

Proposal Writing
UST 410/510-501
Fall 2023
Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs
College of Education and Public Affairs
Cleveland State University

UST 410-501

3 credit hours

UST 510-501

4 credit hours

Updated: 08/18/2023

Instructor: Jeffrey M. Bowen, MNO, CFRE

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Office: Urban Building, Room 221, 1717 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, OH 44115

Office Hours: By Appointment Online or By Phone

Course Location: Online via Blackboard (WEB)

Meeting Time: Postings are due by Midnight on Sundays (Dates are noted)

UST 510 Graduate Students will also meet three (3) times via Zoom (Dates TBD)

Course Numbers: 1280 & 1010

Section: 501

Course Description:

This course will focus on the content and structure of program planning and development, sources of funding, proposal writing and program evaluation. The rationale for this course is the organizational concern for planning, funding and accountability. Urban planners, public and nonprofit administrators are expected to identify and solve problems and to think and act strategically in an increasingly competitive environment. In addition, planners and nonprofit managers must possess the skills necessary to obtain funding and to determine the impact of a particular program and/or policy. Students will gain experience and skills in program design, research, and evaluation through the independent development and writing of a grant proposal.

Required Texts:

- Clarke, Cheryl A. (2009) *Storytelling for Grantseekers: A Guide to Creative Nonprofit Fundraising, 2nd edition*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 978-0-470-38122-9 paperback (*)
- O'Neal-McElrath, Tori. (2019). *Winning Grants Step by Step, Fifth Edition*, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Son, Inc. ISBN 9781119547341 paperback (*)
- Teitel, Martin. (2018) *The Ultimate Insider's Guide to Winning Foundation Grants: A Foundation CEO Reveals the Secrets You Need to Know, Updated Edition*, Medfield, MA: Emerson & Church. ISBN 9781889102634 paperback
- Note that the texts marked with (*) are available via the CSU Electronic Library:
https://researchguides.csuohio.edu/er.php?course_id=90887

Candid (Formerly The Foundation Center):

Among many services, Candid offers *The Foundation Directory Online*, which is an invaluable tool for grant seekers. This paid subscription service is available free via several public libraries in the Greater Cleveland Area (see handout and search tool). **Students are strongly encouraged** to access the directory to gain some experience conducting online research using this comprehensive tool. **Students are required** to watch the 30-minute video: “*Introduction to The Foundation Directory Online*”: Available at: <https://youtu.be/zn740tOBx4w>

Course Objectives:

The purpose of the course is to provide students with academic and practical skills. By the conclusion of the course, the student will:

- Understand the program planning process
- Develop a project/program plan
- Understand and apply research principles and methods to needs assessment and identifying potential funding sources
- Design an evaluation plan
- Relate major trends and issues in public and nonprofit funding to the allocation decisions of government, corporate, foundation and individual donors
- Identify and understand key components of, and practical steps for, proposal preparation
- Demonstrate the skills to plan, research and write a proposal

Course Method:

The class is a seminar course that requires student participation through assigned readings, class exercises, case study, and online discussion boards. Students are expected to complete the required reading, (including any handouts, or other assignments in addition to the specified text), participate in online discussions, and contribute to the learning experience. Students are also required to select and **identify a 501 (c) (3) Tax Exempt, Nonprofit Organization that you will use as the subject for all written assignments and the Final Grant Project.** (Please note that United Way, Foundations, Hospitals, Colleges & Universities, Religious Institutions, research grant projects, and “personal needs” projects do not qualify.)

General Education Statement:

This course is approved as a General Education 08 course, meeting the requirements for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). Skill areas for this class include **Writing to Learn** and **Writing to Communicate**.

Writing Across the Curriculum Criteria

This course also fulfills the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) requirement. The criteria for meeting the WAC requirement are:

1. The course requires students to write between 3,000 and 5,000 words (10-14 pages, double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1” margins) in writing assignments (which may include drafts).
2. Final versions of at least one assignment should total at least 2,000 words (eight pages).
3. The course teaches students writing-to-learn strategies that foster students’ experiences in learning, and writing-to-communicate strategies that foster students’ respect of readers’ experiences. Whenever possible, planning assignments (e.g. reading logs, pre-writing strategies) and peer reviews will be included in class assignments.
4. Students will be assigned writing complex enough to require substantive revision for most students. Students will be given feedback to assist them in preparing subsequent papers or drafts of papers. This feedback will consist of more than mechanical correction of punctuation and grammar.
5. The course provides instruction in discipline-appropriate forms of texts, arguments, evidence,

style, audience, and citation. Students will be required to use the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

- The CSU Writing center's website lists citation guides including links to the APA style guide: <https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/apa-resources>
 - Or, go to the APA website: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>
6. There will be writing assignments throughout the semester.
 7. The course will address the needs of students regarding library competency.
 8. In order to receive a C or better in the course, students must write at a satisfactory skill level (C or better). If the student's writing is weak, but shows understanding of the course material, the student may be assigned a D, in which case WAC credit will not be received for the course.

Grading:

Your grade is based upon regular, frequent class participation, the quality of your work on the required assignments, and your performance on the final grant application project. Students are expected to post thoughtful responses to questions posed by the instructor **no later than midnight on Sunday of each week**. In addition to your own posts for each question, **you should, at the very least, be commenting on two other posts** that particularly resonated with you. You are also required to **revisit the site periodically throughout the week, to respond to your classmates and/or the instructor**. Keeping up with reading assignments, including handouts, is essential to effective class participation. You are required to complete all homework assignments. **Assignments are due as indicated**. Late assignments, based on emergency situations only, will be accepted with prior approval from the instructor, and **may lose up to 2 points for each day that the assignment is late**.

Class Participation	30 points
Assignment 1	10 points
Assignment 2	10 points
Assignment 3	10 points
Assignment 4	10 points
Final Grant Project	30 points
Total	100 points

Undergraduate Student Grading Scale

A	= 94 - 100
A-	= 90 - 93
B+	= 87 - 89
B	= 83 - 86
B-	= 80 - 82
C+	= 77 - 79
C	= 70 - 76
D	= 60 - 69
F	= 59 and below

Graduate Student Grading Scale

A	= 94 – 100
A-	= 90 – 93
B+	= 87 – 89
B	= 83 – 86
B-	= 80 – 82
C	= 70 – 79
F	= 69 and below

Basis for Grading of Assignments

Written communication is critical to planning and nonprofit practice. Grades for written work will be made on the basis of logical argument, the quality and quantity of research, depth and scope of analysis, demonstrated understanding and incorporation of course concepts, organization, form, correct use of English language and grammar, timeliness and fulfillment of assignment requirements. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval of the instructor.

Grading Criteria

In addition to the required content, evaluation of student papers will consider the following criteria:

Higher Order Concerns

- Focus – The hypothesis or main point of your paper needs to be stated clearly at the beginning of the paper.
- Development – The research i.e., literature, date, etc. utilized to support your hypothesis. Specifically, students' incorporation of quotes, paraphrases, examples, inferences, reasoning, opinions, and forecasts relative to supporting their hypothesis.
- Organization – The organization/structure of the paper. Specifically, is the paper organized so that the paragraphs proceed from one to another in a logical style using appropriate transitions? Is the paper well organized? Did the student adhere to the APA style format suggested for this course?

Lower Order Concerns

- Style – Style can be considered in terms of sentence patterns and diction. Are the sentence patterns varied (preferred) or all the same? Variety in style makes for a far more interesting read. Is the diction appropriate (wording, choice of words) for an upper level college assignment? Is the diction appropriate for the discipline?
- Mechanics – Refers to the punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Students should make sure they proofread their paper prior to submission. Points will be deducted for inappropriate punctuation, improper use of grammar, and misspelled words.

University Policy Statements:

University Deadlines

- For the current semester, the deadline for dropping a course is September 8, 2023
- The last day to withdraw from the course is November 3, 2023
- The final examination week is December 11-16, 2023

Grades of "I" and "X"

- X - For undergraduate courses the grade of "X" can only be administratively assigned by the Office of the University Registrar to indicate a grade has not been assigned by an instructor. For undergraduate students who have stopped attending/participating without notification and have not completed all assignments for reasons that cannot be determined, instructors should assign the earned grade. Any grade of "X" will become a grade of "F" at 11:59 PM the day following the grading deadline.
- X – For graduate courses, the grade of "X" can be assigned by the instructor when an attending/participating student has stopped attending/participating without notification and has not completed all assignments for reasons that cannot be determined by the end of the grading period. An "X" automatically becomes an "F" if not resolved by the last day of instruction of the following semester. An "X" also will be assigned by the University Registrar when no grade is submitted by an instructor.
- I - Incomplete. The "I" grade is given when the work in a course has been generally passing, but when some specifically required task has not been completed through no fault of the student.

- An "I" grade can be assigned by the instructor when all three of the following conditions are met:
 1. Student is regularly attending/participating in the class and has the potential to pass the course;
 2. Student has not completed all assignments and has stopped attending/participating for reasons deemed justified by the instructor; and
 3. Student has notified the instructor prior to the end of the grading period.

Students with Special Needs

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services at (216) 687-2015. The Office is located in MC 147. Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they have been granted an accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.

OIE Statement

Federal law, including Title IX, and University policy require that CSU address discrimination, harassment and sexual violence and enable students affected by these issues to have the same opportunity to succeed as other students. To do this, the CSU Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) provides information, identifies resources (counseling, medical, advocacy, safety planning), issues academic accommodations (excused absences, extended deadlines, late withdrawals, alternative assignments) and other accommodations (No Contact Directives, changing living arrangements). Any student affected by discrimination, harassment and/or sexual violence and seeking assistance, should contact the Office for Institutional Equity by calling 216-687-2223, sending an email to r.lutner@csuohio.edu or m.vogelgesang@csuohio.edu, or visiting AC 236.

Writing Assistance

Students with difficulty writing may contact the Writing Center located in Rhodes Tower 124 for assistance. <https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/writing-center> Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) format for citations and reference pages.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is stealing and/or using the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as one's own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. The penalties for plagiarism are found in full in the Student Handbook (Office of Student Life) under Academic Regulations (Policy on Academic Misconduct) at the following link:

<https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/StudentCodeOfConduct.pdf>

COVID Safety Protocols

The COVID-19 pandemic is still present and serious. Vaccination plus booster shots offers the absolute best protection against serious illness, hospitalization, or death from COVID-19. CSU Health and Wellness Services continues to provide free vaccinations and booster shots for students, faculty, and staff by appointment in Room 205 at the Center for Innovation in Medical Professions (2112 Euclid Avenue). Call 216-687-3649 to schedule. If you test positive for COVID-19, isolate, and follow CDC guidelines. Also, please email our CARE team and let your course instructors know. For additional information, see *CSU COVID-19 Information and Protocols*: <https://www.csuohio.edu/safe-campus/covid-19-information-0>

Assignments:

A. Short Papers:

There are four assignments, presented in 12-point font; APA format. All papers must include a **title page with the student's name, email address, course name/number/section, paper #, and the date the assignment is due**. The topics of the papers are as follows:

Paper # 1: Week 4 (Due 09/24) "Letter of Inquiry" (10 Points)

Prepare a 1–3-page Letter of Inquiry outlining your organization's mission and key programs, the need that you are seeking funds for, what basic outcomes you are anticipating from this project, a general description of what the project entails, approximate cost of the project and anything else that you think is important, based on our readings and discussion so far.

Paper # 2: Week 6 (Due 10/08) "Organization Description & Problem Statement" (10 Points)

Prepare a 1-2-page Organization Description and a 2-3-page Problem Statement for your organization. Please upload as a single (3-5-page) paper, with each section clearly identified, in keeping with the formatting and title page requirements identified in the syllabus.

Paper # 3: Week 8 (Due 10/22) "Potential Funders" (10 Points)

Prepare a 3-5-page recommendation of Potential Funders for your proposal. Begin with a discussion of the sources used for your research, then identify who you can approach, at what dollar amount, and the rationale for their inclusion, based on previous gifts to similar causes, and any other relevant factors that you have uncovered, or considered through your investigation into possible funding.

Paper # 4: Week 10 (Due 11/05) "Goals & Objectives; Methods; Outcomes" (10 Points)

Identify the Goals & Objectives of your proposal; Describe the Methods that will be used; and state the anticipated Outcomes. Please upload as a single 4-6-page paper, with each section clearly identified, in keeping with the formatting and title page requirements identified in the syllabus.

B. Final Grant Project Paper, Week 13 (Due 11/26):

The final grant paper is a compilation of various concepts, techniques, and elements from previous assignments (plus additional material and a brief project budget) into a comprehensive, professional final product. The paper should be 10-16 pages in length, with 12-point font; APA format.

Your Final Grant Project Paper should include the following:

1. Cover Letter
2. Organization Description
3. Problem/Purpose/Need Statement
4. Goals, Objectives & Outcomes
5. Methodology & Personnel
6. Program Budget (for the specific need that you are seeking to fund)
7. Evaluation Plan
8. Future Funding & Sustainability
9. Executive Summary
10. Attachments List

In addition to submitting your paper to the instructor for grading, each student will post their paper for the class to share. (Please see note below for **Student Commentary** requirements)

C. Student Commentary on Grant Papers, Week 14 (Due 12/03):

Students are required to read as many of their peer's papers as possible, to learn more about the various organization's proposed projects. **Your assignment for Week 14** will be to pick two (2) papers for

comment. Your posted comments for each of the two papers selected, should include the following:

1. What did you learn about the proposed project that impressed, or moved, you?
2. What did you like best about the overall grant presentation?
3. What, if anything, would make it work better for you?

Class Schedule/Due Dates/Assignments:

Week 1 (Due 09/03)

Introductions; Familiarity with Grant Writing

- Review Syllabus/Assignments
- Handouts: “Faculty Profile Link” “AFP Code of Ethics” & “Donor Bill of Rights”

Week 2 (Due 09/10)

Getting Ready; Introduction to Grant Writing; The Foundation Center

- Read Clarke: Intro & CH 1-2 - Why Story Telling?; First Steps; Research & Relationships
- Read Teitel: CH 32 – Questions & Answers
- Handout: “Foundation Directory Locations”
- **Watch the 30-minute video: “Introduction to The Foundation Directory Online”:**
<https://youtu.be/zn740tOBx4w>

Week 3 (Due 09/17)

Letter of Inquiry, Organization Description, Proposal Overview

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Introduction; Step 1: The Proposal Idea; Step 2: Developing Relationships
- Read Clarke: CH 3 – The Short Story: Writing Letters of Inquiry
- Read Teitel: CH 1-2 – Whom Does the Funder Work for?; Letters of Inquiry
- Handouts: “Sample LOI Food Bank Expansion” “Sample LOI Senior Women’s Outreach” “Sample LOI Dance Company Outreach”
- **Identify the Tax-Exempt Nonprofit Organization that you will be writing about**

Week 4 (Due 09/24)

Proposal Development: Problem Statement & The Case for Support

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 3: Writing a Compelling Problem Statement
- Read Clarke: CH 4-5 – The Proposal Narrative; The Need or Problem
- Read Teitel: CH 3-4 – Meat & Potatoes; Writing a Wonderful Proposal
- Handout: “Case Statement BoardSource”
- **Paper # 1: “Letter of Inquiry” Due**

Week 5 (Due 10/01)

Telling your Story: What Funders Expect

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 9: Writing the Organization Background
- Read Teitel: CH 5-6; 17; 21-27 – In-Person Meetings; How Foundation Staff & Boards Decide; Four Things You Should Never Do; Things You Can Do to Improve your Proposal; Help Your Proposal Make The 1st Cut; Eight Red Flags; Five Mistakes; Four Questions You Can Expect to Be Asked; Five Questions to Ask

Week 6 (Due 10/08)

Learning Where to Look: Current & Potential Funders

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Resources – Sample Proposal; How to Research Funders; Resources for

Grantseekers

- Handout: “Gift Range Table Example” & “Top Giving Foundations - Ohio”
- Experiment with the Grantsmanship Center’s “Local Funding Sources Ohio” Links
<https://www.tgci.com/funding-sources/ohio>
- Experiment with the Grants.Gov’s Government “Grants Search” Tool (note that you will be able to conduct searches without a subscription, but extensive details will not be available)
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>
- **Paper # 2: “Organization Description; Problem Statement” Due**

Week 7 (Due 10/15)

Goals, Objectives & Outcomes

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 4: Defining Clear Goals & Objectives
- Read Clarke: CH 6 – Goals Objectives & Methods
- Read Teitel: CH 13 – Myth: It’s Fine to Embellish

Week 8 (Due 10/22)

Methods, Evaluation and Personnel

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 5: Developing the Strategies; Step 6: Evaluation Component
- Read Clarke: CH 7 – Evaluation & Future Funding
- Read Teitel: CH 12 – Myth: Funders Don’t Read Grant Reports
- **Paper # 3: “Potential Funders” Due**

Week 9 (Due 10/29)

Program/Project Budget

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 8: Developing the Proposal Budget
- Read Clarke: CH 8 – The Budget

Week 10 (Due 11/05)

Future Funding & Sustainability (Organizational and Planetary)

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 7: Developing a Statement of Sustainability
- Read Teitel: CH 7-8, 11, 15 – Reports; You Can Do It!; Myths: Charming Will Conceal Flaws & Funders Don’t Care
- Handouts: “Triple Bottom Line: What is it and How does it Work?” “Triple Bottom Line Graphic”
- **Paper # 4: Goals/Objectives; Methods; Outcomes Due**

Week 11 (Due 11/12)

Executive Summary

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 10: Writing the Proposal Summary
- Read Clarke: CH 9 – The Summary
- Read Teitel: CH 20 & 31 – A Short List of Unequivocal Don’ts; Six Ways to Help Assure Funding

Week 12 (Due 11/19)

Cover Letter, Attachments, Site Visit.

- Read O’Neil-McElrath: Step 11: Submitting the Application; Step 12: Relationships with Funders
- Read Clarke: CH 10-11 – Packaging; Site Visits & Beyond
- Read Teitel: CH 9-10, 14 – Myth One: Fundraising Isn’t That Hard; Myth Two: Foundations Are Straightforward; Myth Six: Funding is a Cat & Mouse Game

Week 13 (Due 11/26)

Details & Deadlines; Proposal Presentation

- **Final Grant Project Paper Due** In addition to submitting your paper to the instructor for grading, each student will post their paper for the class to share.

Week 14 (Due 12/03)

Student Commentary on Grant Papers.

- **Student Commentary on two (2) of your Peer's Papers Due**
- Please upload in the place provided for that purpose in order to receive credit.

Week 15 (Due 12/10)

Other Resources, Course Review, End of Semester Comments & Questions

- Handouts: "Resource C -- Resources for Grantmakers", "GrantWatch Sample"

Week 16 (Final Exam Week)

Course Concluded

No Exam

Please Note:

The course design follows a grant proposal's essential elements, with each section leading logically into the next. **It is crucial to have access to all three texts and keep up with the readings.** It is also important to carefully read the weekly "Overview" pages and stay current with the discussion questions, which combined with the readings, **provide the required content information you will need for each successive writing assignment.**

Regarding the funds you will be seeking, **you should be asking for a specific amount for a particular program purpose rather than "general operating support."** Exactly how you will use the requested funds should be reflected in your proposal's various sections and in the program budget. Note that the expansion of an existing program, or addition of a new service, that you are seeking to fund in your proposal is an academic exercise. It does not need to be created in collaboration with, or approved by, the organization you are writing about.

At the end of the semester, **you will be putting the various sections together into a final grant project.** Your program ideas and passion for the cause will be apparent in the written proposal. You also need to understand what specific questions should be clearly answered within each section of the proposal. That information comes from reading the weekly assignments and actively participating in the course discussions. Keep in mind that **the final project is a single "seamless" paper with each section clearly identified**, just as it would be if you were submitting it as a formal written proposal to a foundation officer, corporate giving professional, or directly to an individual philanthropist.

Graduate Students (UST 510) Please Note:

In addition to the coursework annotated above, Graduate Students will be assigned several articles for reading and discussion. **We will meet three times during the semester via Zoom** (Dates and Times to be determined) to discuss this material and to take a closer look at the Proposal Writing and Grants Management process.

Also Note:

While every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive overview of the course content, assignments and due dates, the instructor reserves the right to add assignments, or make other changes to the syllabus, as the semester progresses.

Questions and Correspondence:

If you need to contact me for clarification, a question about a specific assignment, a personal matter, etc., please **do not use the Blackboard messaging system** for that purpose. Instead, send an email directly to j.m.bowen@csuohio.edu, and I will get back to you as quickly as possible. Also, your professors genuinely appreciate it when you put the ***Course and Section numbers along with the reason for the note*** in the subject heading of your correspondence. It may also expedite their response.