

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

Fall Semester 2016  
Professor Elisabeth R. Gerber  
Mon, Wed 2:30-4:00  
1110 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 2016 will work on one of the projects listed at the end of this document, depending on enrollment and student interest.

**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 7 and ending roughly Friday, December 16, 2016.

**Class meetings:** scheduled meeting times will be used to meet with teammates, the instructor and/or the client. Students should not schedule any other activities/ meetings/ obligations during the class meeting times.

**Mentoring and Collaboration:** the Networks Northwest/Traverse City project is part of a multi-school, cross-disciplinary effort called *MECC: Michigan Engaging Communities through the Classroom*, in which multiple student teams work with a single community-based client. Students on this project team are expected to participate in four multi-team meetings with other MECC participants (approximately monthly). A site visit to Traverse City is also planned for Sept 22 (pm)-Sept 24. More details will be provided during the first class meeting. Students on the other projects will participate in three mentoring sessions with a group of senior policy experts. These mentoring sessions will be held on September 28 (2:30-5:30), October 31 (2:30-5:30) and December 16 (12:00-3:00) and will partially overlap with the scheduled class meeting time.

**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.

**Accommodations:** If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to help us determine appropriate accommodations. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.

**Academic Expectations:** Please refer to the Ford School Academic Expectations statement: <http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>.

APPLIED POLICY SEMINAR PROJECTS  
FALL 2016

***City of Ann Arbor, MI, "Energy Efficiency Investments."***

The purpose of this project is to provide city government with a better understanding of the current state of energy efficiency investments in Ann Arbor, as well as options for better meeting community goals with respect to energy efficiency. Specifically, it will involve quantifying the community energy spend across the commercial, homeowner and rental sectors; identifying promising practices in peer communities; assessing the extent to which energy efficiency investments generate economic development; and evaluating evidence regarding multiplier effects of energy efficiency investments. *Keywords: Sustainability, energy efficiency, economic development*

***Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, "Travel Analysis."***

Since its inception, the Bureau has collected detailed information on work-related travel by its large and dispersed workforce of examiners, enforcement attorneys and fair lending experts, creating a rich but under-utilized data resource. This project will involve conducting an in-depth analysis of this data with an eye towards informing management decisions, improve operational efficiency, and better understand the concerns of our traveling workforce. *Keywords: US federal government, quantitative analysis, satisfaction surveys*

***Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, "Supporting Black Owned Businesses."***

*TBD. Keywords: Economic development, Detroit*

***Downtown Detroit Partnership, "Redevelopment of 600 Randolph."***

The Downtown Detroit Partnership (DDP) seeks the assistance of an Applied Policy Seminar team to identify, evaluate and package opportunities to return 600 Randolph, Detroit, known as the "Old Wayne County Building," to productive use. The project may involve a gap analysis of uses within downtown Detroit and benchmark to other midwestern cities; a stakeholder analysis that will identify and evaluate stakeholders in downtown Detroit that will be impacted by 600 Randolph's future; and analysis of successful public / private mechanisms employed by other cities and regions that provide funding and on-going support for cultural facilities. *Keywords: Economic development, historical preservation, adaptive reuse, Detroit*

***Government Accountability Office, "Options to Extend Labor Force Participation to Older Americans."***

This project would explore trends in labor force participation for older workers, identify barriers to these workers remaining in the workforce for longer periods, and options to eliminate these barriers. Specifically, it would ask: What are the demographic trends for U.S. workers including age, gender, occupation, geographic and other factors that may pertain to older workers remaining in the workforce? What barriers exist, if any, to older workers remaining in the workforce? What public policy options exist to mitigate these barriers? Students would conduct a quantitative analysis of existing data related to workforce participation by older workers; a qualitative analysis of existing studies

examining workforce participation by older workers; and collect and analyze anecdotal information from experts in the field of older workers. *Keywords: US federal government, workforce development*

***ICITAP Philippines, “Competency Framework.”***

The ICITAP-Philippines requests assistance of the Ford School in developing data useful for creating a 'competency framework,' or defined set of knowledge, skills, and abilities, for Philippine National Police executives. A survey instrument and questionnaire are now in use and an interviewer is collecting job task data from representative incumbents. This project will help construct a system whereby training and competencies can be determined through replicable methodology. *Keywords: International, US federal government, public safety, human resources*

***ICITAP WDC, “Strategic Planning.”***

ICITAP is currently undertaking a strategic planning process to help the organization position itself within the federal government. A key challenge is that while technically part of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, ICITAP only receives DOJ funding for six staff positions. The rest of ICITAP's staffing costs and all program costs are borne by the Department of State, USAID, and DOD. ICITAP seeks to differentiate itself from other similar agencies competing in this interagency space by emphasizing its promotion of good governance in partner countries through sustainable institutional development with law enforcement agencies, forensic laboratories, and correctional systems. Students will interview academics and federal, state, and local government officials who have expertise in strategic planning. This will supplement secondary research through books and articles available on the internet. Students will also analyze mission statements and strategic plans for organizations involved in international criminal justice development. *Keywords: US federal government, interagency relations, strategic planning*

***Jordan Morgan Foundation, “Capacity Building.”***

The Jordan Morgan Foundation recently implemented a summer pilot program to enhance STEM education for Detroit school children. The Ford School team will develop a plan for the expansion of JMF's LAUNCH STEM program in both content and reach over the next three years. The project will involve exploring the best ways in which to implement the arts into the current LAUNCH Program Structure (transition from STEM to STEAM); outlining a plan for implementation detailing available funding; and developing comprehensive metrics to quantify the programs' effectiveness.

*Keywords: Youth, grantwriting, Detroit*

***Samaritas, “Refuge Ready Region.”***

This project will help Samaritas and their stakeholder coalition prepare for an anticipated influx of refugees in the coming year. In particular, students will: 1) Perform a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis (CBA) of Samaritas' refugee resettlement efforts, from entering a home country camp to US citizenship (approximately 5 years on average). Demonstrating the economic impact of refugees is a vital and unsubstantiated part of political and civic discussions that influence our State and region's policies. 2) Perform a stakeholder analysis of refugee resettlement partners in SE Michigan to better understand

roles and specialties, available resources, capacity to serve and expand, and current limitations (ex. housing, funding, Federal regulations). 3) Identify key learning partners at a national level of refugee resettlement efforts with specific and applicable lessons / actions / strategies that can be applied in SE Michigan. 4) Identify critical next steps (6 - 12 months out) for our stakeholder coalition to undertake with clearly identified roles and responsibilities. *Keywords: Immigration, economic development, social services, metro Detroit*

***Networks Northwest, "Traverse City Affordable Housing Study."***

This project is part of a multi-school project across UM to support the client's current efforts to develop an affordable housing/workforce housing strategy for the Traverse City region. The Ford School project will include a stakeholder analysis of participants in the region's affordable housing network; identify "learning partners," that is, comparable regions in North America that have done an exceptional job in addressing affordable housing; and creating an action items plan for the next year of the regional Housing Partnership's existence that identifies roles, responsibilities, and interdependencies between members. *Keywords: Affordable housing, market analysis* [NOTE: This project is part of the MECC initiative. Students will be required to participate in four multi-disciplinary sessions with student teams from other UM schools.]