



A Program of

WIPPS

WISCONSIN INSTITUTE *for*
PUBLIC POLICY *and* SERVICE

2016 Program Report

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Washington Seminar 2016 Report



I. Background

Declining trust in government, politicians, and political processes generally—combined with a growing body of evidence that traditional measures of civic knowledge among young people is waning—are an established part of today’s public narrative.¹ This does not mean young people are uninterested in politics or the future of their nation and government.² If anything, they are often discouraged because of a perceived inability to influence outcomes and by the absence of pathways to participation. The creation of the Washington Seminar by the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS), offered as a three-credit course through the UW Colleges’ Department of Political Science, is an effort to open windows and doors for college students by providing opportunities to engage with and learn from policymakers at the state and national levels.

II. Purpose and Goals

While students at UW-Madison are able to participate in Washington, D.C.-based learning programs, nearly 14,000 UW Colleges students—and tens of thousands of students at other colleges and universities in Wisconsin—have no regular program of study in the nation’s capital.³ The Washington Seminar is designed as a study-away learning opportunity for students who do not normally enjoy structured learning experiences beyond their classroom or local community, let alone outside of Wisconsin. The program is open to all students in good standing, including promising students from at-risk backgrounds, such as first generation, low income, and minority college students. The broad goals of the Washington Seminar include:

1. Increase student knowledge about how institutions of government, interest groups, media and other forces influence decision makers and affect policy formation.
2. Motivate students to become more active participants in the civic life and leaders in their communities, state and nation.
3. Help students progress on their journey of self-development from a focus on the self to an understanding of their role in—and relationship to—a larger, more complex world.
4. Begin an exploration of career possibilities and the connection between career options and public policy.



¹ See, for example, Constance A. Flanagan, Peter Levine, “Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood,” *The Future of Children*, Vol. 1, No. 20 (Spring 2010), 159-179.

² Constance A. Flanagan, Peter Levine and Richard Settersten, *Civic Engagement and the Changing Transition to Adulthood*, CIRCLE monograph, January 2009.

³ No public university in Wisconsin outside of UW-Madison offers regular learning experiences in Washington, D.C.

III. 2016 Course

A. Course Overview

The Washington Seminar public policy course is a hybrid learning experience. The course begins online with selected readings and assignments. Students then meet face-to-face in Madison and Washington, D.C. for traditional classroom activities as well as close interaction with policymakers. After returning home, students finish various assignments online.

B. Course Schedule

The schedule for 2016 occurred as follows:

- a. Course began online May 21 and ended July 3, 2016
- b. From May 24-May 28, students met face-to-face in Madison
- c. From May 28-June 11, students met face-to-face in Washington, D.C.

C. Course Assignments

Students were expected to complete the following assignments as part of the public policy course:

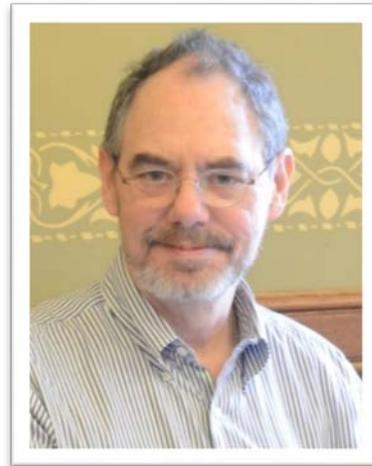
- a. Daily reading from a credible news source
- b. Additional assigned readings related to course topics
- c. Three short papers: an article review, a book review, and a guest lecture review
- d. A policy paper on a topic of student interest
- e. Daily original blog entries and response posts and a final reflective blog post

D. Course Instruction

The course was co-taught by the following instructors:



Eric Giordano, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science
UW Colleges
Director, WIPPS



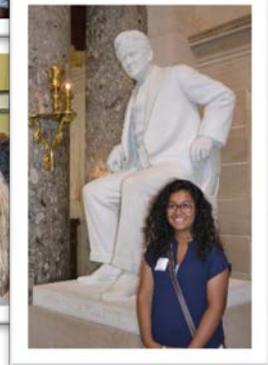
Paul Carver, Ph.D.
Adjunct Professor of Political Science
UW Colleges
Senior Fellow, WIPPS



IV. Seminar Highlights

A. Landmark Site Visits⁴

- Arlington National Cemetery
- Library of Congress
- Lincoln Memorial
- Mount Vernon
- National Botanical Gardens
- National Gallery of Art
- National Korean War Memorial
- National Vietnam War Memorial
- National World War II Memorial
- Smithsonian
- Union Station
- U.S. Capitol & Visitors Center
- Washington Monument
- Wisconsin State Capitol



B. Policy Site visits

- American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- Godfrey & Kahn
- Longworth Building
- Madison Club
- McCourt School of Public Policy, Georgetown University
- National Milk Producers Federation
- National Press Club
- Office of the Governor of Wisconsin
- Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
- Public Citizen
- Rayburn Building
- Russell Building
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. House of Representatives Speaker's Office
- U.S. Institute of Peace
- U.S. Supreme Court
- Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
- Wisconsin State Capitol



⁴ These sites were visited—and some special tours arranged—as part of the course. Students also had free days and were encouraged to explore a variety of additional city sites.

V. Seminar Speakers/Panelists

<p>Shirley Abrahamson Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice</p>	<p>Ray Allen Secretary Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development</p>	<p>Dave Anderson Assistant Deputy Secretary Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development</p>
<p>Tammy Baldwin U.S. Senator Wisconsin</p>	<p>Joan Ballweg Wisconsin State Representative 41st Assembly District</p>	<p>Elise Bean Former Chief Counselor U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations</p>
<p>Janet Bewley Wisconsin State Senator 29th Senate District</p>	<p>Stephen Blakeley Director of Communications and Managing Editor Employee Benefit Research Institute</p>	<p>David Boardman Legislative Assistant for Representative Dave Murphy Wisconsin State Assembly</p>
<p>Jeff Buhandt State Relations University of Wisconsin System</p>	<p>Elisabeth Bumiller Washington Bureau Chief New York Times</p>	<p>Megan Chabalowski Program Officer U.S. Institute of Peace</p>
<p>Ray Cross President University of Wisconsin System</p>	<p>Jason Culotta Senior Director of Gov't Relations WI Manufacturers & Commerce</p>	<p>Mike Duffey Executive Director Republican Party of Wisconsin</p>
<p>Andrew Evenson Legislative Liaison Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development</p>	<p>Ed Gresser Assistant USTR for Trade Policy and Economics Office of the US Trade Representative</p>	<p>Tom Harnisch Dir. of State Relations & Policy Analysis American Association of State Colleges and Universities</p>
<p>Jay Heck Executive Director Common Cause</p>	<p>Ron Johnson U.S. Senator Wisconsin</p>	<p>Phil Karsting Administrator Foreign Agricultural Service U.S. Department of Agriculture</p>
<p>Becky Kikkert Policy Advisor Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development</p>	<p>Kory Kozloski Executive Director Democratic Party of Wisconsin</p>	<p>Regina LaBelle Chief of Staff Office of National Drug Control Policy</p>
<p>Sharon Bomer Lauritsen Assistant USTR for Agricultural Affairs and Commodity Policy Office of the US Trade Representative</p>	<p>Gordon Malaise Senior Attorney Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau</p>	<p>Georgia Maxwell Deputy Secretary Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development</p>
<p>Jim Mulhern President & CEO National Milk Producers Federation</p>	<p>Dave Murphy Wisconsin State Representative 56th Assembly District</p>	<p>Dave Obey Former Congressman Wisconsin 7th district</p>
<p>Jerry Petrowski Wisconsin State Senator 29th District</p>	<p>Emily Pope Fiscal Analyst Legislative Fiscal Bureau Wisconsin State Legislature</p>	<p>Zach Ramirez Staff Attorney Wisconsin Legislative Council</p>
<p>Paul Ryan Speaker of the House U.S. Congress Wisconsin 7th Congressional District</p>	<p>Anne Sappenfield Special Assist. to the State Auditor Legislative Audit Bureau Wisconsin State Legislature</p>	<p>Delia Scott Congressional Liaison Office of the Director National Gallery of Art</p>
<p>Katrina Shankland Wisconsin State Representative 71st Assembly District</p>	<p>Will Stone Partner Capstone National Partners</p>	<p>Paul Strauss U.S. Senator District of Columbia</p>
<p>Amber Meyer Smith Director, Programs Clean Wisconsin</p>	<p>J.D. Tripoli Deputy Legal Counsel Office of Governor Walker</p>	<p>Lori Wallach Director Global Trade Watch Public Citizen</p>
<p>Mike Wittenwyler Attorney Political Law Group Godfrey & Kahn</p>	<p>Zach Wyatt Legislative Attorney Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau</p>	<p>Judy Ziewacz President & CEO National Cooperative Business Association</p>



VI. Student Participants



Jeanette Brand

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County
Political Science, Pre-Law
Junior Pursuing BAAS degree

Life circumstances and a desire to improve my economic situation brought me back to school as a returning adult student. I have been particularly motivated by trying to bring about change. Being able to take this course in Washington, D.C. for three weeks is more feasible for someone in my circumstances than a three-month internship. I have

“For me, this program proved to be the difference between learning from a text book versus learning from the real world.”

never seen anything like this for political science majors except those going to UW-Madison. For me, this program proved to be the difference between learning from a text book versus learning from the real world—they are two entirely different experiences. Not everyone gets this opportunity and I am grateful I did.



Madeline Braun

UW-Manitowoc
Communications
Sophomore transferring to UW-Madison

The Washington Seminar was a great experience. Meeting with people in such a close setting was an excellent way to learn how the government works and who the people are that run it. I would recommend this course to anyone. If I had a chance to do it again, I absolutely would. This is not the kind of learning that you will get at a college while sitting in a desk. It was an intense three weeks, but what we learned was incredibly valuable in the midst of the upcoming election.



I feel like so many of the things we learned will be important to remember throughout our lives when we go to the polls or if we decide to get involved politically. I was grateful to be in the course with a very intelligent group of people. Even though many of us had differing opinions on many issues, we were able to discuss them civilly with one another, which makes me believe that everyone in this group would be a positive presence in any political environment.





Heather Breunig

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County
Political Science, Pre-Law
Junior Pursuing BAAS degree

During the Washington Seminar experience, I felt like every minute of every day I was in the midst of American democracy. From Madison, Wisconsin, to the U.S. capitol building, to the Library of Congress, plus so much more—it all left a deep impact.

The Seminar showed me that life doesn't happen in a textbook. I learned so much, it is very hard

“ I felt like every minute of every day I was in the midst of American democracy.

to describe. I have always been passionate about children, their safety and working within the justice system. During the Seminar, I found my purpose. One of our speakers introduced us to Protect.org and the H.E.R.O. Corps veterans who are on the frontline of protecting children from online predators. This is a career area that I will continue to explore. Thank you to everyone who made this trip possible. It was totally life changing!



Mirella Espino

UW-Marathon County
Latin American Studies, Pre-Law
Freshman transferring to UW-Eau Claire

I graduated from Colby High School with a class size of 73 and I am the first person from my family to graduate from high school and go to college, which makes me sort of a role model for my younger sisters. I enrolled in the course because of my interest in studying law and to learn more about the relationship between public policy and the legal system.

Some key ideas that I took away from the Seminar include:
1) although policymaking is a tedious process, we do not want knee-jerk politics. We want policymakers who critically think through ideas; 2) to achieve the best policies, all arguments should be heard; 3) we should pay attention and make sure that our voice is represented in decision-making processes.



This course exposed me to a variety of organizations and processes that are part of the nonprofit world which I aspire to work in. It was also a great opportunity for hands-on learning about our government and how it really works. This was definitely an amazing experience and I recommend to anyone who can take this course to do so.





Matt Froom

UW-Stevens Point
Business Administration
Sophomore

I am extremely grateful that I was able to attend the inaugural Washington Seminar, which vastly exceeded my expectations on all levels. The instructors did a fantastic job grouping our activities and meetings around a central topic and location, which really helped keep us in the same mindset each day. Meeting with the policymakers from many different parts of the policy making process was an insightful experience; hearing about this process from the people on the inside gave me a new appreciation for the process of policy and law making. I recommend advertising the course as widely as

possible to UW students across the state. A huge thank you to the instructors, funders and everyone else involved with organizing this awesome opportunity.



Nicholas Giordano

Brigham Young University
Neuroscience
Freshman

Consistent reports on the polarization of politics led me to believe government was getting nothing done, which persuaded me to become less interested in public policy generally. I could not have been more wrong. This course upended all of my misconceptions about politics and public

“Exposure to policy influencers shifted my thinking from ‘why get involved in public policy?’ to ‘what can I do now to get involved?’”

policy. Exposure to policy influencers shifted my thinking from “why get involved in public policy?” to “what can I do now to get involved?” Wisconsin state senators Janet



Bewley and Jerry Petrowski talked about the value of working within the system. They were adamant about the importance of finding common ground between the two parties rather than resorting to government gridlock. This idea was addressed by several other speakers. The most important lesson I took away from this course is public policy affects every aspect of my life whether I realize it or not. I also learned that I can make a difference—not just by voting—but by petitioning my representatives, by informing myself on what is happening around me, and by educating others. If I could take this class again I would do it in a heartbeat.





Cole Loniello

UW-Richland

Political Science, Philosophy

Sophomore transferring to Winona State University

The Washington Seminar gave me a new perspective on politics and public policy. Not many classes allow students to learn onsite and see how policymakers do their jobs. I don't think enough people are involved in political processes and this experience has motivated me to become more involved.

I also appreciated the opportunity to explore the monuments to our great leaders and fallen heroes. It is touching to reflect on the tremendous sacrifices so many Americans have made since this country's inception. It reminded me that we do not

do enough to honor our fallen servicemen and women. Wars are truly horrendous affairs that may bring out the worst in people. We must strive towards peace in our time, while allowing the words of great leaders like Franklin Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr. serve as our guiding light.



Kristen Rosen

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County

Animal Biology/Zoology

Sophomore transferring to Viterbo University

I learned that you don't need to be pursuing a law or government career to participate in a course like this. As an aspiring veterinarian and the first in my family to seek a four-year degree, I believe that this is a course everyone should take to get a basic understanding of government.

“This [course] boosted my confidence to ask questions and to become more informed about issues that I care about.

I learn best hands on, and what better way to learn about public policy than interacting with current policymakers in



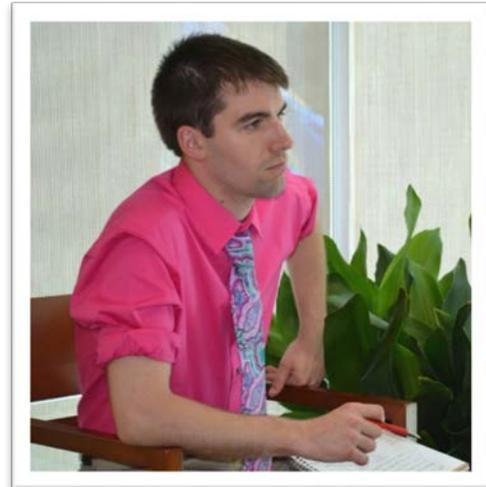
our nation's capital? I learned how easy it is to walk into my representative's office and set up a meeting or get answers from staff about current issues. This boosted my confidence to ask questions and to become more informed about issues that I care about.



Hunter Shawley

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County
Political Science
Sophomore

The Washington Seminar was a truly extraordinary experience. It was amazing to see just how many people and organizations are involved in making public policy. As a result of the Seminar, I have a new and revitalized interest in government and the process of policymaking. I also came away with the opinion that we need to get more people involved, increase a sense of civic engagement among the public, and restore the pulse of public conversation.



“As a result of the Seminar, I have a new and revitalized interest in government and the process of policymaking.”

It truly was great getting to speak not only to the people who directly represent us, but also to the people who are working behind the scenes to move policy processes along. Through the course, we were given perhaps the most important gift as American citizens: the opportunity and courage to speak up and ask questions of legislators and bureaucrats while maintaining a healthy, respectful skepticism. No matter where we go in our lives, this confidence will follow us.



Hyeon Ho “Jack” Sim

UW-Marquette
Political Science
Freshman transferring to UW-Milwaukee

As a South Korean national, I am not very familiar with how American domestic politics work. However, as a result of the Seminar, I learned that the U.S. political system is more complicated than the Korean system. For instance, the American system of lobbying surprised me. Lobbying is illegal in South Korea. The program also helped reinforce why Washington, D.C is a great place to study public policy. It is the center of government agencies for the nation, but it is also where many nonprofit organizations are based and offers many opportunities to get experience in public policy work.

Learning about international affairs was most important to me and I realized that I am very interested in security studies. This experience also helped encourage me towards a pathway of citizenship so that I can someday work for a U.S. agency or organization in the field of security studies. I have now decided to serve in the United States Army and to achieve U.S. citizenship through military service.





Tristan Tully

UW-Fox Valley

Political Science

Sophomore transferring to UW-Oshkosh

The Washington Seminar was extremely engaging and informative. I met with my congressional representatives as well as others involved in the political process—from the media, to lobbyists, lawyers, nonpartisan and partisan staffers, etc. Having the ability to ask policymakers my own questions and engage them in conversation was beyond a doubt the best part of the program. I also learned a number of valuable lessons: 1) it is important to communicate clearly, quickly and empirically when trying to influence people. Accessing trustworthy information and considering all

relevant factors is crucial in creating effective policy; 2) being prepared *before* meeting with people is key; 3) while everyone has strong opinions, compromise is crucial; 4) I appreciated the instructors' message: "Cynicism is destructive. Be skeptical, not cynical;" 5) ignorance is as destructive as cynicism; and 6) I won't always be faced with ideal choices in my job or in the next election. One speaker noted, "Life is a series of choices, and nothing says it can't be second choices." Overall, I am very happy to have been a part of the program.

“ Having the ability to ask policymakers my own questions and engage them in conversation was beyond a doubt the best part of the program.



Pang Kou Xiong

Mount Mary University

Criminal Justice, Pre-Law

Freshman

The Washington Seminar is a fantastic program that allowed me to connect with high-level policy leaders. Interacting with them gave me confidence that I am on the right track with my degree and career interests. I also learned that personal connections and relationships are more important than I imagined. Wisconsin state senator Jerry Petrowski reminded us, "Things get done by friendships and relationships." However, I also learned the power of participating and faithfully voting. Guest speaker and lobbyist Will Stone challenged us when he stated, "All citizens have the right to speak for themselves. But if you don't speak for yourself, someone else will." This reminded me that citizens must pay attention because what the government wants may be different from what the people want. Overall, the experience was amazing food for my brain!



VII. Program Costs

A. Keeping the Course Affordable

A major consideration for program planners was the cost to students. Many interested and qualified students face substantial financial barriers that preclude them from these types of learning experiences. For this reason, we kept costs as low as possible while providing the most bang for the buck for students

Overall Program Cost Per Student = \$2,950

B. Maximizing Value

1. Included in the 2016 program cost were the following:
 - a. Tuition for a 3-credit Public Policy course (through UW Colleges)
 - b. Roundtrip airfare
 - c. Bus fare (from Madison to Milwaukee airport and return)
 - d. D.C. Metro card/fare
 - e. Meal allowance for 18 days (\$7/breakfast, \$10/lunch, \$13/dinner)
 - f. Housing in Madison and Washington, D.C. for 18 nights
 - g. Potomac River Cruise and tour of Mt. Vernon
 - h. All other costs associated with course, ranging from marketing to materials
2. Not included in the 2016 program costs:
 - a. Books – overall, students were required to spend about \$25 for required readings.
 - b. Full meal freight – though students received over \$500 in meal stipends as part of course fees, they likely had to spend more given the high food costs in Washington, D.C.

C. Breaking Even

Ultimately, the course enrolled 10 students, which was the break-even point for the course to run at the designated program fee of \$2,950 per student. In addition, two unenrolled student participants joined the program and paid a lesser fee (tuition was excluded) to participate.⁵ With the participation of these two unenrolled students, the course achieved positive revenue balance of approximately \$3,000.

D. Unanticipated Challenges

What Washington Seminar planners did *not* foresee is just how serious the financial situation is for many Wisconsin students. With only a few exceptions, despite keeping the costs remarkably low for this type of immersive study away opportunity, students who applied struggled to come up with funding and most required scholarship or other financial support in order to participate.



⁵ In brief, the two students in question received a stipend from their campus Student Government Association to attend the Seminar but were later informed that segregated fee funds could not be used for tuition and other program costs. As a result, the only option for the students was to join the program as non-student participants.

VIII. Program Funding & Sustainability

A. Scholarship Donors

1. Importance of Scholarships

Given the difficulty among the majority of interested students to self-fund the entirety of their Washington Seminar costs, it became clear that the success of recruiting students and achieving sustainability depends on our ability to raise dollars for student scholarships.

2. Scholarship Donors

For the 2016 program, WIPPS raised \$7,500 in scholarship support from two key foundations:

- a. ***Herb Kohl Educational Foundation***, based in Milwaukee, generously donated \$5,000.
- b. ***Murco Foundation***, based in Wausau, generously donated \$2,500.

3. Allocating Scholarships

We used the scholarship donations to maximize the number of students who could attend the Washington Seminar. Nine students received an average of \$833 dollars, with scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. Despite our best efforts, at least four students were unable to participate due to lack of funding.

B. Other Key Donors

1. In kind Donations

WIPPS is grateful to the law firm **Godfrey & Kahn** for generously donating their Washington office conference room for classes and guest lectures

2. Other Donations

WIPPS is grateful to the following organizations for their generous contributions:

- a. UW System Office of the President hosted a student reception at Brittingham House.
- b. WisPolitics hosted the students at their weekly program lunch at the Madison Club.

3. Individual Contributions

We are grateful to the many individuals who generously gave their time to meet with the students as part of the course curriculum. A few individuals went the extra mile, spending many hours behind the scenes helping to organize and support the program:

- a. Dave Anderson
- b. Steve Anderson
- c. Jeff Buhrandt
- d. Paul Carver
- e. Greg Lampe
- f. Will Stone

C. Local Donors and Student Entrepreneurship

1. Local Donors

For students with serious financial need, even \$1,000 in scholarship support was not enough to cover program costs. WIPPS assisted some students in finding local resources:

- a. Cole Loniello received \$100 from a bank and \$175 from Richland County Rotary Club.
- b. Tristan Tully received \$500 from the UW-Fox Valley Foundation.
- c. Jeanette Brand and Heather Breunig received \$1,075 each from the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County Student Government Association.

2. Student Entrepreneurship

Most students used personal earnings or savings to help defray costs. Some students exhibited creativity and entrepreneurship by raising additional dollars:

- a. Cole Loniello raised \$450 through a Gofundme online crowdsourcing campaign.
- b. Jeanette Brand and Heather Breunig held four brat fries earning a total of \$800.
- c. Pang Kou Xiong raised \$800 by making and selling over 1,000 egg rolls.

D. Program Sustainability

To sustain and grow the Washington Seminar program, WIPPS must continue to attract students and necessary funding. This will require a combination of strategies as follows:

1. Raise dollars for student scholarships

Many qualified students do not have the financial means to support their participation. We will continue to seek out partner foundations to help augment student funding. This past year we raised \$7,500. Our goal for 2017 is to raise \$15,000.

2. Attract students who can afford full freight

While we want to provide pathways to participation for low income students, we would benefit from attracting more students who can afford full tuition and fees. Three of twelve students (25%) fit this latter category. We would like to increase that percentage to 40%. Our plan is to expand marketing efforts to four-year public and private universities.

3. Align with local foundations and businesses

There are opportunities to partner with local foundations, community clubs and businesses to help support students. We will reach out to two- and four-year campus foundations and target local clubs and businesses to ask for matching funds where possible.

4. Improve marketing efforts

There is room to improve marketing operations. It took longer than expected to ramp up our marketing campaign for the inaugural program. We intend to have marketing materials ready in the summer of 2016 for next year's program.



IX. Conclusion

We are pleased to report that WIPPS achieved all of its primary goals for the inaugural Washington Seminar program:

A. Attract Students

1. We recruited twelve participants for the program, exceeding the break-even point by two.
2. We were also able to attract diverse students from across the state, including from several different communities and institutions.

B. Institutional Backing

1. An important goal was to receive institutional backing from the UW Colleges to offer the program as a credit-bearing course. We were pleased to partner with the UW Colleges Political Science Department to offer the Seminar as three-credit public policy course.
2. We were fortunate to receive support from the UW System in the form of organizational support and help to organize an opening reception for students in Madison.

C. Funding and Sustainability

1. WIPPS raised scholarship funds and achieved cost-revenue neutrality, thus proving concept feasibility and providing a pathway to program continuation.

D. Student Outcomes

1. Perhaps most important, the students themselves reported the experience as “life-changing;” to a person, they proclaimed that if they could do it all over again, they would.
2. We are investigating grants to research long term outcomes of student participation.



Washington Seminar students take a selfie with House Speaker Paul Ryan on the Speaker's Balcony at the Capitol

