

# Issue Organizing Workbook



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# Issue Campaigns 101: Identifying a Goal

## Welcome to Everglades College

Everglades College is a fictional college campus in the city of Pinedo Point, Florida. It is a publicly-funded school composed of 20,000 students. It prides itself on empowering students to make important decisions regarding the college's future. Two years ago, the student government passed—and the college president approved—a minimum wage increase for all college employees, and created a new Trustee position reserved for a current college employee. Last year, the student government passed a resolution to cap tuition rate increases for five years, but the college president vetoed this resolution.

You and several of your friends have formed a new student group on campus and are focused on passing a college resolution that helps protect the environment from climate change. You will need the chair of the Politics & Public Policy department to sponsor your organization in order to become an officially sanctioned student group within the college.

Professor Sharp—Chair of the Politics & Public Policy department—informs you that in order to receive his sponsorship, your student group will need to submit an issue campaign plan. According to Sharp, the issue campaign plan must address three key points:

- 1) **Set a realistic, measurable goal** that can be accomplished during the academic year
- 2) **Define a clear strategy** that allows your group to achieve that goal
- 3) **Utilize effective tactics** that support your overall strategy



# Experiential Activity 1A

The first step in writing a campaign plan is to decide on a goal. You must choose only one achievable goal for your group to accomplish. So far, there have been four proposals submitted to adopt as the goal for your campaign. Below are the four proposals. You must adopt one, and only one, of these options as your campaign goal.

A quick note on goal selection: while each of these goals is inherently valuable to achieve, it's okay to focus on just one goal for this exercise. This doesn't mean that other goals are not important, but that in a campaign with limited resources it's often easier to focus on one thing at time.

**For this exercise, review each goal and identify its general strengths and weaknesses. Your group will then select a goal to propose to Professor Sharp.**

GOAL	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
The college will start a program encouraging students to use less energy to reduce the campus' carbon footprint.		
The college will immediately divest from the fossil fuel industry.		
The college will transition to using 100% clean energy like wind and solar.		
The college will create a public report of it's carbon footprint and a plan to achieve a goal of a zero carbon campus.		

**Based on your initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each goal, which goal will your group adopt? Why?**



# Experiential Activity 1B

Now that you have chosen your goal, you'll need to spend some time analyzing it to ensure it's a goal that your student group can achieve. In this section, you will answer some questions about the achievability of your goal and rewrite it as necessary to make it stronger. **An ideal goal is one that is realistic, measurable, and solves a challenge. Look back to the goal you chose for your student group.**

**Write your goal below, then indicate if it is realistic, measurable, and solves a challenge.**

**ORIGINAL GOAL:**

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## Is it realistic?

Is there a timeline by which the goal will be achieved? If so, is this timeline a realistic one? Does the goal propose an achievable action for the college to take? Knowing what you know about the most recent decisions, do you think asking the college to take this action is likely to gain support?

**1=NOT REALISTIC AT ALL, 2,3, 4, 5=VERY REALISTIC**

1 2 3 4 5

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## Does it solve a challenge?

What challenge does the goal address? Is the goal too specific or general in addressing this challenge? Is there a "how" in achieving the goal?

**1=DOESN'T SOLVE A CHALLENGE AT ALL, 2,3, 4, 5=CLEARLY SOLVES A CHALLENGE**

1 2 3 4 5

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## Is it measurable?

Is there a numerical benchmark this goal seeks to achieve; e.g. reduce garbage output by 50%? How will you determine whether you've achieved your goal?

**1=NOT MEASURABLE AT ALL, 2,3, 4, 5=VERY MEASURABLE**

1 2 3 4 5

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**Based on the analysis of your goal, now rewrite it to ensure that it's realistic, measurable, and solves a challenge.**

**NEW GOAL:**

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# Issue Campaigns 102: Creating A Strategy

## Creating a Strategy

Once a campaign has established its ideal goal, it's time to choose a strategy. A good strategy provides the roadmap to success and answers the basic question of **how we will achieve our goal**.

### **An effective strategy must answer these three basic questions:**

- 1) What institutions have the ability to enact the change you wish to see?
- 2) Which decision makers will you target?
- 3) What messages will you use to motivate these decision makers to action?

Your activities in this section will help you to answer these three questions and adopt a strategy for your student group.



Everglades College is a publicly-funded school that believes in empowering both its governing body and student body to make important decisions regarding the college's future. Below is a description of the college's two major governing bodies.

### The Board of Trustees

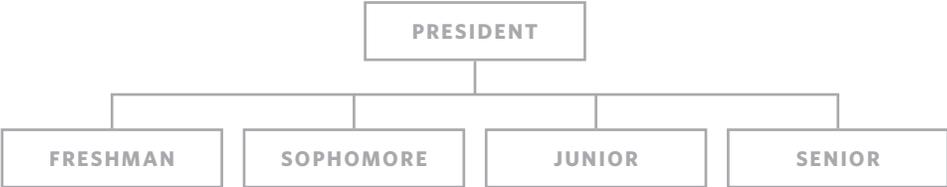
The college is officially governed by a five-member Board of Trustees, plus the college president. The trustees make legislative recommendations to the President, while the President reserves approval/veto power for any resolution that is passed. The Board of Trustees can pass a resolution with a simple 3-2 majority.

The Board of Trustees consists of three members appointed by the Governor of Florida, one faculty representative elected by the faculty, and one employee representative elected by all other college employees. In order to vote on possible legislation, one of the five trustees must submit an official resolution to the board.



### The Student Government Association

The Student Government Association is composed of a total of five members. There is one representative elected from each grade at the college, and a Student President elected by the entire student body. This means there are four representatives and one president. The Student President has tie-breaking voting power in the case of a 2-2 vote on a resolution. Once a resolution passes by simple majority in the Student Government Association, it will go to the College president for final approval or veto. Similar to the Trustees, the SGA will consider new legislation if a resolution is proposed by any one of its members.

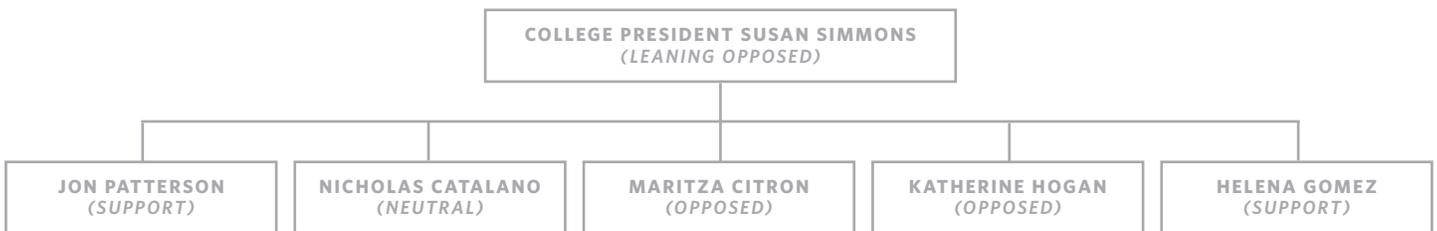


## Experiential Activity 2

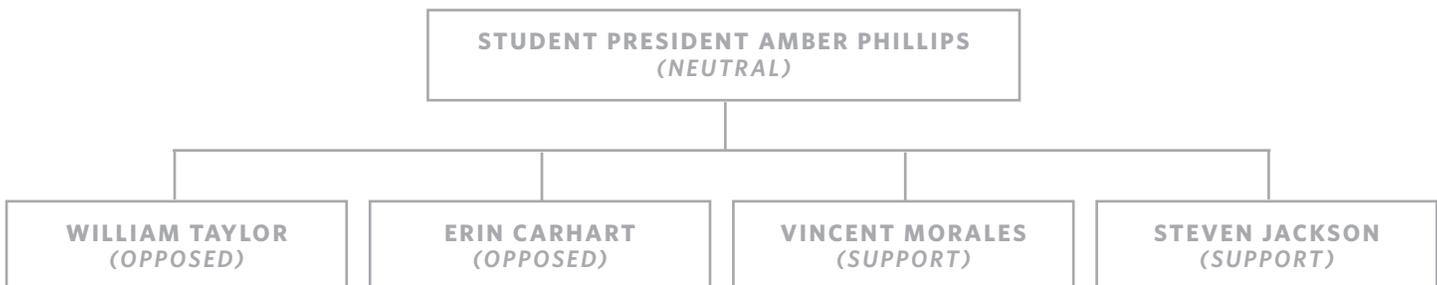
In creating a proper strategy, your campaign will have to make a choice: you must target either the Board of Trustees or the Student Government in order to pass legislation. For each institution, you know that you need a simple majority, plus the College president's approval for a resolution to pass. In an ideal world with unlimited time and unlimited resources, you might try to target all of the decision makers from each governing body in order to achieve the success you want to see. But in the real world, you will always have limited time and resources in order to reach your goal.

The first step in deciding which institution to target for your strategy is to determine where each decision maker stands in relation to your issue. As it stands now, prior resolutions have shown the Board of Trustees and the Student Government Association to be gridlocked on this particular issue. **That means that there is only one neutral decision maker on the Board of Trustees and one neutral decision maker on the Student Government Association.** Being neutral means that you can gain their support with a strong issue campaign. Here is where each institution currently stands:

### EVERGLADES COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:



### EVERGLADES COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION:



Your campaign will need to target one member of either the Board of Trustees or the Student Government Association, as well as the College president. Now that you know how resolutions can pass, let's look at the actual decision makers and decide for your campaign who it makes sense to target.

It's time to start learning more about the decision makers and uncovering their personal motivations. This will allow your campaign to craft a message for these decision makers that is most likely to persuade them to support your resolution.

**Potential Motivators:** Reelection / Legacy / Finances / Organizational Future / Constituent Base

*NOTE: The College president is considered a key decision maker within both institutions, i.e. the Board of Trustees and the Student Government Association.*

## **TARGETED DECISION MAKERS' PERSONAL BIOGRAPHIES:**

**College president Susan Simmons (leaning opposed):** President Simmons was appointed President of Everglades College two years ago. Before serving as president, President Simmons was a sociology professor at the University of Chicago, where she taught for 25 years. As a sociologist, Simmons wrote three books on economic welfare and income inequality. While she has accomplished many things as President, such as elevating the college's rankings and creating the new school of Politics & Public Policy, President Simmons has had a challenging relationship with the Board of Trustees. A few members of the Board have expressed that they want the President to focus more on the finances of the college. An article published by the college newspaper suggests that three members of the Board of Trustees attempted to remove President Simmons from her post. They were unsuccessful. Given this relationship, President Simmons is cautious on what she vetoes or supports, especially since she'll need unanimous approval from the Board on her budget later this year.

**Which of the potential motivators from the list above do you think motivate this person? What evidence do you see from her biography to support your answer?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to support your resolution?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to oppose your resolution?**



**Trustee Nicholas Catalano (neutral):** Nicholas is a retired financial investor and adviser. Mr. Catalano founded his company, NickCat Wealth Group, over 30 years ago with the mission of providing personalized, holistic financial advice to affluent individuals and families, addressing their complex financial planning needs to help grow and protect wealth. The Catalano family has been generous philanthropically, donating tens of millions to support education and health care throughout the Everglades College health system. They promised \$150 million to help build a freestanding, independent children’s hospital in the city of Pinedo Point. Since his retirement, Mr. Catalano proudly serves on the Board of Trustees at Everglades College. He is considered a moderate member of the board, combining idealism and philanthropic principles with conservative financial prowess, though he is known to favor preserving and protecting the college’s financial standing above all else.

Before joining the college, Mr. Catalano built NickCat Wealth Group from the ground-up, advising many famous individuals, families, and corporations. His work has allowed him to build an impressive investment portfolio in real estate, natural gas, and nanotechnology. Being a philanthropic and business leader in the Miami area led Mr. Catalano to run for the US Senate in the 2010 Republican Primary, though he was defeated by his opponent, who labeled him too moderate after Mr. Catalano refused to sign a pledge denying climate change. His positions on this subject remain unknown, though he did say he invested in the natural gas industry because he believes it is the cleanest fossil fuel, calling it a bridge between dirtier fossil fuels and cleaner energy technologies. After his senate run, Mr. Catalano officially retired from NickCat Wealth Group, pledging to focus on strengthening Florida’s health care and education system. In 2011, he was asked to join Everglades College to help strengthen the college’s financial standing, which was still recovering from the recent recession. He is hailed for managing the college to financial stability and cutting waste, while still making investments that improve student life. One such investment that is personal to Mr. Catalano is the Pioneers Program, which invests in providing students the opportunity to participate in a summer-long ecological study of America’s National Parks for college credit.

**Which of the potential motivators from the previous page do you think motivate this person? What evidence do you see from his biography to support your answer?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to support your resolution?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to oppose your resolution?**



**Student President Amber Phillips (neutral):** Amber Phillips was narrowly re-elected Student President this year after running on a progressive platform that focused on increasing representation and advocating on behalf of minority, women, and LGBT voices at the college. She is the youngest Student President elected at Everglades College, winning the seat at the end of her freshman year. She wants to set a record for serving three consecutive years. A student at the School of Social Work at Everglades College, Ms. Phillips' passion has been trying to find ways to alleviate economic hardship for students by advocating for tuition-caps, free printing services, and the reallocation of some college money to provide larger student grants to incoming students. In addition, Ms. Phillips biggest passion is providing a more equitable culture for all college students and creating what she calls a "culture of activism" to address society's ills. She is largely hailed for organizing an initiative which raised nearly \$1 million to aid communities in the US lacking access to clean water and was featured as a "Who's Who under 30," as a result. In addition, she spent last summer interning for an organization seeking to advocate for communities adversely affected by energy pollutants.

Currently, Ms. Phillips is trying to push through a large and controversial "Student Economic Relief" package, which focuses on forcing the college to conduct a thorough review of its endowment money and allocate a larger portion to student grants and scholarships, cap tuition increases, and provide more affordable student housing. This is a highly contentious resolution that Ms. Phillips has dedicated all of her energy and capital towards passing, though she has been met with resistance from both the college staff and students who seek to protect the funding of their own schools and departments. A similar resolution was vetoed last year by the College president. While Ms. Phillips has been lauded for her idealism, her legacy as Student President over the past year and a half is currently criticized as being largely ineffective.

**Which of the potential motivators from the previous page do you think motivate this person? What evidence do you see from her biography to support your answer?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to support your resolution?**

**How might these motivations drive this person to oppose your resolution?**



# Experiential Activity 3

## Selecting your Strategy

At this point in creating your campaign plan, you've chosen a goal, identified the target institutions and decisions makers, and have thought about the key motivators for each decision maker. Now it's time to put all the pieces together and summarize your campaign strategy. **Work with your group to answer these questions:**

**1. Will you target the Board of Trustees or the Student Government Association?**

**2. Which two decision makers will you influence to pass your legislation?**

**3. What message will you use to influence each of them based on their motivations?**

*NOTE: Your message is the way of aligning your goal with a decision maker's motivations. It is your persuasive statement that seeks to convince the decision maker that by supporting your goal, they are also acting in their self-interest.*

**Target 1 Name:**

**Messaging:**

**Target 2 Name:**

**Messaging:**

**Does this messaging appeal to the target's motivations?**

**Could this messaging alienate the target in any way?**

**Does this messaging appeal to the target's motivations?**

**Could this messaging alienate the target in any way?**

**Now put all these pieces together. Summarize your overall campaign strategy in a short paragraph:**



# Issue Campaigns 103: Planning Tactics

## Effective Tactics

Tactics are strategic actions you can organize to broadcast your message to targeted decision makers.

Your tactics are determined by the strategy you choose. Particular tactics you execute must always support the overall strategy and your roadmap to success.

For example: if your strategy is to target a decision maker's motivation to be reelected, your tactics should show the decision maker that there is broad public support for your goal, so that she believes her reelection could hinge on her stance on this issues.

### Below are examples of some effective tactics:

- Signature drives
- Press Conferences & Rallies
- Letters to the Editor
- Digital Organizing
- Office Visits and Phone calls
- Speaker Series & Film Screenings

All of these tactics should get your message to a decision maker, either through news media, the internet, or direct interaction.



# Experiential Activity 4A

Your student group has now agreed upon a goal and defined a strategy for success. It's time to start planning your tactics. You know that you'll be targeting two decision makers to help make sure your legislation is adopted by the college.

**For each decision maker, write down three tactics that you can use to influence their issue ecosystem based on their motivations.**

## Decision Maker 1

**NAME:**

**ROLE:**

Tactic	What message does this tactic convey?	How will you use this tactic to communicate the message to your target ...		
		... using news media?	... using the internet?	... using direct interaction?



# Experiential Activity 4A

Your student group has now agreed upon a goal and defined a strategy for success. It's time to start planning your tactics. You know that you'll be targeting two decision makers to help make sure your legislation is adopted by the college.

**For each decision maker, write down three tactics that you can use to influence their issue ecosystem based on their motivations.**

## Decision Maker 2

**NAME:**

**ROLE:**

Tactic	What message does this tactic convey?	How will you use this tactic to communicate the message to your target ...		
		... using news media?	... using the internet?	... using direct interaction?



# Experiential Activity 4B

Now that you've got some tactics on paper, your next step is to think about how to sequence these tactics over time in order to maximize their impact. Remember, one tactic alone does not persuade a decision maker—it takes a combination of strategically planned tactics to ensure your message is heard. A strong issue campaign creates an ecosystem surrounding decision makers.

*Note: You can sequence tactics for the two decision makers together in order to maximize the effectiveness of each. For example, you might host a public rally to influence Decision Maker 1, but sign-up supporters who attend a letter-writing campaign for Decision Maker 2 the following week.*

**In the space below, describe how you'll sequence your tactics to surround the decision makers with your message:**

TACTIC	TARGET	DATE	DESCRIPTION

