During NEW Leadership™ Idaho, you will be divided into four groups to work on the political action project. This is a role playing exercise that will require you to research a current public policy issue and work with your group to prepare a presentation. Each person in the group must participate in the presentation on Friday.

The topic for this year is the Tuition Lock proposal. During his State of the State Address in January, 2016, Governor Otter proposed a guaranteed lock on tuition for college freshmen. Senate Bill 1292 was introduced to the Sixty-third Legislature and debated by the Education Committee.

The purpose of the Tuition Lock plan is "to provide stable and predictable tuition to undergraduate resident students at Idaho's four-year postsecondary education institutions." Proponents of the bill say it would allow for better financial planning and an incentive to finish college in four years. Opponents of the bill argue that a lock could result in higher costs down the line and an increase in state funds provided to Universities to cover the loss in tuition.

The Action Project will involve several skill-building aspects:

- Working in a group across differences
- Researching an issue
- Identifying constituencies, coalition partners, opponents and allies
- Crafting a message to articulate your group’s position
- Preparing an issue brief news story

The Action Project is a role-playing exercise. Each of you will portray an individual who has a stake in this issue. Think about the following questions: Who are you? Who do you represent? Why do you care about this issue? Why should decision makers care about your opinion?

This is a learning experience. You may find that you are assigned to a group that takes a position or approach that you would not take in “real life.” It is important, especially in politics, to understand the perspectives and strategies of your opposition.

Treat one another with respect. People are likely to articulate arguments and use research that they don’t necessarily support. Although you may disagree with the opinion expressed, please show respect for the individual.

Use the skills and contributions of each group member. As you conduct research, hone your message and organize your presentation, remember to use the skills of all group members. Everyone has something to contribute. Often we want to play to people’s strengths, but it is also important to encourage people to try something new and take risks.
Action Project Groups

Pro

You are representing organizations that are in favor of the Tuition Lock. For the Press Conference, you are a coalition of citizens and organizations who are in support of the Tuition Lock. You will present a 10-minute press conference to encourage public support for this bill. You will then testify at a public committee hearing in support of the bill. In this session your goal is to convince legislators to support your bill. Your group will have no more than 45 minutes to present your case and you must include time for Legislators to ask questions.

Con

You are representing organizations that are against the Tuition Lock. For the Press Conference, you are a coalition of citizens and organizations against the Tuition Lock. You will present a 10-minute press conference to discourage public support for this bill. You will then testify at a public committee hearing against the bill. In this session your goal is to convince legislators to vote against the bill. Your group will have no more than 45 minutes to present your case and you must include time for Legislators to ask questions.

Legislature

You will serve as members of the Senate Education Committee. The committee will be presiding over hearings on the Tuition Lock proposal. Your responsibility as a committee member is to arrive prepared with thoughtful questions for each group. The committee chair will open and preside over the hearing. The committee will also have time to ask prepared questions of each group testifying. At the end of the hearing, you will cast a vote that you believe best serves the public interest. You will be asked to articulate the reasons for your vote.

Media

You are representing members of the Press. Your role is to remain unbiased on the issue; therefore you need to be well versed in both Pro and Con positions. You will have the opportunity to ask questions at the Press Conference. You will also write a News Story covering the hearing.

Final Presentations on Friday are open to the public. These include:

Press Conference on the Capitol Steps
Pro and Con groups will participate in a press conference expressing their stance on the bill. Each group will have 10 minutes to present their statement at the press conference and answer questions from the press. The Media group will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Committee Hearing:
The Legislative group will serve as members of the State Senate Education Committee. The Committee will hold a hearing on the proposed bill. The committee chair will open the hearing and take testimony from the Pro and Con groups. At the end of the hearing the committee will vote on whether to send the bill to the Senate floor.

Pro and Con groups will have no more than 45 minutes to present testimony at the hearing. This includes time for the Legislative group to ask questions of each person testifying.
Action Project schedule:

**Tuesday, May 24**  
*Lookout Room of Boise State Student Union*

8:00 – 8:30  
The Action Project will be introduced to students over breakfast.

8:30 – 9:30  
Introduction of the Action Project Advisers. Students will meet the Action Project Advisers and have an opportunity to learn about each group’s role.

9:30 – 10:00  
Group assignments

**Thursday, May 26**  
*Lookout Room of Boise State Student Union*

8:30 – 9:45  
Action Project Group work

9:45 – 10:45  
*Consulting the Policy Experts* panel. This panel is comprised of people that are currently working with the issue or have a vested interest in the success or failure of the bill being debated. Students will be given time to question the panel.

10:45 – 11:00  
Break

11:00 – Noon  
*Managing Your Message.* Hilltop Public Solutions will talk about how to develop a message, how to understand your audience and the importance of anticipating the arguments of your opponents.

Noon – 2:00  
Working Lunch and Group Work. By the end of this session students should have a very good understanding of their strategy. Any request for supplies must be made to Staff at this time.

**Friday, May 27**  
*State Capitol*

1:00 – 1:30  
Press Conference, Capitol Steps

1:30 – 4:00  
Hearing, Revenue and Tax Room, House E:42