UNC Public Policy Capstone Program
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Request for Project Proposals
Fall 2018-Spring 2019

Project Proposal Deadlines:
Fall 2018 semester: Aug. 1, 2018
Spring 2019 semester: Dec. 1, 2018
The Public Policy Major
UNC Public Policy is an interdisciplinary social science major designed to provide students with the theoretical perspective, analytical skill, and substantive knowledge needed to respond to major domestic and global policy problems. The core curriculum includes exposure to multiple disciplinary fields, including philosophy, economics, political science, and policy analysis. Students develop skills in conducting policy research with quantitative and qualitative methods, analyzing policy alternatives, and writing for diverse audiences. Many students also gain specialized knowledge about a particular policy area by pursuing a field concentration such as Health Policy, Education Policy, or the Environment and Sustainability.

The Capstone Program
In the Capstone program, teams of senior public policy majors take on consulting projects with government agencies or non-profit organizations that seek policy research or analysis on a wide range of topics. While the partner organizations receive actionable, client-centered policy analysis, the students gain real-world experience and apply the interdisciplinary skills they have mastered as UNC Public Policy majors. Each project is assigned to a team of 4-6 students for a semester, with the expectation that each student works approximately 6-8 hours per week for 14 weeks (see timeline below). Student teams meet with their client, develop a work plan, research relevant policy issues, collect data, identify and analyze policy options, and produce a final report that includes specific recommendations for action.

What can my organization expect from the teaching team and the students?
UNC Public Policy facilitates access to experts in the field and provides instructional staff who intensively mentor student teams and help ensure a high-quality final product. While students will seek to understand your organization’s unique needs and perspective, they are also encouraged to approach the project from alternative points of view in order to consider the broadest public interest. Students are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism.

What kinds of projects is the UNC Public Policy Capstone Program looking for?
We work with non-profit or public-sector organizations on projects that meet the following criteria:

- Most importantly, the project addresses a policy question in the public interest.
- The project proposal includes a clear description of the problem or issue and identifies deliverables that contribute to the overall project goal.
- The project requires students to use and further develop their research and analysis skills to learn about some policy topic or question, then propose and evaluate alternative courses of action.

Questions? Contact Anna Krome-Lukens, Director of Experiential Education, at annakl@unc.edu or 919-962-4854
The project can be completed by a student team in the course of one semester (approximately 14 weeks). If you anticipate that the project cannot be completed in a semester, please contact the Director to discuss how the project could be broken into multiple simultaneous or sequential components.

Projects can be in any geographic location, as long as clients are able to meet virtually.

Examples of recent Capstone projects

**Camp Corral**: Students analyzed results of a survey to identify areas of need among the families served by Camp Corral (which provides a unique summer camp experience for children of wounded, injured, ill, and fallen veterans) and assessed the impacts of the camp on families served.

**Institute for Emerging Issues**: Students analyzed key components of disparities in economic and community growth between North Carolina’s rural and urban communities. By collecting data, conducting interviews, and analyzing relevant case studies, they provided examples of best practices for a regionally coordinated approach.

**Orange County Arts Commission**: Students researched successful public funding models for the arts in peer communities and interviewed local stakeholders to determine the feasibility of applying these models to Orange County.

More project descriptions are available online at publicpolicy.unc.edu/academics/experiential-education

What are my responsibilities as a client?

While we respect your limited time and resources, your expertise and guidance are vital to the success of this project. We ask you to engage productively with a team of students over the course of several months. Former clients report spending an average of 1-2 hours per week working with Capstone students on the project. As the liaison from your organization, you are expected to:

- Provide an initial description of your projected needs and work with the teaching team to refine the scope of work before the semester begins.
- Provide access to organizational information or resources relevant to the project.
- Meet (in person or virtually) with the students 3 times: at the beginning of the semester, at least once during the semester, and at the end of the semester, when the students will make a presentation about their work and recommendations. Of course, you are welcome to meet or interact with the students more often.
- Maintain regular communication with the instructor and student team, and provide written or oral feedback on 2-3 intermediate deliverables.
- Be open to students’ ideas and suggestions.
- At the end of the semester, complete a short evaluation of the team’s work and your experience with the Capstone program.

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How do I propose a project?
Submit the following information to Dr. Anna Krome-Lukens, Director of Experiential Education, at annakl@unc.edu by the deadlines listed below:

- Organization name and brief description of the goals and functions of your organization (1 paragraph)
- Name, title, and contact information (mailing address, phone number, and email) of the primary contact and any secondary contacts who will work with students
- Project title and intended semester for your project
- Brief description of the project/issue and what you intend to do with the students’ final product or recommendations (1-2 paragraphs)
- Brief descriptions of intermediate or final deliverables key to the project’s success
- Links to any resources critical for understanding your project or organization
- Any other relevant information that will help the students jump in to project planning

If you would like to submit multiple projects, please list them separately. Please feel free to email or call the Director if you have any questions or to discuss the specifics of your project before submitting your proposal.

When will I know if the Capstone program will take on my project?
Because we try to balance the needs and interests of our student teams with available projects, we cannot promise an immediate answer. You will be notified by August 24 whether your project will be assigned to a team for Fall 2018, and by January 11 for Spring 2019. If we cannot take on your project now, we will consider it for a future semester.

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<tr>
<th>Timeline for Capstone Program</th>
<th>Fall 2018</th>
<th>Spring 2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project proposals due</td>
<td>Aug. 1, 2018</td>
<td>Dec. 1, 2018</td>
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<td>UNC semester begins</td>
<td>Aug. 21, 2018</td>
<td>Jan. 9, 2019</td>
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<td>Initial client-team meetings; students develop work plan, with client approval</td>
<td>Sept. 4-14, 2018</td>
<td>Jan. 22-Feb. 1, 2019</td>
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<td>Students conduct research and analysis</td>
<td>Sept.-Nov. 2018</td>
<td>Feb.-Apr. 2019</td>
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<td>Experiential Education Showcase (clients invited)</td>
<td>Nov. 28, 2018, 12:30-2:00 pm</td>
<td>Apr. 17, 2019, 12:30-2:00 pm (tentative)</td>
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<td>Final team presentations and final reports submitted</td>
<td>Nov. 26-Dec. 5, 2018</td>
<td>Apr. 15-26, 2019</td>
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Thank you for your interest in the Capstone program. We are grateful for your willingness to engage our students in the important work you do.

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