

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2016

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Public Affairs, John Glenn Col
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org John Glenn College of Pub Aff - D4240
College/Academic Group John Glenn College of Pub Aff
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 2367
Course Title Writing and Communication in Public Affairs
Transcript Abbreviation Wrt&Com in PubAfrs
Course Description Being an effective communicator can determine the reach and impact of policy, as well as the ability to influence change. In this course, you will become a better writer and speaker on a topic of public policy—including communicating to diverse audiences with differing information demands.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 7 Week, 12 Week (May + Summer)
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Seminar
Grade Roster Component Seminar
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites English 1110 or equivalent and sophomore standing; or permission of instructor
Exclusions

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 44.0401
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:
Level 2 (2367)

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Upon completion of this course, students will
- Demonstrate the ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively regarding issues of public concern through critical analysis, discussion, and writing
- Be able to apply written, oral, and visual communication skills and conventions of academic discourse to the challenges in the public policy process.
- Be proficient at accessing and using information critically and analytically
- Be prepared to speak articulately about policy or management issues in high-pressure situations, such as media interviews and legislative testimony
- Be able to write succinctly to leverage research to inform a contemporary policy or management issue

Content Topic List

- "General Methods" for Communicating in the Policy Process
- Analyzing and Advising in the Policy Process
- Knowing the Record and Your Arguments
- Requesting Action or Proposing Policy – Types of Briefing Memos
- Visualizing Public Policy
- Informing Policy Makers
- Saying it Well, in a Public Forum

Attachments

- Public Affairs 2367.docx: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Adams,Christopher John)
- GE Rationale and Assessment Plan Writing and Oral Communication 070215.docx: GE Rationale and Assessment Plan
(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Adams,Christopher John)
- Political Science Concurrence.pdf: Concurrence
(Concurrence. Owner: Adams,Christopher John)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Adams,Christopher John	09/29/2015 11:10 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Adams,Christopher John	09/29/2015 11:11 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Hallihan,Kathleen Mary	09/30/2015 03:43 PM	SubCollege Approval
Approved	Greenbaum,Robert Theodore	09/30/2015 07:54 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle,Danielle Nicole	09/30/2015 07:54 PM	ASCCAO Approval



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

JOHN GLENN COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PUB AFRS 2367 – 3 Credits

Writing and Communication in Public Affairs

Autumn 2016, Location TBD

Instructor:

Office:

Email:

Office Hours:

Teaching Assistant:

Office: 240A Page Hall (the TA room)

Email:

Office Hours:

Course goal and objectives: PA 2367 meets the GE Second Writing Course requirements. Students are skilled in written communication and expression, reading, critical thinking, oral expression, and visual expression.

General Education Course Objectives:

Students who take this course will:

1. Demonstrate the ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively regarding issues of public concern through critical analysis, discussion, and writing.
2. Apply written, oral, and visual communication skills and conventions of academic discourse to the challenges in the public policy process.
3. Access and use information critically and analytically.

Additional Course Objectives:

4. Write succinctly to leverage research to inform a contemporary policy or management issue;
5. Design communications for multiple policy and management audiences;
6. Be prepared to speak articulately about policy or management issues in high-pressure situations, such as media interviews and legislative testimony;
7. Write for communications channels that influence modern policy creation and implementation, including the Web, video, traditional media, and social media; and,
8. Exhibit skills in editing peer work.

The objectives will be met through assignments and in-class exercises of public affairs oriented writing assignments (a short problem description, a legislative history, position paper, briefing memo, written testimony and social media pieces); oral exercises (elevator speech, media interview and testimony); and visual design critique. In addition, peer review and revision are built into the position paper and briefing memo.

Course Description

Being an effective communicator can determine the reach and impact of policy, as well as the ability to influence change. In this course, you will become a better writer and speaker on a topic of public policy—including communicating to diverse audiences with differing information demands.

By writing and critiquing your own work and that of your in-class colleagues, you will hone your abilities as a writer and editor. By preparing yourself and others to speak on policy topics, you will better understand the importance of delivering a concise and convincing policy argument via testimony and speeches. At the completion of the course, you will have created a portfolio of artifacts that demonstrates your mastery of communications tactics, and you will have a better sense of communications strategy to apply to future policy problems.

The purpose of this course is to provide practical communication experience to inform and influence public affairs issues. The course assignments aim to develop the competence, confidence, and rhetorical understanding needed by communicators in public life and governmental processes. Assignments are focused on an area of your personal interest, allowing you to conduct an in-depth exploration of an issue you care about through a variety of methods (briefs, speeches, social media posts). The instructor will help you learn to create communications strategy and activate tactics to reach policy goals. Readings and homework assignments will strengthen your individual capabilities. And peer-to-peer engagement builds the competence and confidence to engage in public life.

Course Materials

Required:

A Practical Guide to Communicating in the Policy-Making Process

3rd Edition

Catherine F. Smith

ISBN: #978-0199933921

A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis

Eugene Bardach

ISBN: #978-1608718429

An Easyguide to APA style

Beth M Schwartz; R Eric Landrum; Regan A R Gurung

Find more information about:

ISBN: #978-1412991247

Recommended: Joseph M. Williams, *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. Any edition.

Students can access textbook information via the Barnes & Noble bookstore website: www.shopOhioState.com as well as from their BuckeyeLink Student Center. This information is disseminated by B&N to all area bookstores. You may buy from a store of your choice and/or shop for books (always use ISBN# for searches) on line.

In addition to assigned texts, students are to follow the news and bring topics of interest to class.

Note: All additional materials needed are available on Carmen.

Grading

Class Participation – 15%

Problem Description – 510%

Position Paper – 25%
Briefing Memo – 25%
Testimony – 25%

93 - 100	A	80 - 82	B-	68 - 69	D+
90 - 92	A-	78 - 79	C+	64 - 67	D
88 - 89	B+	73 - 77	C	63 & below	E
83 - 87	B	70 - 72	C-		

Assignments

Nearly all assignments revolve around a single issue chosen by you (student) and approved by the instructor. Selection will take place during Week 2 of class. Assignments build off one another. In addition, peer-review and instructor-review of drafts help you to become a better writer through the revision process.

For all assignments use 1" margins, and use 12-point font Times New Roman. Single-space your papers. The papers must be free of grammatical errors and must present evidence that you have done research on the topic. Be sure to provide citations for statistics and controversial claims. You must use APA, 6th edition style to format your citations. Use the APA Easyguide to aide as your reference.

Deposit your papers in a .doc or .docx format (not a .pdf) in the Carmen Dropbox by the due date. Any late papers will be reduced by one full letter grade for each day the paper is late. Day one begins the minute after the paper is due. In addition, bring a copy of your paper to class for days we are doing peer review in class. Peer review days are noted in the course schedule below.

Class Participation: Class participation 15% of your grade and is based upon both attendance and participation. We will be doing activities in most of the classes related to the topic of discussion. Therefore your attendance and meaningful participation is required in each class. Repeated absences will negatively affect your grade. If you are present in class but are distracted by other reading, texting, or social media, I will reduce your in-class contribution points. "Being here now" makes a difference.

Problem Description: A Problem Description is a statement of an issue of public concern and influential conditions and interests. This short paper answers such questions as: What are the problematic conditions and what problem do they cause? What is your concern and your intended readers' concern? Who else is concerned? What are the key disagreements and agreements among those concerned? Your audience is a specific stakeholder, identified by you, that you believe needs to consider this problem as part of their agenda. A detailed rubric can be found on Carmen. Follow the formatting instructions, above. Refer to Smith, Chapter 3, for guidance on writing your Problem Description. This paper is to be close to 250 words, or about 1/2 page, single-spaced. This writing assignment is worth 10% of your grade.

Position Paper: Your position paper will outline the problem, the public policy issues, a question about the issues (that has at least two answers), your claim, and support for your claim. You are writing on behalf of an organization that works on this public policy issue to a decision-maker. A detailed rubric can be found on Carmen. Follow the formatting instructions, above. Refer to Smith, Chapter 6, for guidance on writing your Position Paper. Your paper is to be about 500 words, or about one page, single-spaced. This writing assignment is worth 25% of your grade.

Briefing Memo: Building from the previous assignments, your Briefing Memo will provide your audience with a readily consumable, short and quickly comprehended summary of your issue. Your audience is your "supervisor," who is the decision-maker that can make change given your policy issue. This summary includes your problem description, legislative history and your position. A detailed rubric can be found on Carmen. Follow the formatting instructions, above. In addition, format this memo as a memo. Refer to Smith, Chapter

8, for guidance on writing your Position Paper. Your paper is to be about 500-1000 words, or about one to two pages, single-spaced. You may include attachments. This writing assignment is worth 25% of your grade.

Testimony: You will provide both written and oral testimony. The audience for your testimony is the chair of a decision making group appropriate to your topic (e.g., Ohio House of Representatives, city council, zoning commission, school board meetings). Working from your briefing memo, you will distill your memo down to a two minute public comment. Afterwards, you may be asked one to two questions from the instructor or classmates. A detailed rubric can be found on Carmen. Follow the formatting instructions, above. Refer to Smith, Chapter 9, for guidance on writing your Position Paper. Your testimony will be about 300 words (which is about two minutes of speaking). You may include attachments. This assignment is worth 25% of your grade.

Turnitin

When you submit items to Dropbox, Turnitin's "OriginalityCheck" is turned on. See the OSU website: <http://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmen/dropbox-turnitin-suite#overview>. OriginalityCheck is a service provided that scans your entire submission and then compares your text to other works (including your own) to determine how much of your paper matches. See the following web page for best practices when writing your homework and papers: <https://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmen/dropbox-turnitin-suite-students>

Writing Assistance

The Writing Center is a key resource for writing assistance. The following is from their website (<https://cstw.osu.edu/students>): The Writing Center works "one-one-one with undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff at Ohio State on writing projects. Writing consultants are able to review writing at any stage, from brainstorming to a final draft, as well as help with non-paper assignments such as presentations, blogs, etc." Consultants are available by appointment, on a walk-in basis or online.

Attendance Policy

See "Class Participation" under assignments."

Digital Etiquette

Lap-tops, tablets and phones are not required for this class. Limit lap-top and tablet use in class for class purposes only (ex. note taking). Phones are not to be out or used in class except for cases of emergency. Please let me know if you need to have your phone out in class. If you think you may distract other students, consider sitting towards the back. If a student is distracting you, feel free to change seats.

Academic Misconduct Policy

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

Student Accommodation Policy

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the

instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>. Students not certified by the Office of Disability Services but with any reason for concern about accommodation should feel free to contact the instructor at their earliest convenience.

Course Schedule

August 24th: Class Introduction

- *In-class Exercise:* Getting to know you - biosketch of classmate

August 29th: "General Method" for Communicating in the Policy Process, Part 1

- *Readings:* Chap 1-2, Smith
- *Guest Speaker:* David Lincove, OSU librarian, "Navigating OSU library resources"

August 29th: "General Method" for Communicating in the Policy Process, Part 2

- *Readings:* Carmen reading Levine
- *In-class Exercise:* What do you care about? Brainstorm on topics

September 7th: What's the problem? And the Process of Peer Review

- *Readings:* Chap 3, Smith; Bardach 1-10; Carmen reading Lamont
- *In-class Exercises:* 1. Framing and Alternative Frames; 2. Select topic; 3. Form peer review teams

September 12th: Assembling Evidence

- *Readings:* Bardach 10-15
- *In-class Exercise:* Problem definition peer review

September 14th: Analyzing and Advising

- *Readings:* Chap 4, Smith
- *In-class Exercise:* Elevator speech on topic and assessment
- *Due by class time:* Problem Description (bring a copy to class)

September 19th: Knowing the Record, Legislative History

- *Readings:* Chap 5, Smith
- *Guest speaker:* TBD, "Understanding legislation and legislative research"

September 21st: Constructing Alternatives

- *Readings:* Bardach 15-26

September 26th: Knowing your arguments, Part 1

- *Readings:* Chap 6, Smith

September 28th: Knowing your arguments, Part 2

- *Readings:* Bardach 56-57
- *In-class Exercise:* CAFO argument analysis

October 3rd: Requesting Action or Proposing Policy

- *Readings:* Chap 7, Smith; Bardach 57-64
- *In-class Exercise:* Position paper outline peer review

October 5th: Types of Briefing Memos

- *Readings:* Carmen examples of Briefing Memos (including budgetary memos)
- *Due by class time:* Position Paper outline (bring a copy to class)

October 10th: Social Media Savvy, Part 1

- *Reading:* Appendix A, Smith
- *In-class Exercise:* Short and sweet: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

October 12th: Social Media Savvy, Part 2

- *Readings:* Carmen readings on social media campaigns
- *Due by class time:* Position Paper draft

October 17th: Visualizing Public Policy, Part 1

- *Readings:* Carmen readings on effective visual communication
- *In-class Exercise:* Critiquing infographics

October 19th: Visualizing Public Policy, Part 2

- *Readings:* None
- *Guest speaker:* TBD, “The Dos and Don'ts of Design”

October 24th: Informing Policy Makers, Part 1

- *Readings:* Chap 8, Smith

October 26th: Informing Policy Makers, Part 2

- *Readings:* None
- *In-class Exercise:* Mock meetings with policy makers
- *Due by class time:* Position Paper final

October 31st: Writing lab, Part 1

- *Readings:* None
- *Due by class time:* Briefing memo outline draft (bring a copy to class)
- *In-class Exercise:* Briefing memo outline peer review #1

November 2nd: Writing lab, Part 2

- *Readings:* None
- *Due by class time:* Briefing memo outline (bring a copy to class)
- *In-class Exercise:* Briefing memo outline peer review #2

November 7th: Saying it well, in a public forum, Part 1

- *Readings:* Chap 9-10, Smith
- *In-class Exercise:* Critiquing public testimony

November 9th: Saying it well, in a public forum, Part 2

- *Readings:* None
- *Guest speaker:* TBD, “Giving public testimony/comment”
- *Due by class time:* Briefing memo draft

November 14th: Saying it well, with the news media, Part 1

- *Readings:* Sample media releases on Carmen; preparing for a news media interview: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/wc021>
- *In-class Exercise:* Mock media interviews

November 16th: Saying it well, with the news media, Part 2

- *Readings:* None
- *Guest speaker:* Jeff Grabmeier, Senior Director, Research Communications OSU Media and Public Relations

November 21st: Saying it well, in a public forum, it’s your turn!

- *Readings:* None
- *Due by class time:* Written testimony
- *Due in class:* Oral testimony – Group 1

November 28th: Saying it well, in a public forum, it’s your turn!

- *Readings:* None
- *Due in class:* Oral testimony – Group 2

November 30th: Bringing it all together

- *Readings:* None
- *Guest Speaker:* TBD, “Field Experiences as a Policy Analyst

December 5th: You are almost there!

- *Readings:* None
- *In-class Exercise: Peer Review of Draft Briefing Memo*
- *Due in class: Draft Briefing Memo*

Due Finals Week: Briefing memo final

GE Rationale and Assessment Plan
Public Affairs 2367: Writing and Communication in Public Affairs

Course Description and General Education Rationale

The purpose of this course is to provide practical writing and oral communication experience to inform and influence public affairs issues. The course begins with an introduction. During the second week of the course, a general method for communicating in the policy process. The remainder of the course is organized following this general method, in essence a guide to public affairs communication. The remaining weeks include topics on articulating the policy problem, the range of public policy-oriented written outputs (position paper, legislative history, briefing memo, written testimony), techniques for visualizing public policy arguments and solutions, strategies for working with the media, social media skills, orally communicating in public forums, and how to do a peer review. This course builds from the fundamentals of the first writing course by furthering research and communication skills focusing on a specific type of communication and audience.

Course learning goals and objectives are pursued via lectures, in-class discussion, assignments and in-class exercises of public affairs oriented writing assignments (a short problem description, position paper, briefing memo, written testimony and social media pieces); oral exercises (elevator speech, media interview and testimony); and visual design critique. The lectures and in-class discussion closely follow the readings. In addition, peer review and revision are built into the position paper and briefing memo.

The syllabus is designed to provide students feedback in several ways. To begin, nearly all assignments revolve around a single United States policy issue chosen by the student (and approved by the instructor). Selection will take place during Week 2 of class. Assignments build off one another. Students will receive feedback at each step, including instructor reviews of drafts of several of the writing assignments. Students are taught about the peer review process to review other students' work. By writing and critiquing their own work and that of their colleagues, students hone their abilities as a writer and editor. Feedback is provided at the time of oral presentations as well.

The main text book used, *A Practical Guide to Communicating in the Policy-Making Process*, is a central text to writing courses across Public Affairs programs. In addition, the text *An Easyguide to APA style*, is a guide to the predominant style in Public Affairs.

GE in Writing and Communication

A GE assessment plan which explains how the faculty will assess the effectiveness of the course in achieving the GE expected learning outcomes over time, rather than how individual student grades will be assessed. Successful assessment plans include the following:

1. Description of the specific methods the faculty will use to demonstrate that the aggregate of his/her students are achieving the goals and expected learning outcomes of this GE category. Thus, if the faculty plans to use direct measures such as embedded questions on exams, pre and post-tests, or a particular essay assignment, provide some examples. If the faculty plans on using indirect measures such as opinion surveys or student self-evaluations, give concrete examples as well. (Ideally, a plan should include both direct and indirect measures.)
2. Explanation of the level of student achievement expected: What will the faculty define as "success" in terms of student achievement of learning outcomes? For example, for an embedded question, he/she might define "success" as a certain percentage of students answering the

question correctly. For an essay, he/she might define success as a particular average overall score based on a scoring rubric.

3. Description of follow-up/feedback process: Once the faculty collects the data on student achievement, how will he/she use this information to make course improvements? How will the information be archived?

Goals: PA 2367 meets the GE Second Writing Course requirements. Students are skilled in written communication and expression, reading, critical thinking, oral expression and visual expression.

Achieving & Assessing Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Through critical analysis, discussion, and writing, students demonstrate the ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively.

The class provides an introduction to a reading and expressing ideas related to issues in public affairs. Understanding the course readings and lecture is evaluated via both written and oral products. For example, students are graded on research and articulation of a US policy issue via graded items including a problem description, position paper, briefing memo, written testimony. These assignments tie back to the general method for communicating in the policy process, provided in week 2 and supported by the book *A Practical Guide to Communicating in the Policy-Making Process*. Each assignment is accompanied by a detailed grading rubric provided to the students when class begins. The learning outcome will be considered met if, on average, students get 80 percent of the possible points on these items. Instructor and peer-review is built in the syllabus and therefore a formal component of the course, allowing students to make course improvements.

2. Students apply written, oral, and visual communication skills and conventions of academic discourse to the challenges of a specific discipline.

All graded course assignments are focused on a US policy issue of the students choosing. Students must apply the general method of communicating in the policy process to the US policy issue they have chosen to produce the written and oral products required in this course. Each assignment is accompanied by a detailed grading rubric provided to the students when class begins. The learning outcome will be considered met if, on average, students get 80 percent of the possible points on these items. In class exercises, such as the elevator speech, mock meeting with public officials and mock interview will be considered successful if 80 percent of students complete these assignments in class. Instructor and peer-review is built in the syllabus and therefore a formal component of the course, allowing students to make course improvements.

3. Students access and use information critically and analytically.

The graded items in this course rest on the ability for students to conduct individualized research on a US policy issue of their choosing and apply this research using the general method of communicating in the policy process. The grading rubric for each assignment will include measures of the ability of the student to access and use the information on their policy issue to complete the assignment. The learning outcome will be considered met if, on average, students get 80 percent of the possible points on these items. Instructor and peer-review is built in the syllabus and therefore a formal component of the course, allowing students to make course improvements.

From: [Brown, Trevor](#)
To: [Adams, Christopher](#)
Subject: Fwd: Concurrence Request
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2015 6:15:43 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Herrmann, Richard" <herrmann.1@osu.edu>
Date: September 24, 2015 at 2:11:23 PM EDT
To: "Brown, Trevor" <brown.2296@osu.edu>
Subject: Re: Concurrence Request

Dear Trevor,

Sorry for not getting back earlier. I have now heard back from both my department's coordinator of the American Politics faculty and its director of undergraduate studies. PS concurs on PS 2367. We do not teach a similar course.

With regard to 2500 there is a concern. Here is what the coordinator of our American Politics curriculum reported to me. "the content of the syllabus does not overlap significantly with anything we offer in American Politics. However, there are concerns that the title of the course, "Governing through Time", is misleading. It is really a course on historical and comparative perspectives on public administration, and we'd like to see the title revised to be clear about that. The current title implies substantial overlap with political science courses as we teach them, and students looking for a GEC could easily confuse this course for something similar to what we teach."

Do you think it would be possible for you to rename 2500? Perhaps replace the word "Governing" with "Public Administration?"

Sincerely,

Rick

On Sep 21, 2015, at 5:30 PM, Brown, Trevor <brown.2296@osu.edu> wrote:

Hi Rick,

I'm checking in on our concurrence request from this summer re: Public Affairs 2367: Writing and Communication in Public Affairs and Public Affairs 2500: Governing Over Time.

Thanks.

Trevor

<image001.png>

Trevor Brown

Dean

John Glenn College of Public Affairs

350A Page Hall | 1810 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210

glenn.osu.edu

Recently published: "[ManagingComplex Contracts: A Theoretical Approach](#)" with Matt Potoski and David Van Slyke in the *Journal of Public Administration and Theory*.