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Testimony Simulation

Instructions for
Congressional Hearings

SWRK 405

Prof. B. Brown-Chappell, Ph.D., MSW

GOALS

+To learn the protocol of giving testimony on a contemporary policy issue

++To understand traditional and non-traditional political ideologies so that you can accurately pose ideologically-based questions as part of a simulation

+++To anticipate questions based on a policy maker's ideology

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare sections III A-D in the policy paper outline. You must cite academic, governmental, and policy think-tank sources. List at least 10 bibliographic citations in APA style in a section titled Works Cited. Typewritten or word processed only.

2. Prepare a one-page executive summary of sections III A-D plus a cover sheet which states the following:

your name
agency identification (hypothetical policy employer)
address
title of your presentation
title of the congressional panel
date of testimony

This summary and cover sheet will be distributed to the Chairperson and members of the Congressional Subcommittee. You will have 5-8 minutes to present.

Your classmates will act as the House/Senate Social Services Subcommittee; there will be a chairperson of the committee who may be the instructor. The subcommittee members will represent one of the ideologies that we have discussed or read about in class. That is, they could represent a policy stream

in the African-American community or they might articulate a liberal, neoliberal, conservative, or neo-conservative perspective. Alternatively, they might ask a question or make a comment that is unique to a feminist, gay/lesbian rights, Native-American, or Chicana\o policy maker.

3. Prepare to serve as a member of the House/Senate Social Services Subcommittee by researching the ideology and personality of the individual you are assigned to play. You will take on one of the following roles: Senator Debbie Stabenow, Dennis McCain, Trent Lott (Minority Leader), Tom Dashcle, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Strom Thurman, Ted Kennedy, Carl Levin or Barbara Boxer. Alternatively, you might play a member of the House of Representatives such as Speaker of the House, Dennis Hassert, Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, or Representatives Carolyn Cheeks Kirkpatrick, Lynn Rivers, Ciro Rodriguez, Charles Rangel, Sander Levin or J C. Watts.

In your role you will ask the witness an ideologically based question. Submit both your question and a copy of the research that you obtained to play your assigned role. Research information may be obtained from Politics in America reference number JK 1012 .P64 1999 or Who's Who in Congress 2001 number JK 1012 .W56x 2001.

The written draft of these sections with instructor's comments must be turned in with your final paper.

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCRIPT

Note: stage directions are enclosed in parenthesis () while instructor notes are given in brackets []

Chair (raps gavel): This session of the House/Senate Social Services Subcommittee is in session. Allow me to introduce my distinguished colleagues. [for example] Senator Stabenow, D-MI; Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-CO; Representative J. C. Watts, R-MO; Representative Sander Levin, D-MI. I am your Chair and Majority Leader of the Senate, Tom Daschle, D-IA.

[Instructor Note: panel thus has a Native American = Campbell; a white woman = Stabenow; one African-American, J.C. Watts. It is dominated by Democrats who are the majority in the Senate.]

Chair: This afternoon we have a number of witnesses who will present informational testimony on a variety of social service topics. Will the first witness(es) please come forward and provide the chairperson with copies of your testimony. (The Chair will distribute the cover sheets and executive summaries to the panel while keeping a copy for reference)

(Witnesses take their seats)

Chair: We have the following witness _____. (reads titles, names, affiliation and topic as listed on the cover sheet)

You will have no more than 8 minutes to present (6 for individuals). After your testimony, the panelists may have some questions or comments. You may proceed.

Witness(es): To Mr. Daschle, Majority Leader of the Senate, I am (repeats cover sheet information) and these are my colleagues (identifies using Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss plus first and last name if there are colleagues) _____. I/We wish to thank you and the members of this committee (identifies each with title, first and last names although if there is a large hearing panel a simple thank you to the panel is sufficient) for allowing us to present on the topic of _____.

Due to the press of time we ask that the full text of our testimony be placed in the Congressional Record, as time will not allow us to refer to it in full.

Chair: So ordered, you may continue.

[Each witness must speak on items IIIA-D, but the exact division of labor is solely their prerogative. Due to the fact that

students have not completed their analysis, they are not requesting specific legislative action]

(At the end of the presentation.)

Witness: Thank you for allowing us to have this opportunity to testify on __. I/we ask that you commission a study on this issue and would be happy to be of assistance. I/We would also be pleased to answer any questions at this time. We may be reached in the future at the address on our document.

Chair: Thank you for your testimony. We will take questions from our panel beginning with our Republican members. (Recognizes each in turn by name and state. At the end of panel questions the chair may ask an ideologically based question and/or comment on the request to commission a study of the issue.)

Thank you for your testimony on __; the witness(es) are excused.

(Next witness(es) are called process repeated).

(After all witnesses have been called).

Chair: This committee will now recess for lunch/dinner.

Hint: Watch C-SPAN to see how testimony is actually done. See testimony grade sheet 1 below.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR DIRECTIONS

1. Hearing each witness(es) usually requires a total of fifteen minutes. I would suggest tht once students have their topics, then a schedule can be arranged such as the example below. This can be given to students so that they know the topics and can prepare for their roles as Representatives or Senators.

Time: 1-1:15 pm

Topic: Aging Policy and the Older Americans Act

Witness: Betty Social Worker

Congressional Panel:

Lott/Neo-Conservative
Nighthorse Campbell/Conservative
Rangell/Civil Rights Liberal
Levin/Neo-Liberal

Joe Doe
Jane Roe
Judy Smoe
Joshua Low