

Golden Rules for NASPAA Advocacy Meetings

(Adapted from AAUP)

- Mail your topic(s) in advance of a meeting with a staffer or legislator so they can adequately prepare ahead of time.
- Schedule your meeting in a professional, written manner - a fax or an email – as opposed to just walking in or even calling the office.
- Remember: you are at the meeting as a citizen constituent representative of NASPAA, not as a representative of your school. Though you should be sure to bring materials showing how your school and others affect your Congressman's district, remember that your expressed views represent NASPAA.
- Try sticking to one or two topics in any given meeting, rather than trying to cram in as many as you think time allows. You'll be taken more seriously if you are focused and able to prioritize.
- Avoid airing your personal views in issues unrelated to the topic at hand. It looks unprofessional and is unfair to the organization that has taken the time to meet with you.
- Speak to the staffer you are meeting with as an equal at all times, even if you are not speaking with whom you were expecting to.
- Show strength in numbers and schedule meetings in (small) groups of NASPAA members.
- If one or more people join you, identify a spokesperson to make sure that communication is clear and consistent in both style and content. The meetings will likely be short, so look organized and prepared.
- Remember to offer a business card whenever possible in order to get one in return, and be sure to offer your school as a resource.
- Find something of interest to pass along when you follow up to say thank you. It could be a statistic, a question to use in an upcoming hearing, or the card of a colleague who would make a good witness on the subject you discussed.
- Inundating staffers with paper and/or emails can be overwhelming. Remember, the simpler, the better, and more likely to be read. Master the one-page memo. If they need deeper background, they'll ask.