

# HOWARD BAKER PUBLIC POLICY CHALLENGE

*Public policy can be defined as a course of actions or inactions created, adopted and implemented by a government or a non-governmental entity in answer to public problems.* HBPPC 2014.15

## OVERVIEW

This year, in tribute to the late Senator Howard Baker, we are launching the **Howard Baker Public Policy Challenge**. The model for the **Challenge** is a national challenge created by the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute and the focus is on **STUDENTS creating SOLUTIONS to REAL local and state problems!**

Student teams develop solutions in the form of public policy legislation and/or initiatives that address the problem they are trying to solve. The solution may be in the form of a mobile app, an educational website, a program, legislation or a policy. The Challenge happens in two phases.

**Fall 2014:** All student teams will compete on **November 19** in the **Howard Baker Public Policy Challenge**, presenting a five minute Powerpoint and a 1-2 page executive summary of their problem and solution. We'll host a workshop on Sept 30 to show you how. Examples can be found here: [https://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/5\\_executive\\_summary\\_examples.pdf](https://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/5_executive_summary_examples.pdf) The top five teams will be selected and move onto the final competition in February 2015.

**Spring 2015:** The top five UT teams from Fall will develop and submit a 10-15 page policy brief and make a 10 minute presentation. We'll show you how at a workshop on January 14. Examples here: <https://www.fels.upenn.edu/challenge/pastchallenges/penn> Final proposal example here: [https://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/ican\\_proposal-final\\_0.pdf](https://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/ican_proposal-final_0.pdf) The grand prize winning team will receive \$3,000 and the two runner-up teams \$1,000 each, to use toward furthering their policy solution. (Students who are unable to commit for the Spring competition may still be able to participate as part of a team, just let us know.) The top team may be invited to the National Challenge and represent UT in March 2015.

**We will use real problems collected from government and non-profits across the state of Tennessee or suggested by the student teams.** Throughout the process, the stakeholders (government, non-profits, etc.) will be engaged as advisors to the teams and their input will be continuously requested in order to develop an appropriate solution and to provide evaluation of the proposed solution.

## WHO is eligible?

All University of Tennessee undergraduate and graduate students, from any college, are eligible. Students will apply online individually and be assigned to a Challenge team based on their interests, background and skills. Each student team will be led by a graduate student and mentored by faculty and/or professionals and stakeholders. (Students who are unable to commit for the Spring competition may still participate as part of a team, but please note that in your application.)

## HOW will teams be formed?

The **goal is to create diverse teams** (interdisciplinary and across classes) of 3-5 students each. The teams will be created by the Baker Center, although students may indicate one other person they want to work with and suggest an issue.

## WHERE is more information?

Detailed information is available at the Howard Baker Center web site here:

<http://bakercenter.utk.edu/student-engagement/public-policy-challenge/>

## WHAT problems will the teams address?

**FOLLOW YOUR PASSION!** Because teams will be composed based on common interests of the students, each team will select its own topic for this policy challenge. For example, you might tackle problems with:

<b>biking and bikeways</b>	<b>diversity</b>	<b>prison overcrowding</b>
<b>food deserts</b>	<b>education</b>	<b>sustainability</b>
<b>obesity</b>	<b>substance abuse</b>	<b>transportation issues</b>
<b>wage gap</b>	<b>homelessness</b>	<b>energy issues</b>
<b>distracted drivers</b>	<b>healthcare access</b>	????

Problems and concerns within the Tennessee region have been solicited from area governmental and non-governmental agencies. For example, the Metropolitan Drug Commission has asked for help concerning the increasing number of women abusing prescription opioids and the 2014 Tennessee law criminalizing women who have babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. TDOIT has requested help with “distracted drivers” and with getting trucks off the roads to make roads safer, protect the environment and save money. Students may identify areas of interest as well.

## WHEN does this take place?

### Friday, September 12: **Application Deadline**

Students will apply individually online via <http://tinyurl.com/PolicyChallenge14-15> The form will ask them to indicate their policy interests and define their related skills. Although students may indicate one person that they might like to work with, one goal of the challenge is to create interdisciplinary teams of students with similar policy interests and for students to meet new people

### September 13-15: **Team Assignments**

A Baker Center team of Ambassadors and staff will review applications and populate teams of 3-5 students, based on student interests. The goal is to create diverse teams. The students develop the policy and make the presentation.

Tues., Sept. 16, 5:30 pm

**Opening Reception! Meet your team!**

Tues., Sept. 30, 5:30 pm

**WORKSHOP I** (with food) - **Drafting the Executive Summary and Presenting Your Case.** Define the problem, research solutions, budget, stakeholders, implementation, & assessment **Dorie Stiefel**, GRA, Political Science and **John Haas**, professor, Communications, instructors

Oct. 1-15

**Turn in Meet-the-Team Blogposts** – date to be assigned to each team

Wed., Oct. 15

**Draft Executive Summary is due.**

Wed., Nov. 5, 5-7 pm

**Pizza & Practice**

Fri., Nov. 14

**Final Executive Summary due to HBPPC** and forwarded to judges.

Wed., Nov. 19, 5:30 pm

**Team Semi-finals Competition**

## WHY enter a Policy Challenge?

With this hands-on approach of **solving REAL problems**, i.e., experiential learning, we believe students and the faculty/community will be motivated to become more civically engaged, understand the importance of bipartisanship and collaboration, and work together to search for new solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems, through the use of public policy.

## What's In It for ME?

This experience will help students build their creative problem-solving skills, improve critical thinking and analysis, build resilience and research skills, improve their writing and presentation skills, strengthen leadership and teamwork, and more -- all attributes valuable for their future careers and lives as engaged citizens!

**QUESTIONS?** [Policychallenge@utk.edu](mailto:Policychallenge@utk.edu) and <http://bakercenter.utk.edu/student-engagement/public-policy-challenge/>