

University of Washington Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs
International Development Certificate Program
PbAf 532 Capstone
Sample Syllabus from Spring 2010

Learning Objectives and Evaluation:

The goal of this course is to have you apply the knowledge and skills you have learned in your professional life, graduate and undergraduate work, and the IDCP certificate courses, toward answering a question posed by a client working on international development. Your responsibility will be to prepare a group report and presentation to help teams at PATH and the Global Development/Agriculture division of the Bill and Melinda Gate Foundation (BMGF) think about some current issues. The questions they have submitted are real, and complicated.

This task represents a very real situation and set of skills many of you will encounter if you pursue international development work – what underlies the work, what you work on, who you work with, and how you work. Increasingly, organizations are seeking research and evidence to support their initiatives; seeking to design and implement programs based on existing knowledge; .. You are unlikely to be able to choose the topic you want to work on, but rather, will need to apply your skill set to whatever issue that arises, or that your organization determines is a priority. You are likely to be working in groups, comprised of individuals with different backgrounds but common goals. And finally, you are unlikely to ever have perfect clarity on the question or the answer, or enough time to do a perfect job. Helping to narrow and focus the question to most effectively answer the key questions may be one of the most valuable tasks you perform.

You will have approximately two quarters within your groups to provide as deep and informed an answer as possible. Each task force will prepare a written report and present their main findings orally (tentative date is Friday, May 21).

Our outside evaluators will be team leads and program directors from PATH and from groups in the Global Development/Agriculture division at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

The BMGF and PATH officers will evaluate your oral report – its delivery, substance, and your ability to respond to their questions (25% of your grade). I will evaluate your written report and how well you meet each deadline through the quarter (50%), and your teammates will evaluate your ability to work respectfully, diligently, and conscientiously within your group – the effort and manner in which you carry out your responsibilities (25%).

Groups will be able to use some, though not all, of our Friday sessions. You will be expected to put in time outside of this class, but Fridays will give you all a common time when you can meet.

Groups and topics appear at the end of this syllabus. Each group will have 2-4 members. I will ask one student to act as a coordinator for each group, and one student should act as the overall editor for each group. The editor **MUST** be a strong writer, with superior skills in organizing and presenting information. This individual must understand how to write as an analyst, not an advocate. All individuals will be expected to contribute to the research and writing of the report, but you may need to divide for certain tasks (e.g. researching certain aspects of the question). Part of your initial challenge will be in figuring out how to divide the work up in a way that allows everyone to productively contribute.

Tentative Deadlines

November 20: a list of clarifying questions, stated as clearly as possible

Dec. 4 or January ? : a clear statement of your research question and timeline of tasks (how you are going to answer it).

April 2: Interim detailed outline/lit review that contains: your research question, your methodology (an explanation of how you are answering your question), and relevant theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, or other important background information that constitutes your literature review.

April 16: First draft due (half the groups)

April 23: First draft due (other half of groups)

April 30: Last draft (half the groups) due to me

May 7: Last draft (other half of groups) due to me

May 14: All reports go to outside evaluators. Rehearse presentation

May 21: Presentation to outside evaluators

Fall and Winter Timetable

November 13th

- Introductions
- Overview of taskforce project, topics, and groups

November 20th

- Receive and discuss clarifying question. Get feedback from the entire class on the topics. This will be the only opportunity for awhile to get feedback from the class as a whole.
- Meet in your groups and develop a plan and roles for clarifying your research questions and producing your April 2nd outline and literature review. This plan should include an initial strategy for reviewing the literature (ie identifying what

literature needs to be reviewed) and deadlines for subgroups or individuals on other activities.

December 4 or January meeting

- Progress report from groups, timeline of specific tasks, and a clear statement of your research question
- We will use this class time to offer any background theory and other information that might be useful to the group as a whole.
- Extra time will be used to meet with groups individually

Late February or March meeting

- Progress report from groups on the April 2nd outline and literature review. Groups will meet individually

Spring 2010 Timetable

April 2	Meet as a group	Each group shares 10 minute progress report
April 9	Meet with groups 1-4, group work time	Individual feedback
April 16	Meet with groups 5-7, group work time	Individual feedback – 1 st draft due groups 1-4
April 23	Meet with groups 1-4, group work time	Individual feedback – 1 st draft due groups 5-7
April 30	Meet with groups 5-7, group work time	Individual feedback – final draft due groups 1-4
May 7	Meet with groups as needed, group work time	Individual feedback – final draft due groups 5-7
May 14	Meet as a group	Rehearsal
May 21	Meet as a group with guests	Presentation day
May 28	Guest speakers	
June 4	Guest speakers	

Suggested Task Force routines and responsibilities

a) Everyone:

- Share all the new readings and insights through emailing and website
- Look for interconnections among groups

- Work hard and meet your deadlines
- Report any problems in the subgroup to the student coordinator, and if this does not work, report the problems to me in my office hours or by email.

b) Student coordinator:

- Set-up and coordinate email lists and consider a commonviews website
- Compile final overall bibliography
- Coordinate final formatting, printing, and binding
- Prepare an executive summary for the report

c) Student editor:

- Edit all reports
- Write introductory or concluding chapter
- Circulate a style sheet by the end of January about how all aspects of the report are to be documented (footnotes, endnotes, tables etc.) and formatted (fonts, locations of page numbers, and so forth). Also standardize the word processing package used.