

TIPS FOR SCHEDULING A MEETING WITH A LEGISLATOR

Key Notes

- Your first step in reaching out to schedule a meeting? Call the Congress Member's DC office!
- BE BOLD! Elected officials and their staffs want to meet with and hear from you.
- Pull from your notes and mention specifically why you would like to meet with each individual congress member. Are you a constituent? Does that person serve on a relevant committee or has co-sponsored similar legislation in the past?
- Please copy or forward your follow-up email to the course team. Whenever possible/appropriate we will help with follow-up efforts!

Scheduling Meetings with Members of Congress

Each office has a different system for scheduling meetings. No matter what, your first step should be making contact via phone. Some offices will schedule over the phone while others require meeting requests to be submitted in writing via email or an online submission form. Some offices will confirm meetings weeks out from a requested meeting date, while others don't formally set their schedules until the week before.

What's the best way to navigate this? Check the member's website and see if scheduler's information is available. If so, call him/her directly and if not, call and ask for the scheduler.

Guide for calling main congressional office number:

- First, request to speak to the scheduler
- Next, identify yourself: My name is _____. I'm a constituent of Representative/Senator _____ and I will be coming to DC in March as part of a Washington University graduate school advanced policy class. A group of us are especially passionate about (ISSUE) and we were hoping to schedule a meeting with _____ or a member of his/her staff to discuss this issue. Could you let me know the best way to set something up?
- Finally, appreciation! Thank the person for taking call and determine follow-up. Be sure to get a name/number/email of someone you can follow-up with. "I know how busy your office must be so if there is a person I can follow-up with I'd be happy to."

Important: Meetings should be scheduled for the morning or afternoon of Thursday, March 16th between 9-11 and 1 -4 pm. If a time outside this block works best for their office your group is welcome and encouraged to accept.

Follow-up

After calling, you will usually follow-up with an email and/or submission of an online request form. **The key to successful meeting scheduling is follow-up.** Be persistent. Ask the scheduler or staffer when/how you can follow up.

One last thing, did we mention that the key to successful meeting scheduling is follow-up?

Template guide email for following-up (don't forget, call first!)

Dear (Staff person/scheduler name)

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me earlier today in regards to scheduling a meeting with (Representative/Senator Name).

To follow-up, I am a graduate student from Washington University's Brown School (and a constituent from the Congress member/senator's district). A group of my classmates and I will be in Washington DC as part of an advanced policy class and would so appreciate the opportunity to discuss ISSUE.

We are scheduling visits with key offices we've identified on DATE/TIME and would be thrilled to have the opportunity to meet and have a few minutes of Congress member/Senator _____ or a member of his/her staff's time.

Thank you and we look forward to speaking with you. Please feel free to contact me via email or phone at _____ if there's any additional information I can provide.

Sincerely,