POLICY PODS PROGRAM MODEL

STUDENT DRIVEN ADVOCACY

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WHAT ARE POLICY PODS?

Policy Pods are groups of about seven students who meet once a week to prepare for legislative advocacy meetings with elected officials. Students look at bills and research the impacts of the bills, practice advocacy pitches, and meet with legislators in district on topics such as immigration, criminal justice, health equity, education equity, environmental issues, etc. Policy Pods have student leaders who meet with the program manager to help prepare and guide the group. There trips to Jefferson City, City Hall and Pod Days of Action for students to present their advocacy. Students attend a pre-training and celebration with a keynote speaker and poster presentation to close the year.

Goals

- Students will develop comfort with the legislative process
- Students will feel empowered to contact legislators and policy decision makers
- Students will develop leadership skills
- Students will develop skills in communication on controversial topics
- Students will engage in civil dialog with people who do not agree with them and support their dialog with facts
- Students will have the ability to self-direct their advocacy efforts
- Students will increase their engagement in civics

Evalutions and Outcomes

Policy Pods are evaluated in a variety of methods. Primarily, the impact of Policy Pods and other civic engagement activities are measured through the office's annual survey on service IPA Scale. Evaluations are also sent to participants at end of every other academic year addressing the above goals. Finally, Policy Pods are optional to be used for Core Credit and graduation cords for leaders. Individuals who seek credit or cords complete a written reflection used for qualitative data.

100% feel empowered to advocate

100% are more likely to be attentive to local and state politics

A majority also stated they gained skills in dialogue across differences and overall communication.

"Policy Pods were the most empowering organization I could join as a Saint Louis University student. Rather than engaging with ideas only in the abstract, I found myself stepping into the real mechanisms of change, spaces where decisions are made, voices are heard, and policies take form. Pods also required me to think beyond my own perspective. The process taught me that advocacy is not a one-time action but a sustained, evolving commitment."
-Atiksh Chandra

TIMELINE

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Applications Due:

- Fall Semester: beginning of third week of class
- Spring Semester: End of Fall Semester

Training Kickoff (2 hours):

- Fall Semester: End of third week of class (Friday afternoon)
- Training of Legislative Process, Bill Writing at the Local Level, meetings with legislators, fact sheets, and expectations
- Introductions of Leaders. Students sit with Pod Groups.
- Full Group meeting for first "meeting."

Groups Start Meeting:

- End of Sept/End of Jan

Sample Meeting and Activity Schedules:

- · Sept 24th Week: First Meeting, Remind group of meeting time, location and that it's starting
- October (Third Week) Schedule meetings with at least 3 elected, working on fact sheets
- October-November (Last/First Week) Finalize Fact Sheet
- November 15 (no later than): Practice Advocacy Pitches
- November 15-30th: Meet with 3+ elected officials
- Dec. 1st: RSVP numbers of group members attending for Pizza Night and any allergies.
- December 10: New applications due for newly interested participants.
- December 6th: Group Celebration and Recap Pizza Party
- Week of Jan 20st: Start meeting again
- Feb. 13th-20th: Schedule 3 meetings (maybe campus advocacy days too if desired)
- March 18-29: Meet with 3+ elected officials
- April: Follow ups and on campus advocacy continued

Leader Applications:

- Mid-March

End of the Year Celebration:

- Mid April from 7-9pm with food, keynote speaker, Pod of the Year and Words from a Senior. Students prepare posters to share.



LEADERSHIP

What's my role as a leader?

Leaders organize and support Policy Pod meetings to prepare students to meet with elected officials to advocate on up to three bills of the groups choosing, schedule meetings with officials, and ensure that roles are delegated and completed. Some areas of delegation may be researching specific bills, digging into topical areas, inputting supportive research into shared drives, pleasing fact sheets with graphics, sending thank you cards to officials, etc. Pod leaders also set up practice meetings with the Advocacy Coordinator to practice a pitch prior to meeting with officials.

Leaders also recruit new members, support and present at meetings, gatherings, and in other leadership capacities. Policy Pod Leaders attend meetings every other week on Fridays at 1pm in Wuller Hall, Suite 204.

Leader Formation

Beginning of the YearTraining with Pod Leaders

- Run through Genreal Pod Training, ask if they would like to present any areas of have questions.
- Discuss policy pod goals, timeline, binders, etc
- Share timelines and goal ideas
- Review applications and discuss final pushes for recruitment.
- Ensure they are in the shared drive as content managers to add members
- Provide resources

Leaders receive a loaded email with links, timelines, resources and examples before kickoff as well.

Monthly one on ones with Pod Leaders to check on status

Policy Pod Leader Binders:

Pod Leaders are provided with an electronic binder at the beginning of the year. Some materials included in the binder are listed below:

- What Are Policy Pods? What is my Role as a Leader?
- Leadership Timeline
- How to Advocate Tip Sheets
- Bills, Committees, Laws process
- Elected Officials List
- Upcoming 2018 Races (your elected officials could change)
- St. Louis Aldermanic Dates
- St. Louis Wards and Officials
- Legislative Calendar MO
- Legislative Calendar Federal
- How to write a Bill in Saint Louis for BOA

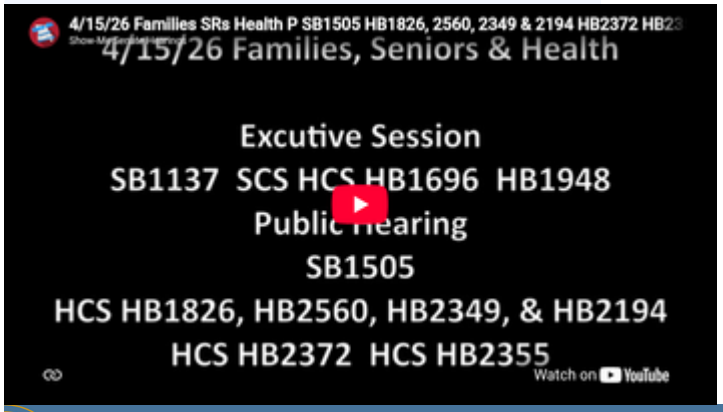
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RESOURCES AND LINKS

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The QR Code and link above you to a folder with resources to use as samples, templates, and to better understand the program. The folder includes posters from past years, training slides, budgets, reflections, etc.

Samples



Student Testimonies at mins: 37:20 58:54 and 1:11:36



