence or effectiveness?

July 19 **Closing Discussion—Answering the *So What?* Question, Evaluating Potential Lobbying Reforms**

Reading Assignment:

New Directions (Grossman): Chapter 13, *Evaluating Reforms of Lobbying and Money in Politics* *Copies in BU Suite Library

Nownes, Chapter 9, *Conclusion: The Role of Interest Groups in American Politics*

Objectives/Questions for the class

- How do we decide when and what types of lobbying reforms are needed?
- How do we evaluate proposed reforms?
- What are the costs and benefits of some recent proposed lobbying reforms?

July 24 **Final Paper Presentations, In Class**

July 26 **Final Paper Presentations, In Class**