

# The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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**M.P.S. in Legislative Affairs**  
Spring 2019

**Politics and Public Policy**  
LGAF 6201 LH  
3 Credits

Thursday, 6-8pm  
Hall of States

## **BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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### **Instructor**

Stephanie Vance

Stephanie D. Vance, also known as the “Advocacy Guru,” is a thirty-year veteran of the Washington, D.C. political scene. She worked on Capitol Hill for three different members of Congress in a variety of roles including Legislative Assistant, Legislative Director and Chief of Staff. She's also been a lobbyist for National Public Radio and a legislative affairs associate for a prominent DC law firm.

In 2005 Stephanie founded Advocacy Associates, a firm dedicated to helping individuals and organizations be both heard *and* agreed with in the legislative environment. To achieve that goal she provides in-person and online trainings on effective advocacy for thousands of organizations and individuals around the world, including such big names as the Humane Society of the United States, the National Association of Realtors, and the American Medical Association. Stephanie's authored five non-fiction books including *Citizens in Action: A Guide to Influencing Government* and *The Influence Game*.

Stephanie holds a Master in Legislative Affairs degree from George Washington University, a Master in Liberal Studies degree from Georgetown University, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Western Colorado University. She lives and works in Washington D.C..

### **Contact Information**

(202) 528-0705  
svance@advocacyassociates.com

### **Communication**

Email is the best way to contact me. I check my email several times per day and will usually respond within 24 hours. I am available to meet with students after class and by appointment. Please call/text only for immediate concerns (if you may have to miss class due to illness, for example). Text is always better than calling. For longer discussions, please e-mail first to set up a time to talk.

### **Blackboard Site**

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. More details to come!

### **Academic Integrity**

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. 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.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

### **University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays**

- Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
- Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
- Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

### **Support for Students with Disabilities**

GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at <http://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

### **In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class**

If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we must leave, we will meet at the Dunkin Donuts (on the lower level of Union Station) to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: <http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>.

### **Attendance Policy**

You are expected to attend all of the classes. If you are unable to attend, please let me know prior to class via email ([svance@advocacyassociates.com](mailto:svance@advocacyassociates.com))

### **Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation**

Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours in instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

### **Course Evaluation**

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

Dr. Steven Billet  
Director, Legislative Affairs Program  
[sbillet@gwu.edu](mailto:sbillet@gwu.edu) | 202-994-1149

Dr. Jack Prostko  
Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty  
Development  
College of Professional Studies  
[jackp@gwu.edu](mailto:jackp@gwu.edu) | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand  
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  
[sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309

## **THE COURSE**

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### **Legislative Affairs Program Objectives**

Upon completion of the Master's degree in Legislative Affairs, students will:

1. Gain both theoretical and practical knowledge related to the U.S. Congress, general issues in the legislative arena, and how to effectively advance legislation;
2. Hone their oral and written communication skills in both theoretical and technical aspects of legislative affairs;
3. Be able to conduct cutting-edge research and engage in effective problem solving by learning critical thinking skills; and
4. Learn how to work effectively with others, the value of collaborative work, and will understand ethical issues involved in the legislative arena.

### **Graduate School Expectations**

Students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Use effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments on their required due dates and times.
2. Have attained a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
3. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

### **Course Description and Overview**

What is public policy? What is the role of politics in setting the government's policy agenda? How does the political situation in Washington affect the issues our government acts on, and the policy choices our government makes? This course focuses on these questions. Policy choices are POLITICAL decisions. What that means, and how it affects policy outcomes, is our subject.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

The course has three learning objectives; by the end of the course, students will:

- Be familiar with public policy theories and how they aid in understanding modern political debates

- Recognize the key players (both inside and outside of government) who participate in the US national public policy-making system, what roles they play, and how they take part in decision-making
- Examine their roles/prospective roles in the public policy system and understand how to perform those roles more effectively

**Course Requirements**

Attend class. Learn!

**Evaluation and Grading**

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due Date	Weight
Midterm Quiz	Covering readings for classes 1-7	Feb. 28th	15%
Paper No. 1	Policy recommendation memo	Mar. 7th	15%
Presentation	Oral presentation of policy memo #1	TBD	10%
Paper No. 2	Policy recommendation memo	Apr. 18th	20%
Mock Senate Hearing	Consideration of policy proposal	Apr. 25th	10%
Final Quiz	Covering readings for classes 8-13	May. 2nd	15%
Attendance & Participation	In-class discussions and preparation	Always	15%
Total			100%

**Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:**

Grade*	Grading Standard
A 94-100	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.
A- 90-93	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+ 87-89	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B 83-86	Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a “B” is viewed as unacceptable.
B- 80-82	You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.
C+ 77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C 73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- 70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F Below 70	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

\*Please note that you will be penalized for late submission of assignments.

**Required Text and Learning Materials**

- Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, John W. Kingdon (an older edition is fine)
- The President's Agenda (3rd edition), 1998, by Paul Light
- The Laws that Shaped America, 2009, by Dennis Johnson
- Additional readings will be assigned.

**Tentative Course Calendar\***

\*The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

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**Week 1 – January 14**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Introductions
- Overview of the course
- A TBD Case Study

Reading Due Today:

- *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Chapters 1-3

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Assign discussion leaders
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**Week 2 – January 21**

Topic and Content covered

- Current policy review
- Policy origins, problems in addressing them and communities

Reading Due Today:

- *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Chapters 4-6
- *Laws*, Chapter 7 (The GI Bill of 1944)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Professional resume or CV
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**Week 3 – January 28**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- National Mood and other aspects of the “political stream”
- When to influence policy through policy windows

Reading Due Today:

- *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Chapters 7-9
- *Laws*, Chapter 8 (The Marshall Plan of 1948)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- One-page “report” on a policy issue
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#### **Week 4 – February 4**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- Politics, Policy, and Process: A Capitol Hill Perspective

Reading Due Today:

- CRS Report: Introduction to the Legislative Process in the U.S. Congress (available online at: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42843.pdf>) – *may be a refresher for some students!*
- Reading to be assigned by instructor

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Prepare for “Choose a Congressman” discussion
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#### **Week 5 – February 11**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- The Policy Influence “Three-Legged Stool”

Reading Due Today:

- To be provided by instructor

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- One-page proposal for policy memo #1 due
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#### **Week 6 – February 18**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- Pre-quiz review

Reading Due Today:

- *Laws*, Chapter 9 (The Interstate Highway Act of 1956)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- *Laws* discussion
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### **Week 7 – February 25**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- Learning practical politics from some of “The Greats”

Reading Due Today:

- Readings provided by the instructor

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Midterm Quiz: covers sessions 1-6
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### **Week 8 –March 4**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- Lobbying 101 – Beyond the “Smoke-Filled Room”

Reading Due Today:

- Readings provided by the instructor

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Be prepared to answer: What is lobbying? What makes for an effective lobbyist?
  - Policy memo #1 due in class
  - Assign presentation dates
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### **Week of March 11 -- SPRING BREAK**

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### **Week 9 – March 18**

Topic and Content Covered:

- Current policy review
- How Presidents develop agendas

Reading Due Today:

- *The President's Agenda*, Introduction + Chapters 1-5
- *Laws*, Chapter 6 (The Social Security Act of 1935)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Presentations begin
  - One-page proposal for policy memo #2 due in class
- 

**Week 10 – March 25**

Guest Lecturer or online alternative TBD

Topic and Content Covered

- Current policy review
- TBD

Reading Due Today:

- *The President's Agenda*, Chapters 6-9
- *Laws*, Chapter 11 (The Medicare and Medicaid Act of 1965)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Presentations continue
- 

**Week 11 – April 8**

Topic and Content Covered

- Current policy review
- The role of facts (and alternative facts) in the policy process
- Choosing the relevant arguments for your policy issue

Reading Due Today:

- Readings provided by instructor
- *The President's Agenda*, Chapters 10-11

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Presentations continue
  - Vote on topic and roles for mock hearing
- 

**Week 12 – April 15**

Topic and Content Covered

- Current policy review
- Choosing relevant influence strategies for introduction, hearings, floor votes and conference committees
- Choosing relevant influence strategies in the regulatory environment

Reading Due Today:

- *The President's Agenda*, Chapter 12
- Readings provided by instructor

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Policy memo #2 due in class
  - Presentations continue
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### **Week 13 – April 22**

Topic and Content Covered

- Current policy review
- Mock hearing

Reading Due Today:

- None

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Prepare for mock hearing
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### **Week 14 – April 29**

Topic and Content Covered

- Current policy review
- Anything else we didn't get to!

Reading Due Today:

- None

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Final quiz: covers sessions 7-13
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### **Copyright Statement**

*Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden. ☺*