Proposal Writing

UST 510 Online
Spring 2017

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University

UST 510-501
4 credit hours

Updated: 12/10/2016

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Office: Urban Building, Room 213, 1717 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, OH 44115
Office Hours: By Appointment
Course Location: Online
Meeting Time: Postings are Due by Midnight on Sundays (Dates are noted)
Course Number: 3536
Section: 501

Course Description:
This graduate level course will focus on the content and structure of program planning and development, sources of funding, proposal writing and program evaluation. The rationale for this course is the organizational concern for planning, funding and accountability. Urban planners, public and nonprofit administrators are expected to identify and solve problems and to think and act strategically in an increasingly competitive environment. In addition, planners and nonprofit managers must possess the skills necessary to obtain funding and to determine the impact of a particular program and/or policy. Students will gain experience and skills in program design, research, and evaluation through the independent development and writing of a grant proposal.

Required Texts:

The Foundation Center:
The Foundation Center Library and the Foundation Directory Online, are invaluable tools for grant seekers. The Directory is a paid subscription service that is available free at the Foundation Center Library and at multiple other public libraries in the Greater Cleveland Area (a list of locations is provided in the course handouts). Students are strongly encouraged to access the directory at one of the sites, in order to gain some experience conducting online research using this comprehensive tool. Students are
also encouraged to visit the Foundation Center to learn more about the wide variety of materials, documents, software, training classes and search engines that are available. **Students are required** to take the brief (about an hour), Self-Paced E-Learning Course: “*Introduction to Finding Grants Online*”: Available at: [http://grantspace.org/training/self-paced-elearning/introduction-to-finding-grants-online](http://grantspace.org/training/self-paced-elearning/introduction-to-finding-grants-online)


**Course Objectives:**
The purpose of the course is to provide students with academic and practical skills. By the conclusion of the course, the student will:
- Understand the program planning process
- Develop a project/program plan
- Understand and apply research principles and methods to needs assessment and identifying potential funding sources
- Design an evaluation plan
- Relate major trends and issues in public and nonprofit funding to the allocation decisions of government, corporate, foundation and individual donors
- Identify and understand key components of, and practical steps for, proposal preparation
- Demonstrate the skills to plan, research and write a proposal

**Course Method:**
The class is a seminar course that requires student participation through assigned readings, class exercises, case study, and online discussion boards. Students are expected to complete the required reading, (including any handouts, or other assignments in addition to the specified text), participate in online discussions, and contribute to the learning experience. Students are also required to select and identify a 501 (c) (3) Tax Exempt, Nonprofit Organization that you will use as the subject for all written assignments and the Final Grant Project.

**Grading:**
Your grade is based upon regular, frequent class participation, the quality of your work on the required assignments, and your performance on the final grant application project. Students are expected to post thoughtful responses to questions posed by the instructor no later than midnight on Sunday of each week. You are also required to revisit the site periodically throughout the week, in order to comment on the discussion, answer clarification questions, and/or respond to your classmates and the instructor. Keeping up with reading assignments, including handouts, and previewing videos is essential to effective class participation. You are required to complete all homework assignments. **Assignments are due as indicated.** Late assignments, based on emergency situations only, will be accepted with prior approval from the instructor, and may lose up to 2 points for each day that the assignment is late.

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A     = 94 - 100
A-    = 90 - 93
B+    = 87 - 89
B     = 83 - 86
B-    = 80 - 82
C+    = 77 - 79
C     = 70 - 76
D     = 60 - 69
F     = 59 and below

University Policy Statements:

University Deadlines

• For the current semester, the deadline for dropping a course is January 27, 2017
• The last day to withdraw from the course is March 31, 2017
• The final examination week is May 6-12, 2017

Grades of “I” and “X”

• X - The grade of "X" can be assigned by the instructor when an attending/participating student has stopped attending/participating without notification and has not completed all assignments for reasons that cannot be determined by the end of the grading period. An "X" automatically becomes an F if not resolved by the last day of instruction of the following semester. An “X” also will be assigned by the University Registrar when no grade is submitted by an instructor.
• I - Incomplete. The "I" grade is given when the work in a course has been generally passing, but when some specifically required task has not been completed through no fault of the student.

An "I" grade can be assigned by the instructor when all three of the following conditions are met:
1. Student is regularly attending/participating in the class and has the potential to pass the course;
2. Student has not completed all assignments and has stopped attending/participating for reasons deemed justified by the instructor; and
3. Student has notified the instructor prior to the end of the grading period.

Students with Special Needs

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services at (216) 687-2015. The Office is located in MC 147. Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they have been granted an accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.

Writing Assistance

Students with difficulty writing may contact the Writing Center located in Rhodes Tower 124 for assistance. Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) format for citations and reference pages.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is stealing and/or using the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as one’s own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the
work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. The penalties for plagiarism are found in full in the Student Handbook (Office of Student Life) under Academic Regulations (Policy on Academic Misconduct) at the following link: https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/StudentCodeOfConduct.pdf.

Assignments:

A. Short Papers:
There are four assignments, presented in 12 point font; APA format. All papers must include the student’s name, email address, paper #, and the date the assignment is due. The topics of the papers are as follows:

Paper # 1 Due Week 4 (Midnight, 2/12) Letter of Inquiry (1-3 pages)
Paper # 2 Due Week 6 (Midnight, 2/26) Organization Description; Problem Statement (3-5 pages)
Paper # 3 Due Week 8 (Midnight, SATURDAY 3/11) Potential Funders (3-5 pages)
Paper # 4 Due Week 10 (Midnight, 4/2) Goals/Objectives; Methods; Outcomes (4-6 pages)

B. Final Grant Project Paper, Due Week 13 (Please upload by Midnight, Sunday 4/23)
The final grant paper is a compilation of various concepts, techniques, and elements from previous assignments into a comprehensive, professional final product. The paper should be 10-16 pages in length, with 12 point font; APA format.

Your Final Grant Project Paper should include the following:
1. Cover Letter
2. Organization Description
3. Problem/Purpose/Need Statement
4. Goals, Objectives & Outcomes
5. Methodology & Personnel
6. Program Budget
7. Evaluation Plan
8. Future Funding & Sustainability
9. Executive Summary
10. Attachments List

In addition to submitting your paper to the instructor for grading, each student will post her/his paper for the class to share. (Please see note below for Student Commentary requirements)

Regarding Student Commentary on Grant Papers (Due Midnight 4/30):
Students are encouraged to read as many of their peer’s papers as possible, in order to learn more about the various organizations and proposed projects. Your assignment for Week 14 will be to pick two (2) papers for comment. Your posted comments for each of the two papers selected should include the following:
1. What did you learn about the proposed project that impressed, or moved, you?
2. What did you like best about the overall grant presentation?
3. What, if anything, would make it work better for you?
Please make certain that you post your comments regarding these papers in the two places provided for that purpose, and NOT on the student’s paper.
Class Schedule/Due Dates/Assignments:

Week 1 (Due Midnight 1/22)
Introduction; Familiarity with Grant Writing
- Review Syllabus/Assignments

Week 2 (Due Midnight 1/29)
Getting Ready; Introduction to Grant Writing; The Foundation Center
- Complete The Foundation Center’s “Introduction to Finding Grants Online”
- http://grantspace.org/training/self-paced-elearning/introduction-to-finding-grants-online
- Read Clarke: Intro & CH 1-2 - Why Story Telling?; First Steps; Research & Relationships
- Read Teitel: CH 26 – Honest Answers to Hard-Nosed Questions
- Handout: “Foundation Library Locations”

Week 3 (Due Midnight 2/05)
Letter of Inquiry, Organization Description, Proposal Overview
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 1-30 – Intro; The Proposal Idea; Developing Relationships
- Read Clarke: CH 3 – The Short Story: Writing Letters of Inquiry
- Read Teitel: CH 1-2 – Whom Does the Funder Work for?; Letters of Inquiry
- Handouts: “Sample LOI Food Bank Expansion” & “Sample LOI Scholarships”
- Identify the Tax Exempt Nonprofit Organization that you will be writing about

Week 4 (Due Midnight 2/12)
Proposal Development: Problem Statement & The Case for Support
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 31-38 – Writing a Compelling Problem Statement
- Read Clarke: CH 4-5 – The Proposal Narrative; The Need or Problem
- Read Teitel: CH 3-4 – Meat & Potatoes; Writing a Wonderful Proposal
- Handout: “Case Statement BoardSource”
- Paper # 1: “Letter of Inquiry” Due Midnight 2/12

Week 5 (Due Midnight 2/19)
Telling your Story: What Funders Expect
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 85-90 – Writing the Organization Background
- Read Teitel: CH 5-6, 16-23 – In-Person Meetings; Decisions; The 1st Cut; Red Flags; Improving Your Proposal; Mistakes; Q & A; Peripheral Matters; Never Do...; Five Questions

Week 6 (Due Midnight 2/26)
Learning Where to Look: Current & Potential Funders
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 113-124 –What is a Foundation?; How to Research; Resources for Grantseekers
- Handout: “Gift Range Table Example” & “Crain’s Foundation List 2015”
- Experiment with the Foundation Directory Online at The Foundation Library, or one of the other Public Library sites where it is available (See Handout)
https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/welcome/features?ga=1.17402425.1669982867.1445279741
- Experiment with the Grantsmanship Center’s “Local Funding Sources Ohio” Links
- https://www.tgci.com/funding-sources/ohio
- Experiment with the Grants.Gov’s Government “Grants Search” Tool
- Paper # 2: “Organization Description; Problem Statement” Due Midnight 2/26

Week 7 (Due Midnight 3/05)
Goals, Objectives & Outcomes
- Read Clarke: CH 6 – Goals Objectives & Methods
- Read Teitel: CH 13 – Myth: It’s Fine to Embellish

Week 8 (Due Midnight, SATURDAY 3/11)*
Methods, Evaluation and Personnel
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 49-64 – Developing the Methods; Evaluation Component
- Read Clarke: CH 7 – Evaluation & Future Funding
- Read Teitel: CH 12 – Myth: Funders Don’t Read Grant Reports
- Paper # 3: “Potential Funders” Due Midnight, SATURDAY 3/11

*Note: Spring Recess is March 12-19

Week 9 (Due Midnight 3/26)
Program/Project Budget
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 71-84 – Developing the Program Budget
- Read Clarke: CH 8 – The Budget

Week 10 (Due Midnight 4/02)
Future Funding & Sustainability (Organizational and Planetary)
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 65-70 – Developing Sustainability Strategies
- Read Teitel: CH 7-8, 11, 15 – Reports; You Can Do It!; Myths: Charming Will Conceal Flaws & Funders Don’t Care
- Paper # 4: Goals/Objectives; Methods; Outcomes Due Midnight 4/02

Week 11 (Due Midnight 4/09)
Executive Summary
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 91-96 – Writing the Proposal Summary
- Read Clarke: CH 9 – The Summary
- Read Teitel: CH 24-25 – A Short List of Don’ts; Six Ways to Assure Funding

Week 12 (Due Midnight 4/16)
Cover Letter, Attachments, Site Visit.
- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Pages 97-110 –The Package; Relationships with Funders
- Read Clarke: CH 10-11 – Packaging; Site Visits & Beyond
• Read Teitel: CH 9-10, 14 – Myths: It Isn’t That Hard; Foundations Are Straightforward; It’s a Cat & Mouse Game

Week 13 (Due Midnight 4/23)
Final Grant Paper Due Midnight 4/23 (Also post your paper for the class to share)

Week 14 (Due Midnight 4/30)
Student Commentary on Grant Papers. Due Midnight 4/30

Week 15 (Due Midnight 5/07)
Other Resources, Course Review, End of Semester Comments & Questions
  • Handouts: “Resource C -- Resources for Grantmakers”, “GrantWatch Sample”

Week 16 (Final Exams Week)
Course Concluded
No Exam

Please Note:
While every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive overview of the course content, assignments and due dates, the instructor reserves the right to add assignments, or make other changes to the syllabus, as the semester progresses.