Grant Writing for Environmental Defense

Community Partner: Willamette Riverkeeper

**UNST 421 / 6 credits/ fully online, Fall, 2020**

**NOTE: This syllabus is about what and when, Discussions on D2L is how.**

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Office hours: Available upon request

## Class and Project Description

This service-learning class uses an experiential approach: students learn to research and write compelling grant proposals by engaging in the process of writing very real proposals to be used by our Community Partner in its pursuit of funding.

Students in this Capstone course partner with a Portland based nonprofit organization who advocates for our natural resources, the wild, and the preservation of these special places.

## Community Partner

**Willamette Riverkeeper Mission Statement:** to protect and restore the Willamette River. Additional statement: We believe that a river with good water quality and abundant natural habitat, safe for fishing and swimming is a basic public right. The Willamette River belongs to all of us, and should be protected as such.

### **Goals, Objectives, Outcomes**

This Capstone course is designed to engage students in a process of community involvement and practice that result in the development of compelling and usable grant proposals.

The GOALS for this Capstone are as follows:

1. to provide PSU Capstone students with a professionally meaningful service-learning opportunity; and
2. to further the mission of the Community Partner by assisting in their effort to gain grants to support and sustain projects and programs.

The OBJECTIVES of this Capstone address both course content and the University Studies goals of communication, critical thinking, appreciation of diversity, and social responsibility, and are as follows:

1. to enhance students’ facility and confidence with writing, in particular persuasive and reflective writing; editing; and oral communication (*communication*);
2. to increase students’ interviewing, research, problem-solving, strategizing and organizational skills (*critical thinking*);
3. to facilitate students’ building of functional teams around both differences and likenesses experienced within the classroom and with the Community Partner’s staff (*appreciation of diversity*); and
4. to encourage students’ ongoing identification with and participation in a shared community (*social responsibility*).

By the end of this Capstone, students will demonstrate the following enhanced capacities:

1. write clearly and effectively in persuasive, concise, and reflective pieces;
2. discover and utilize the intellectual and practical resources necessary to answer multiple application questions;
3. relate to others in a team and to contribute individual gifts and efforts to create a team product; and
4. apply personal energy to meeting community challenges and to experience enhanced community identification.

## Instructor’s Expectations

I am committed to creating an experience in which everyone feels welcome, challenged, and valued. My expectation is that you will check in often (I recommend 5 days a week for this course), keep an open mind, follow instructions to the letter, participate in your own learning process, help your teammates, and turn every assignment in on time. If you miss an assignment, I expect that you will catch up quickly and stay current with your group. Not doing so can be costly to everyone. (See grading process for more information.) Understand that at times I disagree with the author of our textbook and I will tell you when that happens and why I disagree. In those cases, you must go with my instructions over the author’s, since my instructions are about what the Community Partner needs from us.

### **Texts**

**Required:** Therequired text for this class is available at the PSU bookstore and at online sources.

1. Clarke, Cheryl A. Storytelling for Grantseekers. Jossey-Bass, 2009, Second Edition. Provocative framing of effective grantwriting through the use of storytelling techniques. (Make sure it has 12 chapters!)
2. The Capstone handbook – available on PSU’s website: <https://capstone.unst.pdx.edu/students>
3. Lamott, Anne. Excerpt from her book *Bird by Bird*; available in Content
4. Article: “Getting Funded, the Complete Guide to Writing Grant Proposals” by Howlett and Bourque, synthesized by Lisa Jo Frech: available in Essentials

**Recommended:**

1. Barbato, Joseph and Danielle Furlich. Writing for a Good Cause. Fireside, 2000. Irreverent account of the entire grantwriting process, with particular emphasis placed on the writing process itself. PSU Library
2. Carlson, Mim. Winning Grants Step by Step*.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2008, 3rd edition. PSU Library
3. <http://foundationcenter.org/> -- The Foundation Center. You can **only** access this AT the PSU Library
4. Article: Current Trends in Nonprofits by Nell Edgington; available in Essentials

### **My Grading Policy**

In this course, everyone starts out with an A. It’s up to you to keep or lose it. For every assignment you never turn in, your grade drops one whole letter. For every 3 late documents your grade drops one whole letter. If you are late with 6 or more documents your grade will drop yet another whole letter. If your group mates complain about your lack of participation, this could cost you a half drop in letter, in other words, from an A to an A-. You’ll get one warning first, and then with the second complaint, your grade will drop a half letter. Otherwise, this is about producing the best possible product for our Community Partner with me helping you all along the way. Keeping an A in this course requires that you do individual work every week AND group work with your team and you meet deadlines.

1. **Individual work:**

Individual work includes weekly Reading Reactions to the chapters in our text book assigned that week AND a weekly Reflection, which is about your personal thoughts and feelings related to this course and your participation, this week. There will be 4 special topics over the course of the term about which you will write **an essay, single spaced**: Communication; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Ethics and Social Responsibility; and Critical Thinking. You also have one other individual assignment, called Getting to Know the Community Partner. Instructions for all of these individual assignments are included in Discussions. All assignments are due Sunday night at midnight, at the very latest. However, waiting until the last minute to submit your homework has a personal and group price, so it’s strongly recommended that you submit your individual work early- mid week.

It is fully expected that in this course you will:

1. participate online regularly throughout the week,

1. show evidence of thoughtful individual work,
2. complete ALL assignments on time,
3. and contribute your share of the group work.

See pages 6 - 7 of this syllabus for more guidelines on completing the Reflections. If you choose, you have the opportunity to create an individual **ePortfolio** for this course that will include all Reflections, Reading Reactions, Grant Components, Peer Reviews, and the Final Grant Proposal. An ePortfolio is a body of work produced online and is increasingly popular among employers. This exercise is designed to get you used to creating a body of work online, and is entirely optional for you. PSU has made Pebble Pad available to you to put an e-portfolio together for yourself. This can be fun!

**2) Group Work**

You will be a member of a team: a team charged with completing a grant proposal for a specific project for the Community Partner. Substantial time will be needed to establish roles, develop a routine, facilitate the work, and manage productivity, all of which YOU must arrange and manage.

If one person in your group complains about your lack of participation/helpfulness, I will warn you about that. If 2 people in your group complain about this, your grade will drop a half letter.

**3) Final product**

This work will follow a collaborative design. With the input of your team, the Community Partner, and myself, you will create a final product that is needed and will be used by our Community Partner. So it’s imperative that you understand this from Day 1. This is not grant writing in theory. This is the real deal.

At the end of term, the class will have produced 4 grant proposals which I will present to the Community Partner, and the Capstone office, where it will be available as a resource for future Capstone courses and to interested students/faculty throughout the University.

You are free to discuss your progress in the course with me; asking for and receiving feedback from me and fellow class members will help you stay oriented and grounded within the group. You and I will use Feedback and D2L email for communication (not PSU email). You and your group will mostly likely use Google docs for your group work. PSU students have found that Google docs works best for this work. Slack Channel has also been a successful mechanism.

You will not receive a grade for this class until you have turned in the final products outlined above and returned all texts and/or equipment borrowed from the instructor, the Community Partner, and/or the University. You must also complete the course evaluation. Future students, the UNST Department, and I depend on this information to improve this course.

**Schedule**

The following schedule may change as teams form, engage with the Community Partner, and undertake the group work. Please raise any questions you have with me. Know that your questions are very welcome.

**Week 1: Getting to know you**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Read the Capstone Student Handbook – <https://capstone.unst.pdx.edu/students>

2. Introduce yourself and respond to other introductions. Find out who is good at what when it comes to research, writing, and editing. Review syllabus and D2L.

Consider posting a photo of yourself in D2L.

3. Think about the nonprofit context: What do you know about nonprofits? Why do they need grants? What is a grant proposal? What do you know about grant proposals? Where did you learn what you know?

4. Review all materials in Essentials - these are your resources and tools!

5. Review Chapter One and Two of the text – submit your Reading Reaction to each chapter separately to the Reading Reactions folder**, using the form** found in Essentials, one document/one page per chapter, single spaced.

6. Submit your 1st Reflection to the folder called Weekly Reflections. Make sure you understand the difference between the Reading Reaction and the Weekly Reflection. Read the instructions about how to do a Reflection, toward the bottom of the syllabus and also in Discussions. This week is a special topic (there will be 4 of them), on Communication. Write your Reflection entirely about this topic, through the lens of the pandemic if you like, and/or the protests and Black Lives Matter. I particularly want the big picture on this topic.

**Week 2: Learning about the Community Partner**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Learn about the Community Partner. Review the Community Partner website and list questions you have that cannot be answered by the website. It’s important to me and to the Community Partner that you NOT ask questions that could easily be answered by looking at their website and/or Google. Also, try to avoid rabbit holes where there is risk of chasing after information that will not pertain to grantwriting. Email me if you’re unsure of a rabbit hole you’re about to enter.

2. Gather enough information to write the assignment called Getting to Know Your Community Partner. Refer to the guidelines for this assignment in the syllabus, page 7. Submit this assignment under Grant Components.

3. Read Chapter 3 from the text and respond to the chapter. Submit your reading reaction to Reading Reactions.

4. Read and consider Anne Lamott on writing – found in Essentials

**Week 3: Forming Groups**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Which project interests you the most? (Read Project Descriptions in Essentials) Form groups according to project interest: 4 people in a group. Then complete the Team Charter for your group, filling out the form in Content. Filling out this form will require each of you to choose a role. Do Not Switch Roles. Everyone who’s ever done that has regretted it.

2. Work on the Organization Description and a Statement of Need as a group. Make an outline for each document. Make a plan with your team to determine what additional information you need and who will get it.

3. Read Chapter 4 of Storytelling and submit your Reading Reaction

4. Write and submit Reflection #2. This one is personal, about you and this course. Tell me how you’re doing here. I want to engage with you, and this is where we can do that. Don’t overthink it. Just hammer it out.

**Week 4: Organization Description and the Statement of Need**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist:1. Work as a team to write the Organization Description (1 full page) and Statement of Need (2 full pages).

Refer to your Getting to Know the Community Partner assignment and as a group pool your best/strongest responses to that assignment to include in the Organization Description. Also look closely at the student samples from previous students in this course who wrote very good proposals. Model your components after theirs. Refer to handouts in Essentials to make sure you’ve covered all of the elements. Be sure to include the project name given to us by the CP. (Use that at the top of ALL components, except the cover letter.) Then submit these 2 items separately to Grant Components. Expect that these documents will go through several revisions, and that your header needs to look professional and not academic.

2. Read Chapter 5 in the text book and write and submit your reaction.

3. Write and submit your Reflection #3 – an essay on the special topic: Diversity of Experience. Again, use the largest lens your brain can visualize and critique.

**Week 5: Finding Potential Funders**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: **1.** Each person in the group has to find a potential funder. Use the Foundation Center online sources AT the school library (cannot be used from home) for researching funders, using the filters suggested by Clarke and/or Google funders that support environmental work using the filters.

2. Submit your team’s potential funder list to the Grant Components Folder w a team member’s name attached to each source and each category of info included.

3. Read and react to Chapter 6 in the textbook. Submit reaction.

**Week 6: Budget and Budget Narrative**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Budget development: You’re not responsible for the Income side of the budget, but you must create the Expense side of a budget. Do your best to imagine what will be required for this project and Google the cost of items, services, and fees. Do you have all the information you need? If not, who will find it and how? Add a Narrative at the bottom of the budget to explain any line item that might be confusing to a potential funder. Read the Chapter on Budgets! And look at the budget samples in Essentials.

2. Submit the draft Budget with its budget narrative - 1 full page, no more

4. Submit Reflection #4 – your experiences at PSU this week and how you’re feeling right now, given all the chaos in the world.

5. Submit Reading Reactions to Chapter 7 and 8. (separate submittals)

**Week 7: Evaluation Plan, Executive Summary, and Cover Letter**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Using the information you learned in Chapter 7, write an Evaluation Plan (I page) that has specifics: some quantitative AND qualitative information, answering this question: How will you know if this project is a success? In other words, what will that look like? Number the list of outcomes expected for this project, both qualitative and quantitative. Aim for 4-6 measurable outcomes. Submit this to Grant Components.

2. Read Chapter 9 and submit your reaction.

3. Then write (as a team) an Executive Summary (I full page), and a Cover Letter (1 full page), referring to the handouts and text book for guidelines. Submit these components to Grant Components.

4. Reflection #5: Special topic of Ethics and Social Responsibility. I hope you have LOTS to say about this.

**Week 8: Peer Review of Proposals**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. You will use a peer review process to give productive feedback for two other proposals. Each team will give feedback to **two** proposals that are not your own. Use the Peer Review form found in Essentials. See my email for this process.

2. In teams; revise and strengthen YOUR proposal using feedback you received from your colleagues through peer review. Remember not to take the feedback personally!

3. Reading Reaction to Chapter 10.

4. Reflection #6 – an essay on the special topic: Critical Thinking – used everywhere? By everyone? Why or why not?

**Week 9: Final Editing and Packaging the Proposal**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Teams work together to discuss the comments you received, the readings for this course, your current draft, and how it can be improved.

2. Work on all elements of the grant proposal to make them strong and clear and **compelling.** Make sure there is one uniform voice telling this story, that there’s a great hook in each component, that formatting is consistent, and the proposal looks professional.

4. Reading Reaction to Chapter 11

5. Reflection #7: special topic: Critical Thinking! Used every day in this class and other classes of yours, I’m sure, but what about in our country these days?

**Week 10: Closing the Circle and Celebration!**

Tasks/Goals/Checklist: 1. Draft a note to our Community Partner from your group

2. Submit final grant proposals in the Final Proposals folder.

3. Celebrate all that you learned and the good work of your team!

4. Debrief course. Do the course evaluation, please! UNST needs that info.

5. Submit Reading Reaction to Chapter 12

6. Submit your Final Reflection: reflecting on the whole of this experience

On-Line Access to Course Information

The course syllabus and additional resources will be made available on-line through D2L. To access this information, you must have a PSU ODIN account. You will log into the course by going to <http://www.psuonline.pdx.edu> and clicking “D2L Login” under the “more” tab on the upper right hand side of the screen.

Complete List of Assignments for the term – see course homepage and also Discussions for due dates. All written assignments must be single spaced.

1. Getting to Know our Community Partner – assignment details are below
2. Read: “Getting Funded, the Complete Guide to Writing Grant Proposals” by Howlett and Bourque, synthesized by Lisa Jo Frech – found in Essentials
3. All chapters of our text book responded to using the form for Reading Reactions
4. A Weekly Reflection about your experience in this class
5. Organization Description – about our Community Partner
6. Statement of Need – requires significant research
7. List of Potential Funders – one funder per team member
8. Budget with Budget Narrative – you will be given a total dollar amount to work with
9. Evaluation - how will you know your program or project is successful?
10. Executive Summary – the summary of everything, not just your project
11. Cover Letter – always written last
12. Final full grant proposal (one document) with all parts approved by the instructor and then reviewed by your peers
13. ePortfolio – a body of work done over time, available online – optional – see more info below

All Homework Is Due by Sunday night at midnight, at the latest (hint: sooner is always better!)

**Reflections:** One tool to assist you in making meaning of your class sessions, team and grant writing practice, and personal experience in this Capstone is the Weekly Reflection. Reflections can be part of your EPortfolio. You will write very personally about the intersections of your thoughts and feelings each week as they pertain to this course. Most Reflections are entirely on your own to think about and create. Four are special topics and you must write a thoughtful single spaced essay on this topic. The special topics are Communication, Diversity, Ethics and Social Responsibility, and Critical Thinking. Be sure to check the Reflection assignment of the week.

Your weekly reflection is due each Sunday night starting the first week of the term. Make every effort to avoid submitting your work at the last minute. This sets up a practice that eventually impacts your entire team negatively and I’ll be hearing about that from them.

**Content:** You can address concepts from the text book or items in Essentials, from what it’s like working in a team to how this is meeting or not meeting your expectations, and anything else that seems appropriate for the week. Please do NOT use the reflection to rant about your group mates or D2L or PSU or the Capstone Program. Keep them to here and now. Your reflections open a dialogue that you and I will share in these next 8 weeks. Sometimes they help me correct something in the course that other students are also struggling with.

**How to write a Reflection:** To prepare to write your reflection, think about the assignments of the week and your learning process. Live with these insights; wear them as you go about other activities. Then sit and write your way into your response. You might not know where your writing will take you, and that’s a good thing in a reflection. Each reflection *should* take you someplace you didn’t know you were headed, as you uncover the meaning this experience has for you as an individual. Write the reflection only you can write.

**Special Topic Reflections:** Write an essay on the special topic for that week from a global perspective, NOT from the perspective of this course. In other words, go BIG on the topic. ALL Reflections must be single spaced.

**Confidentiality:** I will keep the contents of your individual Reflections completely confidential. No other person will read your writing, unless you choose to show or tell.

**Evaluation:** I will not grade your Reflections, but if you would like feedback about how you might strengthen your writing, let me know. I welcome questions about the Reflections and I will gladly work with you on structuring your reflective writings. Mostly I’m asking you to go deep into your responses to this work. If you turn this homework in late, it will go against your grade. Be sure to read my grading policy.

**Late entries:** Contact me if you need to make special arrangements for turning in late homework.

### **Save all of your reflections.** Use all of your reflections in the preparation of your final reflection. This entire collection of online submissions can serve as part of your E-Portfolio. It’s entirely up to you as to what you put in your ePortfolio and how you wish to use it. My intent is merely to introduce you to this concept that saves paper, can be used on Handshake, LinkedIn, in an interview, on Skype, etc. that shows how you grew with time and experience with a particular subject, and developed critical thinking skills, an **excellent** resource for a job interview.

**Getting to Know Your Community Partner Assignment:** Download the form provided in Essentials, fill it out (single spaced), and upload the completed form to the folder called Grant Components. Do not add additional spacing to the form and make sure the page is full to the very end of the page. Your research must include recent news found using Google, then the News tab, then the Tools tab, changing the setting to the past year.

**About the Instructor:**

I am an independent consultant providing board and organizational development, collaboration, facilitation, grant writing, executive coaching, and mediation to public and private clients in the fields of natural resources and the environment. I’m dedicated to the success of nonprofit environmental organizations and natural resource agencies and bring to my clients a broad base of experience tempered with enthusiasm, humor, and straight talk. Prior to beginning my consulting practice in 2000, I founded the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, a regional consortium of 32 diverse organizations spanning two states and five counties, and served as its Executive Director for 12 years. I also worked as an environmental planner for the State of Virginia, the State of Delaware, and the National Park Service, Rivers and Trails Program; and founded two local land trusts. I’m a contributing author of several publications, including "The Chesapeake Bay and Susquehanna River Public Access Guide", and "Covering the Coasts", a reporter's guide to coastal and marine resources. I’ve produced several films; the most recent is "Partnerships for Clean Water." I’m trained in Myers Briggs Personality Type, in Situational Leadership, and certified in Conflict Resolution. I’ve received numerous awards for my volunteer work, my grant writing success, and my ability to help diverse and conflicting constituents find common ground. I hold a Master’s degree from Temple University. For more information, find me on LinkedIn.

PSU CODE OF CONDUCT: Please Google PSU Code of Conduct to read the expectations of all students at PSU.

**Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities**

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. If you already have accommodations, contact me to make sure that I’ve received a notification letter.

The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, or [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu),<https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.