

Applied Policy Seminar (PUB POL 578)
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
University of Michigan

Fall Semester 2014
Professor Elisabeth R. Gerber
Mon, Wed 1:00-2:30
1210 Weill Hall

The Ford School of Public Policy's Applied Policy Seminar (APS) is a semester-long course offered to continuing students in the Ford School's Master's of Public Policy Program. 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 client 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 client.

Students enrolled in the Applied Policy Seminar for the Fall semester 2014 will work on one of six projects:

- 1) **City of Adrian, MI:** create materials to support implementation of the recently adopted PS264 of 2013, the "Michigan Invests Locally Exemption" or MILE crowdfunding law. Client: Chris Miller. *Keywords: entrepreneurship, economic development, policy implementation*
- 2) **Presbytery of Detroit:** develop a protocol for member congregations to conduct outreach and community engagement in their local neighborhoods and other constituencies, and implement and evaluate the model in one Detroit neighborhood. Client: Richard Brownlee. *Keywords: Detroit, faith-based, community engagement*
- 3) **Warrendale Community Organization, Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance:** compile a catalog of city, county, regional, state and federal redevelopment programs and resources available to residents and businesses in the Warrendale neighborhood. Client: Sylvia Santana and Kenyetta Campbell. *Keywords: Detroit, community and economic development, federalism, database design*
- 4) **Washtenaw County, MI:** conduct a stakeholder analysis to help guide Community Impact team to prioritize policies to focus on, direct future grant-making activities. Client: Paul Montagno, Stephen Ward. *Keywords: integrated services, community engagement, stakeholder analysis*
- 5) **Government Accountability Office:** identify the key policy issues related to the globalization of the workforce, especially the impact of totalization programs on retirement security and retirement decisions. Client: David Lehrer. *Keywords: federal government, globalization, workforce, retirement, literature review, data analysis*

6) **City of Lansing, MI:** evaluate the potential for a regional approach to recycling. Client: Randy Hannan. *Keywords: collaboration, environmental policy, strategic planning*

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 1:00-2:30 on selected Fridays throughout the semester. PP778 will cover topics such as project management, group dynamics/ collaboration, and research tools - skills that are essential to the APS 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.

Timeframe: the project timeframe will coincide with the University of Michigan's Fall Semester, beginning Wed, September 3 and ending roughly Mon, December 15, 2014.

Products: student teams will produce a written project plan, to be approved by the instructor and the client, 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 client representatives, and perhaps additional presentations to relevant parties and stakeholders.