

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Academic and Student Affairs**  
**Consent**

**AGENDA ITEM: 8 – D (3)**

**DATE: June 22-23, 2022**

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**SUBJECT**

**New Undergraduate Certificate Request – SDSU – Lobbying & Government Advocacy**

**CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

[BOR Policy 2:23](#) – Program and Curriculum Approval

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

South Dakota State University (SDSU) requests authorization to offer an undergraduate certificate in Lobbying & Government Advocacy. The certificate provides graduates with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively communicate with government to influence legislative policymaking, executive branch rulemaking, and judicial decisions at the state and federal levels on a variety of issues. This certificate can be applicable to students planning to various fields, including, but not limited to: nursing, engineering, education, business, and agriculture. The aim of this certificate is to better equip graduates to be able to lobby government on behalf of their employer.

**IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION**

SDSU plans to offer the certificate in Lobbying & Government Advocacy on campus. SDSU does not request new state resources. No new courses will be required.

Board office staff recommends approval.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment I – New Certificate Request Form: SDSU – Lobbying & Government Advocacy

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**DRAFT MOTION 20220622\_8-D(3):**

I move to authorize SDSU to offer an undergraduate certificate in Lobbying & Government Advocacy, as presented.



## SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS

### New Certificate

<b>UNIVERSITY:</b>	SDSU
<b>TITLE OF PROPOSED CERTIFICATE:</b>	Lobbying & Government Advocacy Certificate
<b>INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:</b>	2022-2023 Academic Year
<b>PROPOSED CIP CODE:</b>	45.1002
<b>UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:</b>	School of American & Global Studies
<b>BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:</b>	SSAG
<b>UNIVERSITY DIVISION:</b>	Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
<b>BANNER DIVISION CODE:</b>	3S

☒ **Please check this box to confirm that:**

- The individual preparing this request has read [AAC Guideline 2.7](#), which pertains to new certificate requests, and that this request meets the requirements outlined in the guidelines.
- This request will not be posted to the university website for review of the Academic Affairs Committee until it is approved by the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer.

#### University Approval

*To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this proposal, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.*

Institutional Approval Signature

*President or Chief Academic Officer of the University*

5/3/2022

Date

#### 1. Is this a graduate-level certificate or undergraduate-level certificate?

Undergraduate Certificate ☒

Graduate Certificate ☐

#### 2. What is the nature/ purpose of the proposed certificate? Please include a brief (1-2 sentence) description of the academic field in this certificate.

The Lobbying and Government Advocacy Certificate provides graduates with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively communicate with government to influence legislative policymaking, executive branch rulemaking, and judicial decisions at the state and federal levels on a variety of issues important within their chosen fields within business, industry, and professions: for example, nursing, engineering, education, business, and agriculture. As such, the aim of this certificate is to better equip graduates to be able to lobby government on behalf of their employer, should they be tapped within their profession to do so, or as a professional lobbyist. Students will: (1) gain a basic understanding of the structure and functions of each branch of government at the state and federal levels; (2) be introduced to theories and research regarding the impact of government advocacy and lobbying tactics on a range of government

officials; (3) hone and acquire advocacy-related research, writing, and communication skills that will result in ethical, persuasive, and effective government advocacy, especially lobbying meetings and materials; and (4) apply knowledge regarding the structure and functions of American political institutions, interest groups, and lobbying to policy issues within their field.

SDSU does not request new state resources for the proposed certificate.

**3. If you do not have a major in this field, explain how the proposed certificate relates to your university mission and strategic plan, and to the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020.**

The Lobbying & Government Advocacy Certificate aligns with and advances South Dakota State University's mission and strategic plan in the following manner. SDSU's mission mentions that it "offers a rich academic experience...through innovation...that improve[s] the quality of life in South Dakota, the nation, and the world." This certificate is innovative in that there does not appear to be many undergraduate programs nationwide devoted to lobbying and government advocacy and it responds to the primary criticism of lobbying: that it is a skill that is developed by doing, not in a classroom.<sup>1</sup> The foundational course in the certificate, Interest Groups & Lobbying, requires students to participate in three lobbying meeting simulations in order to gain hands-on experience. This certificate will allow students "to improve the quality of life in South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world" because they will be able to influence government policy and funding decisions in a host of sectors, such as agriculture, nursing, engineering, and business.

SDSU's strategic plan, *Imagine 2023*,<sup>2</sup> calls for the University to "achieve excellence through transformative education." In particular, Section 1.b aspires to "develop and grow high-performing and distinct academic programs designed to meet the needs of diverse students and market demands." The proposed certificate advances this strategy through the creation of a program that strengthens its graduates and fills the demand for employees who are skilled in government advocacy and who can influence government policy and funding decisions. The certificate will be open to a broad assortment of students in any major. Graduates of the program will be able to apply political science research and competencies to their respective fields of study. *Imagine 2023* also promotes "active and innovative teaching, learning, and advising practices."

**4. Provide a justification for the certificate program, including the potential benefits to students and potential workforce demand for those who graduate with the credential.**

Despite conventional wisdom, trade and professional organizations, not corporations, are the most common lobbying entities in American politics.<sup>3</sup> Not only are they the most numerous they also are most member-driven because membership is based on a shared passion of working in a particular industry or profession.<sup>4</sup> This enthusiasm leads these organizations to frequently call upon members to participate in political advocacy activities, especially lobbying

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<sup>1</sup> Holyoke, Thomas T. *Interest Groups and Lobbying: Pursuing Political Interests in America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sdstate.edu/imagine-2023-aspire-discover-achieve>

<sup>3</sup> Holyoke, *Interest Groups and Lobbying*.

<sup>4</sup> Holyoke, *Interest Groups and Lobbying*.

days. However, doctors, nurses, engineers, farmers, etc. are not trained in government advocacy, so their impact during such lobbying days has the potential of being minimal at best. This certificate provides the necessary training to ensure that graduates who become members of professional organizations have the necessary skills to effectively influence government officials.

Although there is a trade or professional organization for nearly every profession, not everyone may choose to participate in general, let alone in a lobbying day. However, the next most numerous lobbying entities behind trade and professional organizations are corporations, state and local governments, and hospitals and universities.<sup>5</sup> Many graduates will find themselves working in these fields and may therefore find themselves involved in political advocacy. For example, they may be asked to participate in advocacy efforts that attempt to influence legislative policymaking, executive branch rulemaking, or judicial decision making. Conventional undergraduate training for most professions does not include government advocacy. While some larger entities will have a legal and/or government relations department, many graduates will find themselves with employers that do not. Thus, employers will need their employees to not only participate in government advocacy but develop a plan of action. Training and experience in government advocacy strengthens an applicant's resumé and can help them get promoted.

According to the Bureau of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook, careers approximating lobbying and government advocacy are expected to grow between 9 and 11% over the period of 2020-2030.<sup>6</sup> However, future professional lobbyists are not the primary target audience of this certificate. This certificate is for employees who can or will be called upon by their employers or professional organizations to influence legislative, executive, and judicial policymaking at the state and federal levels as an added responsibility or duty to an existing job. There is no "lobbying" career listed in these databases. The BLS's A-Z Index of the Occupational Outlook Handbook refers one to Public Relations, but elsewhere also tags Political Scientists. Nevertheless, many large businesses and firms deploy one or more employees in lobbying efforts of government at every level. There is simply a lack of statistical data available to the public on the workforce demand for individuals tagged with the identifier "lobbying" nationally and in South Dakota in general, largely for two reasons. This is even more true where, as this certificate intends to target, lobbying may consist of only a fraction of one's employment duties. As the book resource by Thomas Holyoke notes, 1) Most data about lobbyists are restricted in pay only databases to those who are professionals and are required to register with state or federal governments because they spend a substantial amount of their work time on lobbying.<sup>7</sup> 2) Furthermore, the negative connotation of lobbyists has led to them avoid the term, instead using a variety of professional titles, such as government liaison and government relations director. Due to both reasons, there is simply a lot of under reporting.

This certificate will provide training to ensure that graduates have the knowledge and skills to influence government officials. It will equip them with foundational skills to plan and/or participate in government advocacy, which has the added benefit of helping them succeed in the job market or get promoted. They will not only benefit from understanding the inner

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<sup>5</sup> Holyoke, *Interest Groups and Lobbying*.

<sup>6</sup> See, Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Public Relations Specialists. Online: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/public-relations-specialists.htm>; *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Political Scientists. Online: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/political-scientists.htm> (both visited February 3, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Holyoke, *Interest Groups and Lobbying*.

workings of American political institutions and processes, but they will be able to influence legislative, executive, and judicial policy outcomes. Graduates will also benefit from these skills being highly sought after by employers and professional organizations.

There are no similar programs in the regental system or the region. This certificate joins the relatively few undergraduate certificates, minors, or majors devoted to government advocacy across the country.

**5. Who is the intended audience for the certificate program (including but not limited to the majors/degree programs from which students are expected)?**

The main audiences for this certificate program will be students in majors throughout the university who envision an employment path focused on advocacy to influence government policy or relations on behalf of their future employer, industry, or profession.

**6. Certificate Design**

**A. Is the certificate designed as a stand-alone education credential option for students not seeking additional credentials (i.e., a bachelor's or master's degree)? If so, what areas of high workforce demand or specialized body of knowledge will be addressed through this certificate?**

Yes. The certificate is only offered on campus, so resident students will be more likely to complete it along with existing majors and minors. However, current professionals may pursue this credential to demonstrate an additional level of proficiency in lobbying-related responsibilities with an employer, or as a means of advancing or repositioning their existing career potential.

This certificate will take someone, for example, who majored in Dairy Manufacturing or in Construction Management and provide foundational learning and skills in communication, government structure and function, interest groups and lobbying activity along with a credential to equip them for the added responsibilities of advocacy a major employer in the dairy or construction sector often needs when lobbying for government action.

**B. Is the certificate a value added credential that supplements a student's major field of study? If so, list the majors/programs from which students would most benefit from adding the certificate.**

Yes. There is tremendous potential for added value across a wide range of majors from which lobbying and interest groups emerge: Agricultural Education Communication & Leadership, Communications, Animal Science, Business Economics, Civil Engineering, Community & Public Health, Dairy Production, Education, Human Biology, Human Development & Family Studies, Leadership & Management of Nonprofit Organizations, Mechanical Engineering, Nursing, as well as Political Science.

**C. Is the certificate a stackable credential with credits that apply to a higher level credential (i.e., associate, bachelor's, or master's degree)? If so, indicate the program(s) to which the certificate stacks and the number of credits from the certificate that can be applied to the program.**

Yes. Students would be able to apply the coursework to their specific major requirements

and count other credits to general electives. For example, students would be able to apply the POLS credits toward their Political Science major, the PHIL credits toward the Philosophy minor, and the CMST credits toward their Communication Studies major, minor, or Speech Education Specialization.

**7. List the courses required for completion of the certificate in the table below (if any new courses are proposed for the certificate, please attach the new course requests to this form).**

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
CMST	215	Public Speaking	N/A	3	No
POLS OR POLS	210 331	State & Local Government (3 cr.) U.S. Congress (3 cr.)	N/A	3	No
PHIL OR PHIL/ BIOL	220 383	Introduction to Ethics (3 cr.) Bioethics (4 cr.)	N/A	3-4	No
POLS	434	Interest Groups & Lobbying	N/A	3	No
Subtotal				12-13	

**8. Student Outcome and Demonstration of Individual Achievement.**

*Board Policy 2:23 requires certificate programs to “have specifically defined student learning outcomes.*

**A. What specific knowledge and competencies, including technology competencies, will all students demonstrate before graduation? The knowledge and competencies should be specific to the program and not routinely expected of all university graduates.**

Students will:

1. gain a basic understanding of the structure and functions of each branch of government and interest groups at the state and federal levels, exploring their relevance for the student’s major field of study;
2. apply terms, processes, theories, and research regarding the impact of government advocacy and lobbying tactics on a range of government officials;
3. demonstrate ethical and persuasive communication through research, writing, and oral communication that utilize the skills necessary for effective government advocacy, especially lobbying meetings and materials; and
4. apply knowledge regarding the structure and functions of American political institutions, interest groups, and lobbying to policy issues within their field.

**B. Complete the table below to list specific learning outcomes – knowledge and competencies – for courses in the proposed program in each row.**

Individual Student Outcome	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes			
	CMST 215	POLS 210 OR POLS 331	PHIL 220 OR PHIL 383	POLS 434
Students will gain a basic understanding of the structure and functions of each branch of government and interest groups at the state and federal levels, exploring their relevance for the student’s major field of study.		X		X

Individual Student Outcome	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes			
	CMST 215	POLS 210 OR POLS 331	PHIL 220 OR PHIL 383	POLS 434
Students will apply terms, processes, theories, and research regarding the impact of government advocacy and lobbying tactics on a range of government officials.		X		X
Students will demonstrate ethical and persuasive communication through research, writing, and oral communication that utilize the skills necessary for effective government advocacy, especially lobbying meetings and materials.	X		X	X
Students will apply knowledge regarding the structure and functions of American political institutions, interest groups, and lobbying to policy issues within their field.				X

## 9. Delivery Location.

- A. Complete the following charts to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver the entire program on campus, at any off campus location (e.g., USD Community College for Sioux Falls, Black Hills State University-Rapid City, Capital City Campus, etc.) or deliver the entire program through distance technology (e.g., as an on-line program)?

	Yes/No	Intended Start Date
On campus	Yes	2022-2023 Academic Year

	Yes/No	If Yes, list location(s)	Intended Start Date
Off campus	No		

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods <i>Delivery methods are defined in <a href="#">AAC Guideline 5.5</a>.</i>	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	No		
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	No	If yes, identify institutions:	

- B. Complete the following chart to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver more than 50% but less than 100% of the certificate through distance learning (e.g., as an on-line program)? *This question responds to HLC definitions for distance delivery.*

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	No		

No more than 25% of the Lobbying and Government Advocacy Certificate is available online.

PHIL 220 Introduction to Ethics is infrequently offered online as an option (it is a standard f2f course).

## **10. Additional Information:**

### **Enrollment Projections**

The School of American and Global Studies anticipates 30-60 students pursuing the Lobbying and Government Advocacy Certificate within the next five years. The school currently has approximately 100 students in the Political Science major, 30 students in the Political Science Minor, and 99 students in the Legal Studies Minor. This projection is conservatively based on an estimation that 20 Political Science students pursue this certificate, another 5 total from other American and Global Studies programs, and an average of 5 students from the thirteen majors listed under 6B above.

### **Cost, Budget, and Resources**

All courses are currently being taught at SDSU. There are no additional costs or resources required to offer the program.