The George Washington
University Elliott School of
International Affairs

IAFF 6159 Section 10: Capstone Course for ISTP
Program
Spring 2017
3.0 Credits

Instructor: Kei Koizumi
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: kkoizumi@gwmail.gwu.edu
Phone: 202 491 3406  Skype: keiindc
Class meetings will be held at 1957 E Street, CISTP Conference Room 4th floor Tuesdays 7:10-9:00 PM

Course Description

This course is the final project for the Masters Program in International Science and Technology Policy. Students produce a policy paper for a client under conditions that are as close to those experienced by a professional consultant as possible. Students, working in teams, find a client with a policy problem, negotiate a terms of reference, research the problem, and produce a policy paper with policy recommendations. Policy recommendations are given in a policy paper and in a public presentation at the end of the semester.

In this course, all work is done by small teams. Typically, a team has 2 to 4 people. In general, 3 people is the best size.

Course Prerequisites
Course work in Masters Program in International Science and Technology Policy; fulfilling requirements to graduate in spring 2017.

Pre-Capstone
In the fall semester, the instructor and students gather in informal pre-capstone meetings to assemble teams and to match each team with a client, and prepare a terms of reference for each team’s project. The pre-capstone preparations are required for all participants in the capstone course.

Goal of Course (Learning Objectives)
At the end of this course, students should be able to conduct policy research for their own organization or a client. They should be able to organize this research into clear policy statements and argue the validity of these policy proposals. They should also be able to know the strengths and weaknesses of the policies that they are recommending. In all, this course has five major goals:
1. The ability to conduct policy research for a client and produce policy recommendations.

The goal is assessed by:
- Negotiated Terms of Reference with a client for policy research. The terms of reference should be clear, logical, and describe work that can be done within a semester.
- Following the schedule for the semester and meeting deadlines; and
- Producing work products on schedule

2. Ability to conduct research in depth.

This goal is assessed by:
- Use of library, web, and other resources to find adequate background on problem;
- Use of interviews with stakeholders to get comprehensive view of problem and issues affecting policy recommendations; and
- Proper use of citations and sources.

3. Ability to craft realistic, actionable policy recommendations that could be used by the client.

This goal is assessed by:
- Use of material from all courses in ISTP that is relevant to the problem;
- Identifying potential actions that are within the legislative, legal, or other scope of the client; and
- Identifying potential actions that are within the scope and resources of the client.

Note: By its nature, policy often is shaped by political beliefs. This course does not require you to produce recommendations that can be accomplished within the current administrative/political structure. As far as possible, the course will judge the work without judging the political nature of the recommendations. However, all policy recommendations need to be accompanied by a statement of how they may be accomplished within the existing political framework. Projects should identify the laws and policies that would need to be changed to accomplish the recommendations.

4. Ability to express policies clearly and argue their value.

This goal is assessed by:
- Clear use of English;
- Papers and presentations that follow policy paper forms;
- Clear oral presentations; and
- Clear use of standard rhetorical forms.

5. Ability to understand strengths and weaknesses of policy.

This goal is assessed by:
- The assessment section of the paper; and
- An honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses in presentations of the project.

Grade Computation:

In general, the grade for the course is computed according to the formulas below. Should there be any anomalies in the class, such as failure to complete the final paper or any other intermediate product, there will be adjustments to the formulas at the discretion of the instructor. The grade will be computed from four products:

Terms of Reference (5%)
A 2-4 page agreement between your group and the client. It should follow the standard Terms of Reference form.
Preliminary Statement of Findings & Annotated Bibliography (10%)

This project is a preliminary statement of the team’s conclusions and a list of reference works that will be used to shape the project. The statement of findings should not exceed 2 pages or 800 words. It should contain:

Current Statement of Policy Goal
Current Proposed Policy Statement
Interviews Completed
Interviews still desired by the team

The Annotated Bibliography should MLA, Chicago, IEEE or some other standard Bibliography format. It should have at least 35 references. In general, it should contain at least:

Ten references that give the background of the policy problem. Usually, these should be books or more formal papers.

Five references describing the theoretical approach (Economic, political, technical, etc.) that you will be using to guide your policy. (In some cases, this has been only one book.)

Twenty references to papers, web sites, news articles, etc., that describe the problem and current attempts at policy solutions.

References to all interviews including subject name, information, and date of interview.

To create the bibliography, you should go to the Library and talk with the reference librarian. In general, you should check JSTOR and Proquest, as well as Science, Nature, NRC Science & Technology Policy, Spectrum, and Foreign Policy.

Early in the semester, the instructor may ask for a preliminary abstract of the capstone paper. This paper will be the form required by the S&T Global conference, the graduate Science & Technology Policy conference that is held every spring at the AAAS in Washington, DC. You will be strongly encouraged but not required to submit your capstone project to the conference and deliver a talk at the meeting. The due date for the preliminary abstract may be adjusted to match the deadline for submitting abstracts to the conference. (The 2017 conference is March 24-25, 2017; deadline for submissions is January 13. See stglobal.org.)

Draft Paper (15%)

A rough draft of the final paper (see below). It will be returned with detailed comments.
Policy Paper (50%) An 8,000 word paper in standard policy-paper format. (This will be explained and documented in class.) This paper should present the policy recommendations and argument for their acceptance. It should present the background for the problem and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the policy. 

It should contain:
- Executive Summary
- Introduction to Problem
- Background of policy
- Policy statement
- Argument Assessment
- Bibliography (need not be the same as the submitted bibliography)
- Appendices (may have one or more appendices that contain supporting material. The appendix will not be counted against the 8,000 words)
- Author Biographies

Note: Your client may require the policy paper in a different form. However, the final paper for the course will have to have all the elements above in order to comply with the structure of the class.

Presentation (20%) A 30-minute powerpoint presentation of the policy recommendations and the background. The presentation will be given to class. You may give a separate presentation to your client.

Notes on grades:
The course is graded on the GW 0-4.0 scale. Each point is worth one letter grade. 0.0=F; 1.0=D; 2.0=C; 3.0=B; 4.0=A. Clarity of written expression as well as content will be used to assign all grades. Your clients will be asked for their assessment of the project. However, the final grade is assigned by the instructor.

Criteria for Assessing Capstone Project:
The Capstone will be evaluated according to the following five categories. These are based on the capstone paper, the proposed policy, the strategy for getting the policy accepted and implemented, and the development process.

Clarity and Logic of Expression (20%), including:
Clear writing in English
Logical organization of text
Complete References and Supporting Material

Completeness of Policy Proposal (20%), including:
- General context for proposal
- Alternatives and parallel or similar policies
- Strategy and alternatives for approval and implementation

Assessment of Ability of Proposal to Meet Policy Goals (20%), including:
- Benefits and drawbacks (or Strengths and Weaknesses) of proposal to client
- Benefits and drawbacks of proposal to other stakeholders
- Benefits and drawbacks of alternatives to the client
- Benefits and drawbacks of alternatives to other stakeholders

Assessment of Strategy (20%), including:
- Benefits and drawbacks to client
- Benefits and drawbacks to other stakeholders
- Ability or likelihood of approval
- Ability or likelihood of implementation

Completeness of Development Process (20%), including:
- Thoroughness of information collection (client and stakeholder interviews)
- Thoroughness of research
- Full use of appropriate diverse points of view
- Full use of appropriate intellectual frames
  (Administrative, political, economic, physical, social, etc.)
- Client management – quality of relationship with client
- Team collaboration

Weekly Team Updates
Each group shall have a weekly update meeting or some other form of communication with the instructor. When the class meets, these updates will generally be informal meetings with the instructor during that period. During other weeks, it can take the form of an email report or a skype call or a formal meeting, should the group desire it or the instructor feel the need. Each report should cover the following:

- Progress made since the prior meeting;
- Plans for the coming week;
- Problems that the group is currently facing.

Work Plan and Division of Labor
Along with the Annotated Bibliography, each team must submit a work plan for completing the capstone project. This plan identifies the major tasks remaining for the capstone and identifies individuals responsible for each major activity. The Work Plan represents an agreement among the team members. It is intended to be a flexible document. It can be changed at any time by full consent of the team and resubmitted to the instructor. However, if any team is unable to complete the capstone because of disagreements or claims that individuals are not fulfilling their responsibilities, the instructor will review the issues and help the group determine a course of action based on the most recent work plan.

Reading List

Readings for this course will be distributed a week prior to discussion. The readings are used to illustrate points of the process and change from year to year.

Webpage

The web page for the class will be on Blackboard.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction and Overview:

Overview of the course
Discussion of Terms of Reference
Presentation of current problem ideas
End of Week: Terms of Reference and Workplan Due

Week 2: Research and Bibliography

Week 3: Individual Group Discussions (email or video call, flexible times)

Week 4: Group Meeting

Week 5: Group Meeting

Week 6: Group Meeting

Week 7: Bibliography & Abstract Due (No meeting)

Week 8: Short Group Meetings
Groups present state of research, successes, and problems

Week 9: Group Meetings

Week 10: Group Meetings
Be prepared to discuss policy recommendations & argument

Week 11: Draft Due

Week 12: Presentation Preparation

Weeks 13-14: Presentations
Final Draft is due the first Monday of Final Exam Week
Course Policies
This is a semester project. Students should plan on completing the work within the 14 weeks of the term. While the instructor will be flexible in accommodating personal needs and will negotiate some deadlines, teams should plan on completing the projects on deadline, as meeting deadlines is part of the course experience.

All work products should be submitted via email in standard Microsoft Word Format. If this is a problem, please contact the instructor to negotiate some other form.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND POLICIES
University Policies on teaching can be found at:
http://www.gwu.edu/~academic/Teaching/main.htm

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For the remainder of the code, see:
http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

Support for Students Outside the Classroom
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to:
http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counselling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

Security
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.
Fall Semester

Two in-person meetings

Week of December 12: Group Conferences (usually conducted over Skype)

Spring Semester

January 13 is the initial deadline for abstract/paper submissions for the ST Global conference

Week 1: January 17 Initial Meeting

DEADLINE: Terms of Reference and Workplans Due at the end of the week

Week 2: January 24 Meeting Bibliography & Research Library Conference Room

Week 3: January 31 Individual Group Discussions (email or video call, flexible times)

Week 4: February 7 Group Meeting

Week 5: February 14 Group Meeting

Week 6: February 21 Group Meeting

Week 7: February 28 Deadline: Preliminary Statement and Annotated Bibliography and Work Plan

Week 8: March 7 Short Group Meetings

Week of March 14 is Spring Break

Week 9: March 21 Group Meetings

March 24-25 is the ST Global Conference 2017

March 27-28 is the AAAS Forum on S&T Policy

Week 10: March 28 Group Meetings

Week 11: April 4 Draft Due

Week 12: April 11 Presentation Preparation

Week 13: April 18 Presentations

Week 14: April 25 Presentations

Final Draft is due Monday, May 8