

Political Science 9637
RPOS 204Y Selected Problems in Pol Sci
Office Hours: By appointment via email, or call 442-3112

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TTH 10:15:00_AM-11:35:00_AM ES0245
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to explore the role of lobbying as part of a larger strategic campaign for influencing the political and statutory process. The role lobbyists play in the legislative arena can be compared to that of lawyers in the judicial arena. Just as lawyers provide the Trier of fact (judge or jury) with points of view on the legal issues pertaining to a case, lobbyists do the same providing local, state, and federal policymakers with points of view on public policy issues.

Students will explore and understand some basic principles for effective lobbying, including ethical standards, campaigning, and the role of the media as well as learn strategies for effective lobbying with a chance to apply and practice them in a simulated classroom format.

This course satisfies the University's General Education Oral Discourse requirement. Thus, the class includes assignments and exercises in which students will communicate ideas, attend to an audience, and actively engage comments and questions.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required readings are available on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Oral Presentations: There will be two oral presentations, one mid semester worth 15% and one end of semester worth 30%.

Papers: There will be several written assignments during the semester:

Action Plans: We will examine several high profile legislative issues in New York State. Students will be required to work in groups and develop an action plan to lobby the New York State Government. The first Action Plan, due mid-semester, will be worth 10% of the final grade. The second Action Plan, due at the end of the semester, will be worth 15% of the final grade.

Memos: Depending on which side of an issue the student groups are assigned, they will be required to prepare a Memorandum in Support or in Opposition. Both Memos, mid and end of semester, are worth 5% each.

Guest Speakers: Several times throughout the semester speakers will be invited in to speak to the class on relevant topics. Students will be required to submit a minimum of three questions for each of these speakers. Submissions of these questions are graded as an "in-class activity" discussed under "Attendance" below.

Attendance: Graded in-class activities and assignments will be part of the course grade worth 20%. Missing class means the student earns an automatic "0" credit for the activities or assignments missed. However, this course has the following NO FAULT safety valve: You may drop 2 in-class assignment

grades. So, if you must miss class for any reason, it will be possible to drop the zero you would automatically receive for missing an assignment that day. If you do not use your safety valve for missed classes, you will be able to use your safety valve to drop any low scores you make even when you DO attend. **Plan carefully for classes that you know you will need to miss. Work, religious practice, sports team travel, military duty, club activities, fraternity/sorority obligations, family responsibilities, assignments for other courses, and even brief illnesses, etc. - these are your responsibility to manage by using your safety valves.**

Cell Phones and Lap Tops: Please make sure your cell phone is turned off as soon as class begins. I view using and checking your cell phone during class as disruptive behavior. I do not allow students to use lap top computers during class.

Academic Honesty Policy: Students are on their honor to be ethical and honest in carrying out all the assignments and requirements of this course. Any violations of this code, such as cheating, copying, plagiarism, or misrepresentation of one's own work, will meet with the appropriate penalties and discipline as outlined in UAlbany regulations. If you have an unclear picture of what constitutes plagiarism, or the limits of acceptable group collaboration, please ask me for clarification. It is also the responsibility of every student to report any observed instances of cheating and plagiarism. Disciplinary actions for such offenses are severe, and include loss of course credit, suspension and expulsion from the University.

Special Needs Policy: Students who have special needs due to learning or other disabilities will be accommodated, and should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students who request accommodation will be asked to provide appropriate documentation.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPICS</u>	<u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS</u>
1/20	Introduction	
1/25	Lobbying and the Constitution	1 st Amendment; "The Dinner"
1/27		Slayton – Tammany Hall
2/1	What Groups Lobby	Lobbying Reconsidered
2/3	Group Project Discussion	Group Project Folder #1
2/8	The Art of Lobbying	Lobbying Folder #1
2/10		Tales from the Sausage Factory
2/15		The Power Broker (Lecturer questions due)
2/17	Guest Lecturer	Interest Group Politics (Memo #1 due)
2/22	*No Class	
2/24	*No Class	
3/1	When Does the Lobbying Start?	Diaries of Mario Cuomo
3/3	Mid-Term Presentations	Group Action Plan #1 due
3/8	Mid-Term Presentations	
3/10	Mid-Term Presentations	
3/15	The Ethics of Lobbying	3/15 Reading Folder
3/17	Lobbying and Public Relations	3/17 Reading Folder
3/22	The Fourth Branch of Government	3/22 Reading Folder (Lecturer questions due)
3/24	Guest Lecturer	3/24 Reading Folder
3/29	*No Class	
3/31	*No Class	
4/5	Campaigns/Politics & Lobbying	4/5 Reading Folder

4/7 **Guest Lecturers - Panel**
4/12 The Future of Lobbying
4/14 **Guest Lecturers - Panel**
4/19 *No Class
4/21 *No Class
4/26 **Final Presentations**
4/28 **Final Presentations**
5/3 **Final Presentations**

4/7 Reading Folder
4/12 Reading Folder (**Lecturer questions due**)
Memo #2 due

Group Action Plan #2 due