Hunter College
GSR742 Public Policy Analysis

Fall Semester Course Syllabus
Tuesday 17:35 – 19:25

Overview
The course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the factors that shape public policy work, equip them with the tools to analyze existing policies, identify opportunities and solutions, navigate theoretical obstacles and learn how to develop and implement policy strategies.

Combining theoretical analysis with practical experience, the course will examine the philosophy, politics and economics of public policy, expose students to a range of voices representing diverse policy areas and strategies and provide hands-on experience with policy and advocacy development.

Assigned readings, classroom discussion, individual and group projects and written papers will provide the framework for the course.

Course Requirements (grade)
Class Participation (25 percent)
Active participation in class discussion, based on completion and analysis of required readings and a demonstrated ability to reflect on and respond to opinions offered by other students and speakers is expected.

Group Assignment (25 percent)
Students will work in groups on a policy project. Class team effort is required to identify the project, and groups will be assigned to prepare and assess different positions and campaigns.

Short written and presentation assignments (25 percent)
Students will choose a topic to prepare written testimony for and present at a City Council hearing. Research and outreach to organizations working on the topic of choice is expected.

Final Paper (25 percent)
Students will be expected to write a 10-15 page policy paper on a given topic. Topics will be provided in early October. Students should provide a brief synopsis (1-2 pages) by November 6, 2007 and the final paper is due December 11, 2007.
Course Schedule
August 28
Introduction. Overview of course, description and setting group and individual assignments.

September 4

September 11
Playing the numbers game: The data/policy affair

September 25
Policy narrative: spin weaving and navigating lost meaning

October 2
Building a movement: Engaging community – advocacy approaches (bottom up and top down)

October 9
Employing the Client Voice? Necessity, misrepresentation, distraction (v. the professional voice)

October 16
Virtual Policy: The IT connection and the netroots impact

October 23
Funding realities and grooming for the camera: positioning in the corporate and media world

October 30
Playing politics: Engaging elected officials as politics and policy collide

November 6
Morphing into bureaucracy: getting it done at the government agency level, behind the scenes and implementation stuck on interpretation

November 13
Fieldwork: Coordination and coalition building – the joy of building a platform

November 27
Legalize it: Policy and the law

December 4
Policy focus (topics ranging from international to domestic)

December 11
Policy focus (topics ranging from international to domestic)

Required reading:
Postmodern Public Policy, Hugh T. Miller
Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, Deborah Stone
Unspeak, Steven Poole
Additional book chapters, policy papers, newspaper and magazine articles will be assigned.