Course Context

Grants are an important component to the funding mosaic that non-profits, universities, and government agencies need to fulfill their missions. In the work world, grant proposal writing tasks are assigned to the Executive Director, program staff, and development teams. Even if your position is not the proposal writing lead, you are expected to support proposal writing efforts as grants require organization-wide participation. As a result, employers look for candidates with grant proposal and development skills for contribution to organizational sustainability. Grants development is often an organizational, program, and evaluation development exercise and gives the grant writer special insight and contributions into the workings of organizations.

Overview and Structure

This course offers broad exposure to grant writing concepts, strategies, and preparation. The methods include lecture and extensive activities in and out of class. Students are expected to:

**BEFORE class:** study key concepts with readings posted on Catalyst in preparation for in-class activities. Students must come to class with basic understanding.

**IN-class:** participate in analysis, discussion, and application of key concepts through active learning techniques. Students will build basic knowledge with higher cognitive order engagement.

**AFTER class:** integrate and apply the key concepts with project-based development of grant proposal deliverables. Students will demonstrate concept mastery with real world articulation and application of concepts.

This is a rigorous, holistic class designed to teach students about program design, evaluation, budgets, communication, research, and other topics that are focused into grant proposals. The assignments are all inquiry-based and applied to live projects with real deadlines done on behalf of non-profit organizations in the Seattle area.
Grant proposal writing students will learn how to:

- Seek funding sources and determine a fit
- Understand the differences and strategies between the various kinds of funders
- Gather information and assemble proposals
- Write a grant proposal, logic model, and budget; Describe proposed projects including goals, objectives, outcomes, outputs, and impacts
- Work within organizations and with funders to make a successful proposal
- Use tactics for out-competing other applicants
- Use strategies for selecting and sequencing funding sources to maintain a steady cash flow

Course Goal and Objectives

To give students the concepts, tools, and confidence to create grant proposals that are well executed and framed to appropriate funders. Students will be able to:

- Use prospecting tools and skills to find grant opportunities
- Understand how to determine a strong match between a funder and fund seeker
- Demonstrate knowledge for how to set-up a grant seeking effort for maximum organization, communication, and adherence to guidelines and scoring priorities
- Determine, develop, and write about the need for a project, its project description, evaluation plan, budget, framing, and applicant qualifications
- Write goals, objectives, activities, outcomes, and impact statements
- Write a grant proposal, letter of inquiry, cover letter, and prospect research memo
- Understand how grant proposals are scored
- Steward funder relationships and manage grants post-award
- Apply the above objectives to a real world project

Graded Deliverables Summary

Students will:

- Write one Core Elements assignment and one live grant proposal to an active funding source including a budget and logic model in a team (60 points)
- Write one letter of inquiry as an individual (15 points)
- Write one cover letter as an individual (10 points)
- Research and write one prospect research memo as individuals (10 points)
- Participate fully in classroom and group activities (5 points)
Graded Deliverables Detail

The Core Elements assignment and the grant proposal project assignment including a logic model and a budget (60 points)
The Core Elements assignment must include a need statement with citations; project description with a general description, timeline, goals, objectives, outcome, and impact statements, evaluation, and a budget. The purpose of the Core Elements assignment is to bring together the essential information that you will customize to the grant opportunity and funder that is assigned by your project organization.

The Grant proposal assignment includes preparation of a full grant proposal that is assigned by the project organization. Graded elements: following request for proposal guidelines and directions; quality of writing; persuasiveness of the framing and argument; clarity; citations; team cooperation. Other necessary elements include: need statement, project description with goals, objectives and outcomes, and impact statements, timeline, logic model, evaluation plan, and budget.

* Avoidance of passive voice language is required for all assignments. These are group assignments. There will be a peer review at the end of class for this project and this will affect your grade.*

Prospect research memo (10 points)
Graded elements: completeness (name, addresses, contact, person, approach, a summary of the opportunity, strategies, and recommendations for how to frame the ask); clear and effective use of language including avoidance of passive language. This is an individual assignment.

Letter of Inquiry (15 points)
Graded elements: presentation, use of letterhead, quality of writing (including avoidance of passive language), quality of the core elements including: the ask; mission statement; need statement; project description including goal, objective, and outcome statements, and timeline; organizational history and qualifications; evaluation; budget; clarity; and framing. This is an individual assignment.

Cover letter (10 points)
Graded elements: presentation, use of letterhead, quality of writing, executive summary including the ask, mission statement, clarity, and framing; clear and effective use of language including avoidance of passive language. This is an individual's assignment.

Participation (5 points)
Graded elements: in-class engagement with discussion and activities; in and out of class group work; attendance. Missing any classes will result in a reduction in points. Group project members will submit evaluations of their peers and this will become part of the participation grade.

Total possible points: 100

See more detail about grading definitions on page 8.
Graded and Non-graded Deliverables Combined Schedule Summary

January 28 non-graded
Peer review of need statement and project description (bring one copy to class for peer review)

February 8 non-graded
- Logic model, goals, objectives, outputs, outcomes, and impact peer review (bring two copies to class for peer review.)
- Need statement and project description peer review (bring two copies to class for peer review.)

February 11 non-graded
- Peer review of Core Elements and full proposal including the logic model, need, goals, objectives, outcomes, timeline and impact statements, and project description (bring two copies to class for the peer review. Bring one copy of your Core Elements assignment for instructor review.)

February 18 non-graded
- Budget and full proposal peer review using the Bright Star proposal rating tool (bring two copies to class for peer review)

March 10 graded
All assignments due:
- Group: The final Core Elements assignment, a full proposal project including a budget and logic model
- Individual: a letter of inquiry, a cover letter, and a prospect research memo

Schedule and Assignments Approach

- This class is structured to require extensive reading in the first part of the quarter and then the reading load tapers off into writing assignments.

- It is essential to complete the assigned readings before you come to class as I will assume you have the basic concepts when you arrive. Classes explore concepts on a higher conceptual level and I expect you to come to class ready.

- Supplemental readings may be assigned to support questions in class.

- All readings and handouts will be posted on Catalyst.
Class Schedule, Topics, and Assignments

Instructions in red indicate items to bring for in-class activities.

January 7
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
   • Grants overview
   • Project organizations meet with student teams to start proposal writing projects
After class: Review all project organization background documents; organize your project teams; review sample need statements and project descriptions.

January 14
Before the tour: Read everything in the project organization Dropbox, review the funder and their proposal materials that have been chosen by your project organization. Prepare questions to ask during the tour to help inform your understanding of what has to go into the proposal.

During class time: Meet with project organizations for a tour at their site or on Skype. Go to the meeting prepared with questions to complete your proposal based on your assessment of what information you have in the Dropbox and what information you still need. This is also your opportunity to get a feel for the culture of the organization. Plan to meet in your team after the tour to get started on the Core Elements assignment.

After class: Begin filling in everything that you can in the Core Elements assignment knowing that this assignment will evolve in the next few weeks.

January 21
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
   • Fundable concept
   • Need statements and project descriptions
After class: Deliverable to complete and bring for the next class: Research and begin the Core Elements assignment that includes a need statement and project description, start developing the proposal.

January 28
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
   • Goals, objectives, outputs, outcomes, impact
   • General evaluation
   • Logic model for program planning and evaluation
   • Peer review of need statement and project description
After class: Deliverable to complete and bring for the next class: Create a logic model for your project; finish the first draft of your need statement and project description for the Core Elements assignment.

February 4
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
• Crafting formulas and value statements
• Logic model, goals, objectives, outputs, outcomes, and impact peer review (Bring two copies to class for peer review.)
• Need statement and project description peer review (Bring two copies to class for peer review.)
• Groups check in after reviews
After class: Deliverable to complete and bring for the next class: Continue revising the Core Elements assignment that includes the project logic model, need, goals, objectives, outcomes, and impact statements, and project description. Start inserting the Core Elements information into your project proposal.

February 11
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
• Budgets
• Peer review of Core Elements and full proposal including the logic model, need, goals, objectives, outcomes, timeline and impact statements, and project description (Bring one copy of your Core Elements and One copy of your proposal per student to class for the peer review. Also, bring one copy of your Core Elements assignment for instructor review.)
After class: Deliverable to complete and bring for the next class: Create a budget for your proposal; complete your proposal and logic model first draft.

February 18
Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
• 990 tax filings
• Budget and full proposal peer review using the Bright Star proposal rating tool (bring one copy to class for peer review)
After class assignment: peer review another student's proposal, budget, and logic model; continue developing and revising your proposal, logic model, and budget.

February 25
Before class: Bring the indicated handouts to class
In-class topics:
• Prospect research
• Speaker: Jeanette Privat, Redmond Public Library
(Bring a laptop and a power strip if you have one).

After class assignment: Continue developing and revising your Core Elements assignment, full proposal, logic model, and budget; each team member locates a grant source that fits their project organization and writes a memo including pertinent information and a description of how they would frame to that funder. Peer review another student’s proposal, budget, and logic model (optional).

March 3

Before class: Read materials on Catalyst and bring the indicated handouts to class

In-class topics:
- Letters of inquiry
- Cover letters
- Attachments
- Grant writer panel

After class assignment: Write a letter of inquiry and cover letter for your proposal.

March 10

In-class topics:
- Grants management and ethics
- Panel with grant makers
- Peer evaluation
- Potluck/celebrate!

All assignments are due to the instructor in a paper format:
- The final proposal including a budget and logic model (group)
- Core Elements assignment (group)
- Letter of inquiry (individual)
- Cover letter (individual)
- Prospect research memo (individual)

*send digital copies of everything to your project organization contact person or your grades will not be released*

This schedule may change. Any changes will be announced on Catalyst as well as in class at least 24 hours in advance.
Course Guidelines

Assignment submission
Students will submit paper copies for peer reviews and for final submission to the instructor. Students will also e-mail final deliverables to the project organization that they were assigned.

Late work
Late work is not accepted without prior arrangement with the instructor.

Cell phone and off-task computer use
Students will not use cell phones, laptops, or tablets to do anything other than class work. Violation of this code will result in a reduction of the class participation points.

Academic Accommodations
If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students at http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/. If you have a letter from the office of Disability Resources for Students indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for this class.

Academic Honesty
The student conduct code of the University of Washington requires students to practice “high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity.” The instructor will not award credit for work that has been plagiarized. The instructor and administrative officials from the Evans School will determine if the student’s actions warrant disciplinary action, which may include probation or dismissal. Please also talk to me about any reading, research, or writing difficulties you may have in this course. Ask if you are unsure whether a specific material constitutes plagiarism.

Evans School Guidelines for Course Grades

4.0 Excellent and exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of good professional quality, shows an incisive understanding of the major policy and management issues and demonstrates a clear recognition and mastery of the appropriate analytical approaches to address the problems and questions.

3.7 Strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity and is thorough and well reasoned. It indicates a strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches and demonstrates a clear recognition and good understanding of the salient policy and management issues and problems.

3.4 Competent and sound graduate student work. Work is well reasoned and thorough and methodologically and analytically sound, but is not especially creative or insightful, nor technologically or analytically sophisticated. It shows adequate understanding of the policy and
management issues and problems, although that understanding may be somewhat incomplete. This grade indicates neither unusual strengths nor exceptional weaknesses.

3.2 Adequate graduate student work. Basically competent performance, although the work shows some weaknesses. Work is moderately thorough and well reasoned, but there is some indication that the understanding of important policy or management issues is less than complete. It may also be inadequate in other ways, such as quality of reasoning, writing, or incomplete analysis. Methodological or analytical approaches are generally adequate but have one or more weaknesses or limitations.

3.0 Borderline graduate student work. This work barely meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. The understanding of basic policy or management issues is incomplete and the methodological or analytical work performed is minimally adequate. The writing and reasoning barely qualify for professional quality work. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would barely suffice to sustain graduate status in good standing and does not reflect long-term professional quality work.

2.6 Deficient graduate work. This work does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed and flawed by numerous errors and misunderstandings of important issues. Methodological work or analysis is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or basic skills.

Recommended Texts


**Grassroots Grants: An Activists Guide to Grant Seeking** Andy Robinson

**Storytelling for Grant Seekers: The Guide to Creative Non-Profit Fundraising** By Cheryl Clarke

**Beyond Fundraising: New Strategies for Non-Profit Innovation and Investment** By Kay Sprinkle

**Outcome Funding: A New Approach to Targeted Grant Making** By Harold Williams (Read this to understand how funders integrate logic model paradigms into fulfilling their philanthropic mission.)

**The Chronicle of Philanthropy** is a periodical of philanthropy news, trends, grant announcements, and commentary. You can read it on-line or get a paper copy in the mail.

**Streetsmart Financial Basics for Nonprofit Managers** by Thomas A. McLaughlin
Financial Leadership for Nonprofit Executives: Guiding Your Organization to Long-term Success by Jeanne Bell & Elizabeth Schaffer

The Budget-Building Book for Nonprofits: A Step-by-Step Guide for Managers & Boards by Murray Dropkin & Bill LaTouche