

Strategic Public Policy Consulting (PUB POL 578)
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
University of Michigan

Fall Semester 2019
Professor Elisabeth R. Gerber
Mon, Wed 4:00-5:20
1210 Weill Hall

The Ford School of Public Policy's Strategic Public Policy Consulting (SPPC) is a semester-long course offered to students in the Ford School and other UM professional degree programs. The course provides an opportunity for students to conduct a supervised consulting project for a real policy organization. Each year, topics for student projects are jointly developed by the course's faculty director and staff at the external partner organization. Projects range widely in policy area, methodology, size, and complexity. All projects culminate in the production of a final report and an oral presentation to the partner.

Students enrolled in Strategic Public Policy Consulting for the Fall semester 2019 will work on one of eight projects that include [subject to revision]:

"Traverse City Region Blue Vision," TC Community Fund
"Evaluating Detroit's Rehabbed and Ready Program," Detroit Land Bank
"Leveraging Partnerships in Conservation and Recreation," HCMA/DRC
"Maritime Security for Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea," ICITAP
"Recruiting and Retaining Diversity in the Workplace," Congressional Research Service
"Feasibility Study for Providing Access to Healthy Food," Buena Vista Charter Twp, MI
"Expanding Access to Underserved Rural Communities," Mid-Michigan College
"Advancing Employee Ownership in Michigan," C2BE

Registration: Each student should register for a 3-credit course (PP578) and should plan to devote approximately 10 hours per week to the project, on average, over the course of the semester. Each student is also required to register for PP778, a one-credit professional skills component. PP778 meets from 1:00-2:20 on selected Wednesdays during the first half of the semester. PP778 will cover topics such as project management, group dynamics/collaboration, and research tools - skills that are essential to the SPPC and are among those most strongly recommended by students and alumni in the curriculum surveys.

Group Assignments: On the first day of class, the instructor will assign each student to one project for the entire semester. Students will be asked to rank their project preferences, and every attempt will be made to honor each student's wishes, subject to the requirements of the projects and the need to construct well-balanced project teams.

Methodology: Decisions about specific research questions, to be made jointly between the instructor, the students, and the client, will determine the scope of each project.

Methodologies will depend on the specific questions studied. They may include literature reviews, archival research, legal analysis, case studies, email/ telephone/ face-to-face interviews, analysis of census data, budget modeling, GIS analysis, and SWOT analysis.

Supplemental Sessions: All student teams will meet three times over the course of the semester with a select group of distinguished mentors - public policy professionals who can provide both high-level advice and guidance, as well as share their professional connections to help elevate the impact of the students' work. These sessions will take place during regularly scheduled class meeting times. In addition, students who select the Traverse City project will also participate in four required sessions with students from other UM units/courses through the Michigan Engaging Communities through the Classroom (MECC) initiative. MECC brings together teams of students working on related projects with the same partner organizations. The sessions allow interdisciplinary interaction and learning. MECC sessions will take place on September 10, October 8, November 12 and December 10 from 6:00-8:00 pm at the Ginsberg Center on the UM campus.

Final presentations and a celebratory reception will take place on Wednesday, December 11 from 4:00-6:00 in the Ford School.

Timeframe: The project timeframe will coincide with the University of Michigan's Fall Semester, beginning Wed, September 4 and ending Wednesday, December 11, 2019.

Products: Student teams will produce a written project plan, to be approved by the instructor and the partner organization, and a team charter. By the end of the semester, each team will complete a report that documents their research methods, findings and recommendations. Length and complexity will be largely determined by the specific research questions asked. Preliminary reports may also be requested as appropriate. Students will also make at least one final oral presentation to their partner organization representatives, and perhaps additional presentations to relevant parties and stakeholders.

Ford School of Public Policy Inclusivity Statement:

Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
- be open to the views of others
- honor the uniqueness of their colleagues
- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community

- value one another's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let your instructor know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of courses may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make your instructor aware of your needs, they can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help determine appropriate academic accommodations. Any information you provide will be treated as private and confidential.

Student Mental Health and Well-Being Resources: The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. We acknowledge that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) and/or [University Health Service](#) (UHS). For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>

Please review additional information and policies regarding academic expectations and resources at the Ford School of Public Policy at this link:

<http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>