

**Political Science 083S.1**  
**First-Year Seminar: Lobbying the Federal Government**  
**Prof. Frank R. Baumgartner**  
**Pennsylvania State University**  
**Fall Term 2001**

M, W 4:15-5:30, 113A Chambers Building

Office hours: M, 2-4 and by appointment

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This is a course about how laws and regulations get made in the federal government. We'll study a lot of specific cases of recent policymaking, drawing from an on-going research project funded by NSF and going on currently here at Penn State. We'll have some lobbyists come to class to discuss their work. We'll read some political science books about government and interest groups. We'll discuss politics and the impact of money and ideas on policy outcomes. We'll learn a lot about how government works, and especially how Congress works through studies of particular cases. Along the way, you should deepen your understanding of our system of government.

The course is also a First-Year Seminar, so we'll focus on some other things as well. One of those is how to make the most of your college career—how to study, how to choose courses, how to make the most of your extra-curricular activities, how to write papers, how to get to know your professors and your fellow students, and how to get around the library and the internet most effectively to use these resources in your research. We'll alternate between the substance of the material for the course, focusing on lobbying, with some attention to these questions of how to be the best student. Typically, we'll reserve time on Wednesdays for discussion about student issues, and on Mondays and for most of the period on Wednesdays we'll discuss the substance of the course.

I will encourage you to work together outside of the classroom, and I'll encourage each of you to come see me in my office. I'll make you write a lot and present your ideas a lot in class; I'll give you feedback on your writing and allow you to revise it. But I'll expect revisions and improvements to be made: that's how you learn to write well. Shirking, skipping class, coming late, not handing in assignments when they are due, free-riding on other students during class discussion or in study groups are all signs of poor performance and they will be marked down seriously. On the other hand, participating, speaking up, asking questions, doing extra readings outside of class, linking what you learn in this class to what you already know or to what you are learning in other courses or in campus activities, working hard on your writing and speaking skills, and taking the initiative to learn more than I force you to are all signs of excellence and I'll encourage all of that.

Three books concerning government and lobbying are required for purchase. In addition, a fourth book on how to make the most of your college education is required and will form the basis for discussions throughout the term. These four books have been ordered and are available at local bookstores:

Schattschneider, E.E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Browne, William P. 1998. *Groups, Interests, and U.S. Public Policy*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.

Wolpe, Bruce C. and Bertram J. Levine. 1996. *Lobbying Congress: How the System Works*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Light, Richard J. 2001. *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

In addition to these readings, we will make extensive use throughout the term of a large web site maintained here at Penn State. You should become familiar with it as soon as possible; its contents will form the basis for many of our assignments and discussions. Often, we will relate the details of what you find on the web site with the theories and ideas presented in the other required readings. [Http://lobby.la.psu.edu](http://lobby.la.psu.edu) is the site. More details about that will follow throughout the term. Check it out.

Assignments are simple. Lots of writing, and lots of class discussion. No exams. You will write 5 3-to-5 page papers throughout the term and then combine these into a term paper due on the last day of class. Details on these papers are below, and we'll talk more about them in class. Each Wednesday for most of the semester, as noted below, we'll finish class with a half-hour discussion of Light's book. Students will be divided into two groups, and each time one of the groups will be required to distribute to all the other students in class a very short (less than one page, single-spaced) reaction paper. Does the book apply to Penn State? What advice in the book is worth following, or what have your experiences been? What advice will you ignore, and what will you follow? These papers will be graded only acceptable/not acceptable, and each of you will write four of them over the term.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

50%	5 short papers combined (10 points each)
10	acceptable grades on all four 1 page papers on Light (2.5 points each)
20	class discussion and participation
20	term paper

100% Total grade. Note that class participation, not simply attendance, can make the difference between an A and a C.

Please note the following announcements concerning University policies.

### **Academic Dishonesty**<sup>1</sup>

The Department of Political Science, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist of any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Other violations include, but are not limited to, any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in regard to an examination, such as tampering with a graded exam or claiming another's work to be one's own. Violations shall also consist of obtaining or attempting to obtain, previous to any examinations, copies of the examination papers or the questions to appear thereon, or to obtain any illegal knowledge of these questions. Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of a violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to impose appropriate penalties that are consistent with University guidelines.

### **Disabilities**

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor early in the term. Do not wait until just before an exam to decide you want to inform the instructor of a learning disability; any accommodations for disabilities must be arranged well in advance.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the text above has been directly obtained from the sections of the Princeton University website (<http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/rrr/99/pages/OI.htm>) concerning academic integrity (Rights, Rules, Responsibilities introductory text as well as pages 55-69) as well as from the website of the Department of Economics at The Pennsylvania State University.

## Weekly reading and writing schedule

The following assignments are for both the Monday and Wednesday sessions. You should read all the material before the Monday session even though we may not discuss all of it on that day. Please note that some adjustments may be made in the following schedule to accommodate guest speakers.

Week 1. Wednesday August 22. First day of class.

- Introductions, syllabus, no assignments today.

Week 2. August 27. Introduction: Conflict expansion, the weak, the strong, and government.

- Schattschneider, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Note: No class on Wednesday August 29. Read ahead. Visit the library.

Week 3. September 5. Overview of current research on lobbying.

- Note: Monday September 3 is Labor Day. No class.
- Read the <http://lobby.la.psu.edu> web site before class. Students currently working on the project will present how they do this research.

Week 4. September 10 and 12. Where political conflicts come from, how interest groups change them, and the roles of political parties.

- Schattschneider, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8.
- Light, Chapter 1.

**First paper due in class Wednesday September 12.** Analyze Schattschneider's idea of conflict expansion. Is that where public issues come from? Compare his theory with a current case of lobbying from the newspapers or the lobby web site and see if it fits. 3 pages.

Week 5. September 17 and 19. What are interest groups, where do they come from, are they good or bad?

- Browne, Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Light, Chapter 2. (one page paper due on whether Light applies to Penn State, Group 1)

Week 6. September 24 and 26. More on the variety of interest groups in Washington, where they come from, and what they do.

- Browne, Chapter 2 and 3.
- Light, Chapter 3. (one page paper due, Group 2)

Week 7. October 1 and 3. Lobbying various targets: Policymakers, the public, other groups.

- Browne, Chapters 4, 5, 6.
- Light, Chapter 4. (paper, Group 1)

**Second paper due in class Wednesday October 3.** Give an overview of the current lobbying debate you will analyze throughout the rest of the term. Discuss who is involved (on all sides), what they are trying to achieve, who is going to make the decision, what are the issue-definitions, what is the level of public awareness/media coverage. 5 pages.

Week 8. October 8 and 10. Who wins and who loses.

- Browne, Chapters 7, 8.
- Light, Chapter 5. (paper, Group 2)

Week 9. October 15 and 17. Making sense of the group system.

- Browne, Chapters 9, 10.
- Light, Chapter 6. (paper, Group 1)

**Third paper due in class Wednesday October 17.** Pick a theoretical question from Browne's book that you will analyze with respect to your case. Explain the importance of the issue you choose, and explain how it can be studied with reference to your case. This will become the introduction to your term paper. Any theoretical question from Browne is acceptable as long as it can be applied to the case you chose in your previous paper. Suggestions include class bias in who mobilizes to form groups, lobbying tactics, working with allies, questions of issue-definition, conflict expansion processes, or anything else from Browne's book. 3-5 pages.

Week 10. October 22 and 24. How to be a lobbyist: The fundamentals.

- Wolpe and Levine, Part 1, Chapters 1, 2, 3.
- Light, Chapter 7. (paper, Group 2)

Week 11. October 29 and 31. How to lobby: Continued.

- Wolpe and Levine, Part 1, Chapters 4, 5.
- Light, Chapter 8. (paper, Group 1)

**Fourth paper due in class Wednesday October 31.** Review your theoretical introduction from paper #3 and your case overview from paper #2. Now write an additional paper analyzing your case specifically from the perspective of what you wrote in paper #3. If your topic was how some tactics are more effective than others, for example, then now you should explain in detail what tactics were used in your case. This paper calls for you to confront theory with evidence. You should describe what occurred in your case as it relates to the theoretical question you posed in your previous paper. Note whether your evidence supports or refutes what your theory predicted. Add references to Wolpe and Levine and other sources if appropriate. 5 pages.

Week 12. November 5 and 7. How to lobby: The end.

- Wolpe and Levine, Part 1, Chapters 6, 7, 8.

Week 13. November 12 and 14. Analyzing cases of lobbying.

- Wolpe and Levine, Part 2, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4.

**Fifth paper due in class Wednesday November 14.** Discuss the implications of your findings from your previous paper. Now that you have explained a theoretical perspective, confronted the theory with evidence from a particular real-life example, how did the theory fare? Did you confirm the theory and learn something important about who wins and loses in politics? Did you disconfirm the theory completely or partially? If so, is that because the theory is faulty, or was your case simply unusual, in your opinion? If the theory is faulty, how should it be revised? Whether or not the theory is right, what are the normative implications of your findings? Is democratic governance well served or distorted by the activities of the lobbyists that you observed in your case? 3-5 pages.

Week 14. November 19. One last day on being a student and doing well in college.

- Light, Chapter 9. (paper, Group 2)
- General discussion of whether Light's book makes sense.
- Class cancelled November 21. Happy Thanksgiving.

Week 15. November 26 and 28. More discussion of cases.

- Wolpe and Levine, Part 2, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8.

Week 16. December 3 and 5. Review, discussion of term paper projects, and informal presentations to class.

**Term papers due in class Wednesday December 5.** Take papers 2 through 5 and merge them into one paper. Start with the theory (paper 3), discuss your case in general (paper 2), explain how your evidence relates to the theory (paper 4), and then discuss the implications of your findings (paper 5). Revise your previous papers for style and content and take into account all my comments over the previous drafts of the papers. You may also need to refine your theory and your introduction so that your paper fits together as tightly as possible. Note that this may require you to re-write the introduction so that it corresponds to the evidence and to the conclusions that you reached. Focus on creating an internally consistent term paper where all parts of it are related to each other and where there are no digressions. You've just written a 15-20 page term paper based on original research. Congratulations!