January 20, 2018

RPAD 508
Professional Applications II

Instructor: Stephen Weinberg
Tuesdays, 5:45-7:30
Husted 106A
Office: Milne 213B
Office Hours: after class, or by appointment
Teaching Assistants:

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to help prepare students to succeed in internships and your future careers by developing specific skills important to the public and nonprofit work environment. Over the semester we devote attention to three skill sets: 1) writing (and rewriting!) for different audiences, 2) group deliberation and negotiation, and 3) working with diverse populations. Students will demonstrate mastery of these skills through in-class exercises, homework assignments, and peer feedback. At the conclusion of the course students should be able to communicate key ideas, in writing and orally, in a well-organized, concise, and persuasive manner. Students will be able to recognize the role of implicit and egocentric biases in management and policy, and to take steps to reduce the role of such biases in their workplace. Students should be able to consider policy changes from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. Students will be able to elicit information from group members in deliberation, and to prepare for negotiations.

Readings

You are expected to acquire the following books on your own. (If anyone needs me to order them through the bookstore for documentation purposes, please let me know.)


Grading

45% Quizzes and Exercises (11 total)
5% Team Project Plan
25% Team Project
13% Individual Memo
12% Website Policy Statement

Each assignment will receive a letter grade from A to E. I translate these grades into a 4pt scale, with A = 4.0, A- = 3.66, B+ = 3.33, B = 3.0, B- = 2.66, and so on. At the end of the semester, I take a weighted average of all your grades to get your final score. This score is then translated into your semester grade as follows:

3.70-4.00: A
3.50-3.69: A-
3.20-3.49: B+
2.95-3.19: B
2.60-2.94: B-
2.33-2.59: C+
1.95-2.32: C
<1.95: E
Attendance

Attendance is required and necessary for your success in the course. You are allowed two unexcused absences. A third unexcused absence will result in a third of a letter grade deduction. Four unexcused absences will result in failing the course. Absences will be excused only under certain circumstances, such as health or family emergencies, religious observations, or work-related travel.

Office Hours

While I prefer for you to come to my regular office hours, I am happy to schedule appointments if you cannot come at that time. Let me rephrase: I expect and encourage you to schedule appointments if you cannot come at that time. You must e-mail me (sweinberg@albany.edu) to schedule an appointment.

Assignments

All assignments will be submitted via blackboard.

There will be 4 projects relating to a group memo on a policy proposal that your group will choose to analyze. Part of your grade on group memos depends on your team members’ assessments of your participation.

Project plan: team plan for completing the group project

Memo: summarize a distributional issue in your team’s policy area (1 page, plus exhibits)

Group project: group memo proposing a policy reform and assessing its impacts on sub-populations (8-10 pages, plus exhibits).

Website Discussion: public discussion of your group’s proposal, suitable for posting to a senator’s website (2 separate versions for 2 different senators, 2 pages)

There will also be 11 exercises and reading quizzes. All quizzes are open note but NOT open book.
Late Individual Assignments. An assignment is considered late if the electronic file is not submitted before class, and/or if the electronic file is not readable. Assignments submitted 10 minutes after the beginning of class will be considered late and will be automatically reduced by two-thirds of a letter grade (e.g. from an A- to a B). Homework submitted one day after the due date will be automatically reduced by a full letter grade. Individual assignments will not be accepted after that. Exceptions will be made for serious health and family emergencies. It is better to submit homework early rather than late, so please plan ahead if you know you will be missing a class session in which an assignment is due. Given the sheer size of this course, I have much less flexibility with late assignments than I have in my other courses.

Late Team Assignments. If the project plan or team paper is submitted more than an hour late, it will be reduced by one-third letter grade. One day late is a two-thirds deduction. Two days late is a full letter grade assignment.

Collaboration

I strongly encourage you to discuss the individual assignments with your peers, provided that

a) you attempt every assignment on your own before discussing them with colleagues;

b) you write up your own individual assignments from scratch, without looking at your colleagues’ work while you do it; and

c) that you explicitly acknowledge whom you worked with on the first page of the assignment. **Copying a colleague’s work directly is cheating.**

Homework is due at the BEGINNING of class. Extensions may be granted by Prof. Weinberg in the case of serious medical or family emergency.

Plagiarism and Citations

I assume you are familiar with American standards regarding plagiarism. You must familiarize yourself with the information at [http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html](http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html). Plagiarism is a major offense and can receive severe punishments, from automatically failing the course to being expelled from the program. If in doubt about acceptable use of sources, ask.

Correct citations are one of the more important elements in avoiding plagiarism. When you use a source in a memo, make sure to cite it using any standard academic citational method. (I personally prefer the author-date parenthetical citation method used in economics, but I see no
reason to force you to adopt economic norms.) Two things I do care about, no matter which
standard you adopt: a) the titles of sources do not belong in the main text of your paper, but
rather in the Works Cited page or a footnote, and b) article titles go in quotes; book and journal
titles go in italics.

The key to a citation is that the reader must be able easily to track down the source.

Web Citations: It is helpful to the reader to include URLs on the Works Cited page for
material located on the internet, assuming that the URL is permanent and that the website is
universally accessible. You would NOT provide URLs for published journal articles you have
accessed through the library, but you would provide a URL for a government report or for a
working paper downloaded from an author’s website. Some conventions call for including the
date you accessed internet materials; these conventions are necessary in increasingly rare
circumstances. There is a distinction between material that exists in a final, dated form that
happens to be located on the internet and material from fluid web sites. If something is fixed,
such as a journal article, dated working paper, or government report, then you do NOT need to
report the date you accessed the information; simply report the date of the document itself. If
something could be changed at any moment, then you must report the date you accessed the
website.

Academic honesty is something your professor takes very seriously. Cheating in any
form will not be tolerated. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and submitting the
same assignment for multiple classes. Students are required to be familiar with the university’s
academic honesty policies; ignorance is not an excuse for dishonest behavior. In all cases of
cheating, a Violation of Academic Integrity Report will be submitted to the Dean of Graduate
Studies to be placed in your university file, with copies provided to you, the department head,
and the Dean of Rockefeller College. Additional penalties may include some combination of the
following: revision and re-submission of the assignment, reduction of the grade or failure of the
assignment, reduction of the course grade or failure of the course. In particularly serious
instances of cheating, the matter may be referred to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic
Responsibility, and students may be recommended for suspension or expulsion.

Grammar Help

For the individual assignments, you should feel free to seek help in proof-reading your
drafts, provided that a) you make all changes yourself, and b) you acknowledge any such help
explicitly on the first page of your assignment.

Incidentally, I find the Grammar Girl blog to be a useful resource:
Jan 23: introduction

a. Survey to Assign Project Teams, due by Saturday, Jan 27

Section I: Professional Communication

Jan 30: Technical Writing

a. Exercise 1 due before class, via blackboard
b. MPA survey due before class via emailed surveymonkey link. Responses are anonymous, but we will see who took it. It counts as a quiz, worth either an A or an E.

Feb 6: Project Management

a. Readings TBD
b. Exercise 2 due before class, via blackboard

Feb 13: Deliberation 1

a. Sunstein and Hastie, introduction and chapter 1
b. Team Project Plan due, before class

Feb 20: Deliberation II

a. Sunstein and Hastie, chapters 2-4
b. Reading Quiz 1 due before class (covers Sunstein and Hastie intro and ch1-4)

Section II: Serving Diverse Populations

Feb 27: Implicit Biases

a. Take IAT (link provided on blackboard)
b. Bohnet, intro and chapters 1-2
c. Individual Memo due

March 6: the Gendered Workplace

a. Bohnet, chapters 3-5
b. Reading Quiz 2

March 13: SPRING BREAK
March 20: Designing for Diversity
   a. Assigned chapters of Bohnet
   b. Exercise 3

March 27: Examining Egocentrism I
   a. Selected readings from Hochschild, Sue, and Tuan (posted to blackboard)
   b. Reading Quiz 3

April 3: Examining Egocentrism II
   a. Exercise 4

April 10: Writing for the Public
   a. No homework due in class

TEAM PROJECT DUE VIA BLACKBOARD: Friday, April 13

April 17: Negotiation Simulation
   a. Prepare Harvard Business School case studies (you will have to purchase these online through HBS, for about $5)
   b. Reading Quiz 4

April 24: Negotiation
   a. Malhotra and Bazerman, ch1-5, 7
   b. Reading Quiz 5

May 1: Project Debrief
   a. Website Policy Statement due

May 8: Wrap Up
   a. Exercise 5