**BGSU DEFINITION Public Policy Projects FINAL – 5/2/2016**

**DEFINITION SUBMITTED TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION:**

Public Policy Projects (PPPs) are credit bearing experiences which engage undergraduate students (individuals or groups) in applied community based research focused on the critical examination of a current public policy issue or problem related to their field of study (major or minor) and/or related to career goals. PPPs are advised by a faculty mentor and should be academically rigorous, draw on the scholarly literature, include a review of the current public debates related to the state of policy on the topic, and advocate for viable solutions. PPPs must include community based research approaches ensuring public engagement with the issue to gain an applied understanding of the policy (e.g. interviews with elected officials, issue leaders and/or stakeholders, volunteering, internships, site visits, advocacy work). PPPs must include a defined mechanism for community feedback and reflection on the project, and a defined plan for public dissemination of the project report/product.

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES:**

**KEY ELEMENTS:**

Such problems may be identified by: faculty, community partners (e.g. nonprofit organizations), government entities, and/or for-profit organizations. Students will also be encouraged to identify their own topics in response to their own intellectual curiosity. Students at any level can participate in a policy project and they may be completed either individually or by a group of students working together.

In a Public Policy Project, students will typically be expected to:

* Use their disciplinary/ interdisciplinary knowledge to identify and research a public problem
* Utilize applied community based research methods as well as any other appropriate methodology
* Identify possible solutions and their viability
* Recommend a solution and an implementation plan
* Discuss the challenges to implementation
* Examine the relevance of their project to the public good
* Complete a public engagement and a public dissemination component
* Include a defined mechanism for community feedback and reflection

Public Policy Project implementation must include the following:

* A project proposal approved by the faculty mentor(s), and if applicable community mentor. Co-advisement by a relevant community expert or faculty peer would be determined by the nature of the project and the primary faculty mentor
* A defined public policy issues or problem identified by faculty, community partners (e.g. nonprofit organizations), government entities, and/or for-profit organizations, or by the student/s based on their own intellectual curiosity and/or previous course work or community engagement experiences
* Some form of public engagement with the issue (e.g. interviews with elected officials, issue leaders and/or stakeholders, volunteering, internship, site visits, advocacy work) to gain an applied understanding of the policy issue. Students must document the plan for this public engagement as part of the project proposal.
* Some mechanisms for community feedback and reflection are identified to provide feedback to the student and the faculty mentor (e.g. review by entities involved with the public engagement activity, feedback on the public dissemination portion, etc.)
* A final paper/report and a presentation or poster session at a conference sponsored by the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship
* Public dissemination of the results to the broader community outside of BGSU (e.g. presentation to community organization, website, public poster display etc.)

**COURSE VARIABLES:**

**Semester Calendar:** Can be offered during any academic term based on approval from the academic department and availability of faculty.

**Course Credit:** Variable course credit determined by academic department/program, earning hours towards degree completion, extra credit and/or meeting a program competency requirement.

**Curricular Location:** Public Policy Projects may be integrated into the following: Major/minor requirements, BGP courses, capstone courses and experiences, independent studies, Honors Projects, BGSU registered internship experiences, and non-credit based PPPs approved by CCCE.

**Course Tracking:** Academic departments and programs determine how they will integrate PPPs into the course and schedule development process if they choose to offer a PPP option. Projects will be tracked through a Public Policy Project course attribute, determined by the academic department or, if completed outside of a course, via the approval of a proposal submitted to the Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE).

**Faculty:** Faculty Mentors approve the PPP proposal and supervise the projects.

**Grading Method:** Graded A/F, S/U only, A/B/C/NC, S/NC - dependent on the specific course or program requirement.

**Learning Outcomes:** Determined by the faculty mentor and defined in the PPP proposal process.

**Assessment:** All Public Policy Projects should have a defined civic engagement learning outcome and use the BGSU Civic Engagement Rubric to assess at least one defined learning outcome that will be demonstrated via completion of the Project. Mechanisms for community feedback and reflection are determined by the faculty mentor (e.g. review by entities involved with the public engagement activity, feedback on the public dissemination portion, etc.)

**Evaluation:** Determined by the faculty mentor. Must include verification of the public engagement and public dissemination activity.

**Supervision:** Faculty mentor supervise all aspects of the Public Policy Project and determine the mechanism(s) for feedback required of community entities participating in the course projects/experiences.

**Project Approval Process:** Each student or group of students engaged with a Public Policy Project must work with a faculty mentor who is willing to supervise the project. Projects must be initiated and developed by the student applicant(s) under the supervision guidance of their faculty mentor. The application should consist of an Application form, a Proposal (Project Narrative) describing the plan for research/scholarly/creative project, and the plan to address the public engagement and public dissemination requirements.

**Course/Class Approval:** PPP classes are tagged in the Course Registration System to make them easily identifiable for enrolling students and for tracking/reporting purposes.  PPP classes and competency requirements are tagged using an ‘attribute’ at the section level. PPP Faculty Mentors work with their department scheduler to tag the course as PPP. Courses defined as PPP, regardless of the instructor of record, are tagged and approved by the department/program, and all sections of the course should include the attribute.  The staff of the CCCE assist with the tagging and tracking of all PPP attributes.  Every time that a course with the PPP tag is taught, it must include all of the elements required for qualification as a PPP class.

**Student Compensation:** None from BGSU. It is permissible for a student to conduct a Public Policy Project based on an existing work/internship/community engagement experience with a community partner. PPPs will be eligible for any relevant grants for undergraduate research and community engagement.

**Student Hours:** Determined by faculty mentor.

**Assignment:** In a Public Policy Project students will typically be expected to use their disciplinary knowledge to identify a public problem, related to the common good rather than private interests, research and develop possible solutions, identify an implementation plan and discuss the challenges to implementation. Projects must include some form of public engagement with the issue (e.g. interviews with elected officials or issue leaders, volunteering, internship, site visit) to gain an applied understanding of the policy issue. Students will also present their work at a poster session or conference sponsored by the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship and publicly disseminate their results.

**Major/Minor-Related:** PPPs should align or be related to student major and/or career goals.

**Application/Approval:** PPP classes are tagged in the Course Registration System to make them easily identifiable for enrolling students and for tracking/reporting purposes.  PPP classes and competency requirements are tagged using an ‘attribute’ at the section level. PPP Faculty Mentors work with the CCCE to tag the course as PPP. Courses defined as PPP, regardless of the instructor of record, should be approved by the department/program, and all sections of the course should include the attribute.  The staff of the CCCE oversee the tagging and tracking of all PPP attributes.  Every time that a course with the PPP tag is taught, it must include all of the elements required for qualification as a PPP class.