

# Advocacy and Politics

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## Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Must be enrolled in the UT System Archer Fellowship program to enroll

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## Course Description

This course is an introduction to the issues individuals face when placed in the role of being advocates for an issue, idea, or even for themselves. The goal of the course is for class participants to grasp concepts they will see and experience during their internship in Washington D.C. We intentionally schedule half of this class for the beginning of the semester. You will not only learn about advocacy but hopefully many of your questions and concerns about the internship process will be answered during the course.

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## Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completing the class, students will be able to:

- 1) Explain the role that advocacy plays in shaping politics and the political environment.
- 2) Identify the primary tools used in building and maintaining a reputation in work environments.
- 3) Understand the key skills that you need to succeed in a prestigious DC internship.
- 4) Describe how government policies are affected by different parties who continually try to influence leaders.
- 5) Better influence others in work settings common to Washington, DC.

## Required Textbooks and Materials

- Machiavelli - *The Prince*
  - Matthews, Chris - *Hardball*
  - Daly, John A. - *Advocacy: Championing Ideas and Influencing Others*
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## Assignments & Academic Calendar

The class will meet for 3 separate time periods. Session 1 will occur **Saturday-Monday January 13-15**. Session 2 will occur on **Friday, February 23 and Saturday, February 24**. Session 3 will occur on **Sunday, April 8**. Each class day will begin at 9:00AM and finish at 5PM unless announced otherwise.

You should have Machiavelli's The Prince read for the first class session; Matthews for the second session; and the Daly book by the start of the third session.

**Paper One: *Advocating for an Issue*:** Your task is to identify an organization that is currently advocating for an issue in Washington and then write a paper discussing the ways this organization does or has pitched their idea. For instance, teams in the past have looked at organizations advocating for statehood for D.C., the legalization of marijuana, LGBTQ marriage, and the Dream Act. Your team gets to pick the organization and its issue. You should plan to interview people involved in the marketing of the idea as well as people who are decision-makers about the issue. Suppose that you are focused on an advocacy organization trying to get Congress to provide better dental care for older Americans (I am not sure an organization does this), you would want to chat with the people in the organization who are pitching this idea to Congress as well as, perhaps, staff members on relevant committees who might be deciding whether to create or pass this legislation. This paper will be done by teams of five to eight people. This paper is due on **February 19** by email in **Word format**. We will have 15-20-min team-based Skype conversations about the paper the week of February 5. These will be held in the evening on Wednesday Feb 7 (6-8 pm EST). Dr. Chin will be coordinating the schedules of these calls.

In this paper, as well as the second paper, you have two goals. The first is to identify **very specific tactics** people use to influence. For instance, for this paper you may encounter a person who says that one needs to build alliances with other advocacy organizations. How does the organization actually do this? Meetings? Phone calls? And, then, what specific moves does the person make at the meeting or on the phone? For instance, at a meeting a person might decide, ahead of time, what they can give on and what they can't. On the phone, they might remind the other person about a recent social event. Or they might ask their advice on the issue rather than pushing the issue directly. Or, the organization might use Twitter as a way to communicate with their supporters. But how do they write tweets to get people's attention? How do they know their tweets are successful? (perhaps, for example, by measuring the percentage of tweets that are re-tweeted). The second is to **integrate your interviews**. You should not submit a paper that simply contains summaries of the interviews. Instead, you should seek out themes that cut across interviews and then embed specific interview items within those themes. So, for instance, you might say that one theme was the use of social media. Then you would describe how the different media might be used – again with specifics.

**Paper Two: *How do people successfully influence and persuade in DC?*** Your task is to interview people (same number as you have members on your team) about their advocacy techniques and then write an integrative summary of what you learned from those interviews. The goal for this paper is to discover some secrets of successful influence. The first paper deals with organizational influence, the second deals with personal influence. Just like the previous paper the goal is to be very specific about the moves people make to influence. So when someone tells

you the secret is to be trustworthy, what specific actions does that person do to build trust? Be on time for meetings? Follow-up immediately? Like the prior paper, integration is crucial. A mediocre paper would simply include summaries of the interviews one after another. An excellent paper would seek out themes and then integrate the results of various interviews into those themes. So, for example, you might find one theme would be trust. Then you would include examples from various interviews about how trust is exemplified. In this paper you should also integrate materials from the Advocacy book into the paper. A good paper will connect what you learned in your interviews to the materials in the book. You should plan to include materials from at least nine chapters. This paper is due on **March 30** by email in **Word format**.

Please plan on conducting a short (10-15 minute) presentation on your final paper at the last class.

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### **Course Requirements and Grading Policy:**

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material. There are a total of 1,000 points that can be earned over the semester:

1. **Attendance/Participation/Readings** (600 points) – regular attendance (6 classes) and participation in class discussions.
  - Attendance, participation, and completion of assigned readings will be worth 100 points for each class. Tardiness, lack of preparation, or lack of participation can result in point deductions at the professor's discretion.
  - Decorum and professionalism are expected in the classroom at all times. Respect for the professor, classmates and their opinions, guest speakers and their opinions and Archer Center staff are also required. The professor reserves the right to deduct points from class participation should any improprieties occur throughout the course of the semester.
  - Due to the schedule of this course, students are not allowed absences. Missing classes will result in a 100 point penalty (letter grade) per class missed. If a class is missed due to illness or another excused absence, a paper worth 100 points must be completed as a make-up assignment. This must be discussed with and approved by the professor in advance.
2. **Papers** (400 points) – Each paper will be worth 200 points total.

### **Grading Scale**

The total points earned on a 1,000 point scale will be divided by 10 to calculate the final grade:

- A (90-100)
- B (80-89)
- C (70-79)
- D (60-69)

E (59 or lower)

Midterm grades will be based off attendance and participation from the first weekend of class.

Final grades will be reported to your home UT System institution by **May 10, 2018** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

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### **Course & Instructor Policies**

Students who complete all assigned projects SATISFACTORILY AND in a timely manner will receive a B. Students who display excellence through written work and through class participation will receive an A. Students who fail to SATISFACTORILY complete assigned projects or to attend classes will receive lower than a B. Students are encouraged to discuss with faculty how they might display excellence in the course.

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