

UCSD Winter 2010
100E Interest Group Politics:
The Politics of Interest Groups and Social Movements
Thursday 6:00 pm-9pm
Room:

Instructor

Susan Halebsky Dimock
Office:
Email: shalebsk@ucsd.edu; sue@dimock.net
Cell: 703-946-0806
After class and Tuesday night by appointment

Overview of the Course

This course will explore the role of interest groups and social movement organizations in American politics. The first part of the course will examine the formation and internal dynamics of social movement organizations and interest groups. We will discuss why people protest, how groups get started, why people join groups and how groups maintain themselves. The second part of the course will investigate how organized interests attempt to achieve their goals. We will examine the strategies movement organizations and groups employ to achieve their policy goals and evaluate the effects of their actions. In this section of the course we will focus on Congress, lobbying, indirect lobbying, and how interest groups work with the executive branch.

Required Reading:

Reader - Available from US Printing and Copying 1725 M Street, NW

Course Requirements

This is a seminar class. Your attendance is mandatory. Active participation in class is a requirement of the course. You are expected to read assigned readings *before* attending class. You are expected to complete homework assignments on time. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and their projects. We will have many guest speakers during the term. You are expected to treat our guests politely and ask questions after their presentations.

The grading in the class is based on class participation, home work assignments, a backgrounder on your issue, a one-pager for your lobby day visit, participation in the lobby day exercise and a write-up of your lobbying visit, and a final paper. In this class you will be required to select, early on, a policy-related issue you are passionate about. This issue will be the basis of your work in this class. Homework assignments will lead to two papers, one background paper on your issue and a final paper that develops a comprehensive strategy for achieving your policy

goals. You will be required to present your research to the class at least once during the course. The class will culminate in a “lobby day.” You will be required to lobby your representative in Congress on your issue of concern.

Homework: You will have homework assignments that will be due in class. This homework will consist of reading questions, questions in preparation for scheduled assignments and scheduled assignments.

Attendance Policy: Seminar attendance is absolutely essential to satisfy the first element of the course requirement. Skipping just one night of class is the equivalent of skipping an entire week in a regular course. If you have an absolute conflict on a night that you cannot resolve, it will be forgiven once *as long as you contact me ahead of time to explain your absence*. Missing a class without contacting me ahead of time, or missing more than one class under any circumstance, automatically precludes you from receiving full credit for class participation and the homework assignments tied to class attendance.

No use of cell phones or laptops in class.

Grading:

Class Participation: 20%

Homework: 10%

Backgrounder: 25%

Lobby Day One-Pager: 10%

Final Paper: 35%

Class Schedule

Week 1 January 7 **Introduction**

HW: A list of 3 policy-related issues you are passionate about and a sentence or two about each.

Also, identify an interest group or social movement organization in Washington, DC that works on each of your issues, if such groups exist. Be sure to include the url addresses of these organizations where possible.

This homework is due via email by **9 am, Tuesday, January 12. Please do not do an attachment, type your work into the email.**

Week 2 January 14 **Interest Groups and Social Movement Organizations in Washington**

Readings: *Nownes*, chapters 1 and 2
 Burstein (Costain and McFarland, Chapter 3)
 Smucker, The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide

HW: By the end of week 3, make an appointment to meet with the appropriate staff member of your member of Congress or your member of Congress to talk about your issue. Schedule this meeting sometime **after week 8 (February 25)** so that you have sufficient time to maximize your knowledge of your issue and practice your pitch in the lobby day simulation.

Week 3 January 21 **Why Interest Groups and Movement Organizations Form and Grow and Internal Group Dynamics**

Readings: *Nownes*, chapter 3 and 4
Cress and Snow (Costain and McFarland, Chapter 5)
Imig (Costain and McFarland, Chapter 9)
Patterson and Singer

Week 4 January 28 **Interest Groups and the Economy**

Readings to be given out in class

Week 5 February 4 **Interest Organizations and Congress and Direct Lobbying**

Readings: Smucker
Wright (Chapters 1, 3 and 4)

Week 6 February 11 **Indirect Lobbying:
Narratives and Crafting Your Message**

**this class may be moved to February 9 due to speaker schedule*
Readings: West and Loomis, excerpt from *The Sound of Money*
Tierney and Frasure (Cigler and Loomis, 1998)

Due: Background paper on your issue and lobby day one pager

Week 7 February 18 **Indirect Lobbying: Part 2
Getting Your Message Out**

Readings: *Nownes*, chapter 8
Brown and Waltzer (reader)
Smucker (reader)

