



Advocacy Crash Course

**National Association of Schools of
Public Affairs and Administration**
Deans and Directors Summit 2009

Adapted from AAUP

Outline

- ✦ The fine print: legal note
- ✦ What to do before and during your meetings
- ✦ Thinking outside the box
- ✦ Reciprocity
- ✦ What to do **AFTER** your meetings
- ✦ Words to live by: golden rules of lobbying

The Fine Print...

- ✦ If your university has a Federal relations person and/or lobbyist, please clear your meeting with them and also ask their help.
- ✦ In your meeting, you are a citizen constituent and representative of NASPAA, not your school.
- ✦ Ethics rules and requirements:
 - ◆ Lobbying Disclosure Act: unless you are a registered lobbyist (i.e. you receive compensation for lobbying), you do not have to disclose contacts.
 - ◆ The new ethics rules are stricter about gifts and meals – when in doubt, don't do it.

Before the Meeting

- ✦ Bring issue brief materials and materials about your school/program to the meeting.
- ✦ Don't be disappointed if you get a staffer, rather than the policymaker. There are big advantages to meeting with staffers.
- ✦ Do your homework. Know the legislator's vote history, committee assignments, etc. re: the issues at hand.

During the Meeting: Substance

✦ **Know your bill.**

- ✦ Background and talking points
- ✦ Bill numbers and specific titles (an average of 10,000 bills are introduced in each 2-year session, so know which bill(s) you are referring to).

✦ **Stay on message:** follow the talking points

- ✦ **Always bring it back to the constituents.**
How does your cause benefit the district or the state?

During the Meeting: Substance

✦ **Tell a story**

- ◆ Keep it poignant, concise, and relevant to the legislator.

✦ **Provide data** to back up your story.

- ◆ Know that framing issues in right/ wrong, or good/bad, will only get you so far.
- ◆ Be as specific as possible about benefits/harms. Use the issue briefs and talking points.

✦ **Come prepared** with materials about your school and NASPAA leave-behind materials

✦ **Leave a business card** whenever possible and get one in return.

During the Meeting: Style

✦ Consider your audience

- ✦ The Hill is largely run by 20-somethings, please speak to them as **peers**, not students.
- ✦ Presentation style (brief & to the point)
- ✦ Words matter: rather than using words like “educating”, use “partnering” or “supporting”.

✦ **Be sure to stress that you are at the meeting not as a representative of your school, but as a citizen constituent and representative of NASPAA (267 schools across the U.S.)**

Think Outside the Box

✦ There are many things you can ask your representative to do besides vote yes or no

- ◆ An entry in the congressional record
- ◆ Visit your institution
- ◆ A meeting or event in the home district
- ◆ An op-ed piece on your issue

Reciprocity

✦ What can you do for your representative?

- ◆ As a well-informed, civically engaged citizen, you are a great asset
- ◆ Consider drafting questions for upcoming hearings
- ◆ Offer your school as a resource (research on issues, faculty experts, etc.)

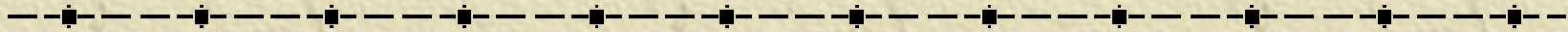
After the Meeting

- ✦ A thank-you note or email is a great way to follow-up.
- ✦ Establish yourself as a resource: make yourself available to provide further information in the future.
- ✦ Maintain the relationship – the time to visit/call is not simply when you want something. Reciprocity helps build true partnerships.

For the Future...

- ✦ Start building coalitions. There is no legislative issue that applies only to NASPAA— who else shares our interests?
- ✦ Think of an enticing angle with which to engage the press – pitch stories, write opinion pieces, craft press releases.
- ✦ Monitor other key issues you think affect your school, other NASPAA schools, public service, etc. and communicate with NASPAA staff!

Thank You!



We will be glad to answer any questions!

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