



FEMA



National Fire Academy

**F0121 – Politics and the White Helmet
Version: 1st Edition, 3rd Printing, September 2014**

Quarter:

**ACE Credit: In the upper-division baccalaureate degree category, 1 semester hour
in Fire Service Administration or Public Safety Administration.**

IACET Continuing Education Units: 1.5

Length of Course: 2 Days (16 contact hours)

Prerequisite: None

Curriculum: Leadership and Executive Development

Training Specialist: Kevin Brame

Instructor:

Instructor email/phone:

Classroom: J-

Meeting Time: 8 AM – 5 PM

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Course Description (Catalog)

F0121 – “Politics and the White Helmet.” This two-day course is aimed at providing the chief officers in both fire service and EMS agencies with a overview of the ways to succeed and work within the local, county and state level political system to achieve positive results for their department. It will give the officer an improved insight into better ways to relate and speak to citizens and others to gain support and understanding of their needs for bond issues, tax votes, and general elections. Participants learn about successful approaches appropriate for government employees and volunteers. The course identifies successful tools needed to address the challenge necessary to bring about change, and how a department’s culture of power, influence, negotiation, and coalition building is important to success.

Student Qualifications (Primary and Secondary Audience)

The target audience for the *Politics and the White Helmet* course includes chief officers in fire and emergency services organizations, with a focus on volunteer and combination departments. This includes any chief officer or senior official in a leadership position in the department that desires to influence the future of the organization.

Course Scope (Goal)

The goal of this course is to prepare department heads and other senior officers in fire departments and emergency medical services (EMS) agencies to be able to successfully promote and pass public-policy initiatives. This critical skill is needed to ensure that the organization continues to meet its mission and purpose through changing times. Typically, senior officers and department heads are not prepared to work in a local political environment.

The students will examine the nature of local politics; the role of ethics in building personal and professional credibility; the role of influence in politics and how influence is developed; the role of leadership in politics; how to create and lead strategic change; and how to develop a strategy for changing public policy for a fire department or emergency services issue.

Course Objectives (Course Learning Outcomes – TLOs)

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to accomplish the following:

- Describe the local political process used to establish public policy.
- Describe the role of effective leadership in the political process.
- Develop and implement political strategies that effectively influence public policy.

Course Delivery Method

The National Fire Academy (NFA) offers specialized training courses and advanced management programs of national impact in an academic classroom environment [on campus at the National Emergency Training Center \(NETC\) in Emmitsburg, Maryland](#) and through their State, local, and tribal training partners. This classroom course is designed for the national level fire service officer from State and local fire service organizations. All course materials are designed for interactive classroom environments, in either paper notebook or electronic formats.

Course Schedule

The purpose of the course schedule is to give you, at a glance, the required preparation, activities, and evaluation components of your course.

DAY 1	DAY 2
Introduction; Welcome and administrative	Unit 2: Leadership Essentials (cont'd) Activity 2.4: Negotiations in the Political Environment
<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>
Unit 1: Politics 101	Unit 3: Creating the Future
<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>
Unit 1: Politics 101 (cont'd) Activity 1.1: Community Needs and Expectations	Unit 3: Creating the Future (cont'd) Activity 3.1: Identifying a Current Local Issue With Political Implications and Establishing the Urgency and Guiding Coalitions Activity 3.2: Developing and Communicating a Vision for a Current Local Issue With Political Implications
<i>Lunch Break</i>	<i>Lunch Break</i>
Unit 1: Politics 101 (cont'd) Activity 1.2: Maintaining Political Influence	Unit 3: Creating the Future (cont'd) Activity 3.3: Empowering Subordinates To Act and Generate Short-Term Wins for a Local Political Issue Activity 3.4: Defining the Future
<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>
Unit 2: Leadership Essentials Activity 2.1: Impact of Behavior on Credibility Activity 2.2: Personal and Professional Credibility Activity 2.3: Credibility Assessment	Unit 3: Creating the Future (cont'd) Activity 3.5: Creating Public Policy

Course Resources (Instructional Materials)

In order to be fully prepared, obtain a copy of the required textbooks and other instructional materials prior to the first day of class.

Required Readings

The student must complete required readings during the course to be able to thoughtfully participate in discussions and activities.

None.

Suggested Reading/Resources

Suggested readings and resources are not evaluated, but may enhance the student's understanding, serve as additional sources for citation and promote discussion of course material.

None.

Required Resources (Course Textbook)

Student Manual.

Supplemental Resources (Supplemental Course Textbook)

None.

Grading Methodology (Evaluation Procedures)

The required performance to successfully complete the course is attained by completing the class with a letter grade of a "C" or higher.

Letter Grade	Point Range
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	69 or lower

Required Reading Assignments

Student completion of reading assignments will be done via evaluation of their class participation and will not be a separately graded activity.

Suggested Readings

Suggested readings are not evaluated, but may enhance the student's understanding and promote discussion of course material.

Course Outline

Unit 1: Politics 101 (Day 1)

Objectives

Terminal Objective

The students will be able to describe the local political process used to establish public policy.

Enabling Objectives

The students will:

1. Define politics.
2. Define public policy.
3. Explain the fire and emergency service leader's role in creating and implementing public policy.
4. Explain the local government political environment.
5. Distinguish between a community's formal and informal power structure.
6. Summarize strategies for maintaining political influence.

Unit 2: Leadership Essentials (Day 1)

Objectives

Terminal Objective

The students will be able to describe the role of effective leadership in the political process.

Enabling Objectives

The students will:

1. Distinguish between power and influence.
2. Describe the types of power available to the leader in the political process.
3. Explain the characteristics of passive and active influence.
4. Define the concept of leadership in the political process.
5. Summarize the essential attributes of leadership.
6. Explain the roles of collaboration and negotiation in the political process.
7. Given a local emergency services issue with a political element, evaluate the leadership elements necessary to achieve a successful outcome.

Unit 3: Creating the Future (Day 2)

Objectives

Terminal Objective

The students will be able to develop and implement political strategies that effectively influence public policy.

Enabling Objectives

The students will:

1. Define community.
2. Define community/political equity.
3. Explain the process for creating community/political equity.
4. Explain the process for developing an effective change strategy.
5. Define the change objective (future).
6. Explain the principles of effective change management.
7. Explain the principles of transition to a politically adaptive organization.

8. Given a local emergency service issue that involves a change in public policy, develop a strategy(s) that effectively influences the necessary public policy change.

Policies

Class Attendance and Cancellation Policy

Attendance

- You are required to attend all sessions of the course. If you do not, you may not receive a certificate, and your stipend may be denied.
- If you need to depart campus early and miss any portion of the course and/or graduation, you must make the request in writing to the NFA training specialist. The training specialist, in collaboration with the superintendent, may waive the attendance requirement in order to accommodate you with extraordinary circumstances as long as you complete all course requirements. If you receive approval for departing early, you must forward the approval to the Admissions Office so your stipend reimbursement is not limited.

Student Substitutions

Substitutions for NFA courses are made from waiting lists; your fire department can't send someone in your place.

Cancellations or No-Shows

NFA's mission for delivery of courses is impaired significantly by cancellations and no-shows. It is very difficult and costly to recruit students at the last minute. Currently there is a two-year ban on student attendance for students who are no-shows or cancel within 30 days of the course start date without a valid reason. If you receive such a restriction, your supervisor needs to send a letter to our Admissions Office explaining the cancellation/no-show.

Course Failure

If you fail an on-campus course, you will not be issued a stipend for that course. You can reapply for the failed course or any other NFA course and go through the random selection process. You don't have to successfully complete the failed course before attending another NFA course.

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Students, instructors and staff are expected to treat each other with respect at all times. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and may result in removal from campus and denial of stipends.

Writing Expectations

Student writing will conform to the generally accepted academic standards for college papers. Papers will reflect the original work of the student and give appropriate credit through citations for ideas belonging to other authors, publications or organizations. Student written work should be free of grammatical and syntax errors, free of profanity or obscene language or ideas, and reflect critical thinking related to the course subject matter.

Citation and Reference Style

Attention Please: Students will follow the APA, Sixth Edition as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to NFA. Assignments completed in a narrative essay, composition format, abstract, and discussion posts must follow the citation style cited in the APA, Sixth Edition.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date (11:59 p.m. EDT/EST) and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, you must manage competing demands on your time. Discussion board postings submitted within 3 days after the submission deadline will receive up to a 20% deduction. Those that do not submit their discussion board postings within this timeline will receive a “0” grade for the week. Final assignment papers will not be accepted after the deadline. Any paper submitted after the deadline will receive a “0” grade for that assignment.

Netiquette

Online learning promotes the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a professional learning setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations.** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The NFA Online classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note.** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺ .

Disclaimer Statement

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

Grading

Please review the above grading methodology that explains how grades will be awarded. Students who do not complete the entire course will be awarded an Incomplete (I) grade. In accordance with National Fire Academy academic policies, an Incomplete (I) grade must be removed by the end of the next semester following the course, or it automatically becomes a Failing (F) grade.

If you fail an on-campus course, you will not be issued a stipend for that course. You can reapply for the failed course or any other NFA course and go through the random selection process. You don't have to successfully complete the failed course before attending another NFA course.

http://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/admissions/student_policies_campus_information.html

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to exhibit exemplary ethical behavior and conduct as part of the NFA community and society as a whole. Acts of academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, deliberate falsification, and other unethical behaviors will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to report academic misconduct when they witness a violation. All cases of academic misconduct shall be reported by the instructor to the Training Specialist.

If a student is found to have engaged in misconduct and the allegations are upheld, the penalties may include, but are not limited to one or a combination of the following:

- expulsion,
- withholding of stipend or forfeiture of stipend paid,
- exclusion from future classes for a specified period; depending on the severity it could range from 1-10 years, and/or
- forfeiture of certificate for course(s) enrolled in at NETC.

Refer to NFA-specific Standard Operating Procedure 700.1 – *Academic Code of Conduct and Ethics* for more information.