The Political Economy of Interest Group Influence
Politics G53.3300.001
Spring 2008
Professors Sanford Gordon and Catherine Hafer

I. Introduction
This course will introduce students to some of the most important topics in the study of private interests and their influence on public policy in the United States and abroad.

II. Contact and meeting Information

Professors
Sanford Gordon
19 West 4th Street, Room 311
Office Hours: Thursday 2-4pm, or by appointment
Phone: (212) 998-3708
E-mail: sanford.gordon@nyu.edu

Catherine Hafer
19 West 4th Street, Room 312
Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:15-5pm, or by appointment
Phone: (212) 992-9679
E-mail: catherine.hafer@nyu.edu

Class Meetings
Tuesday, 4:10-6pm, 19 West 4th Street Room 212

III. Student Responsibilities and Course Grading

Participation: 20%
Participating in seminar is an essential component of satisfactory completion of the course.

Presentations: 10%
In addition to normal participatory duties, each student will spend several of our meetings providing a public good as “defender” of a particular text or perspective, which will include a 10-15 minute presentation at the beginning of the class.

Thought papers: 20%
Each student will write a paper no longer than one single-spaced page each week he/she is not presenting. The paper should be e-mailed by close of business (5pm) on the day before class so that we can incorporate its insights into class discussion. The paper may critically examine a particular feature of a single reading, or draw comparisons among multiple readings for that week. At the end of the semester, we will drop the lowest short paper score. (This has the practical effect of permitting you to miss writing one paper.)
Research paper: 50%
A final research paper will count for 50% of the grade. Details will be discussed in class. You should be thinking about your paper and discussing the topic with us by late February or early March. Note that if your research interest lies primarily in topics covered toward the end of the class, you should be prepared to read ahead.

IV. Weekly Schedule

Part A. Tactics

Week 1. January 22, 2008
Introduction and Orientation

Buying Policy

Week 3. February 5, 2008
Campaign Contributions: Alternative Mechanisms

Week 4. February 12, 2008
Lobbying

• Austen-Smith, David, and John R. Wright. 1994. “Counteractive Lobbying.”
  *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 25-44.

  Typescript.

**Week 5. February 19, 2008**

*Distribution and the Political Environment*


**Week 6. February 26, 2008**

*Private Politics*


**Part B. Policy-Making**

**Week 7. March 4, 2008**

*Canonical Accounts of Legislative Capture*


Week 8. March 11, 2008
Legislative Choice of Policy and Agency Form


Week 9. March 18, 2008
SPRING BREAK

Week 10. March 25, 2008
Collusion in Agency Politics


Week 11. April 1, 2008
The Behavior of Bureaucrats

Part C. Group Dynamics

Week 12. April 8, 2008
Group Formation
TBA

Week 13. April 15, 2008
Internal Group Politics

Coalitions and Associations

Week 15. April 29, 2008
Wrapping Up: What Have We Learned?