SEMINAR OVERVIEW

This is a particularly challenging time for government officials, more commonly known as bureaucrats or, more respectfully, as public administrators. We, as Americans, are demanding more from government. We want governments to be more efficient and at the same time fair. We want government leaders to alter their way of conducting business. All this while external pressures arise stemming from limited revenues, more services to serve changing populations and new technologies. Yet fundamental questions remain – how to balance public and private needs and how do we hold public leaders and officials accountable?

This seminar is designed to complement and enhance your placement experience. While your practical experience as bureaucrats in various executive agencies will be wide ranging and at times perplexing, this seminar is designed to aid your observations by placing them in alternative intellectual constructs. Hopefully, the understanding and insight you acquire will provide you more robust tools in your future endeavors.

Primarily using California’s state government institutions, we will examine how bureaucracies are structured and operate; both formally and informally. We will ask how do leaders decide and how do they manage? Although policy making in executive or administrative agencies is distinctly different than how it is done via the legislative process, it is done, and we will analyze how administrators make policy via the implementation process. Finally, and perhaps most critically, we are hopeful that your experience in both the seminar and mentorships will lead you to become advocates for more effective governance and management.

The seminar’s Objective:

As we’ve gained experience, my predecessors have articulated a set of objectives and course requirements that provide an excellent template for this seminar and your mentorship.

1. **Public service and the public interest**: We discuss how government leaders identify and pursue the public interest and what makes government effective and responsive in the minds of citizens.

2. **The political environment of policymaking**: We consider the political landscape that must be confronted in shaping and managing the policy agenda, and key features of the policy process in California that explain why and how policy change does (or doesn’t) occur.

3. **Policy design and analysis**: We explore how policy problems are defined and solutions analyzed within the complex political environment in which policy is shaped and implemented, and we learn practical approaches to researching and analyzing policy issues.
4. **Leadership and organizational effectiveness**: We discuss what makes leaders more or less effective and consider the role of leadership and leadership strategies in promoting organizational effectiveness.

**SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS**

Our reading and writing expectations are quite straightforward. This seminar is designed to meet the goals, objectives, and experience of traditional graduate school education. This means presenting materials analyzing critical issues facing public agencies in general and providing instruction in methodology.

You are expected to do the reading and think about the key concepts before class. We will use seminar time largely to move beyond the readings – applying and critiquing them. A significant part of your grade is based on class participation – reflecting your ability to draw out the key concepts from the readings, to relate readings to one another, and to your placement, and to be respectful of others’ ideas and contributions.

You are expected to attend every seminar session. Your mentors are aware of the seminar and its expectations; therefore, you should arrange your schedule to accommodate the meetings. While this seminar requires your active contribution, your mentorship may prompt an absence due to an unscheduled “crisis.” On those occasions when a conflict is unavoidable, please let us know with ample warning, i.e. not shorter than 24 hours.

On the other hand, it is likely that you will encounter unforeseen issues and interests that may be appropriate for a general discussion. When appropriate, we can explore these issues during each seminar session. **Any and all conversations about your mentorship experience(s) are treated as confidential.** Do not discuss the content of our mentorship material with others, even your colleagues, outside the seminar. **We pledge to you that what you say remains in the seminar.**

Accordingly, we expect you to:

- Do the reading each week in time to think about it and with time to write a thoughtful memo, on the weeks that you choose to write one.
- Come to seminar on time, prepared to critique and apply the readings and participate constructively in class discussion and group activities.
- Open your mind to big-picture thinking and to contrary points of view and be respectful of others’ views.
- Think about how the issues from seminar relate to your organization, to your chosen group project topics, and to California state government generally.
- Work hard on your writing and pay attention to the comments I give you on written assignments.
Class participation
Effective participation in class discussions is an important component of performance. The seminar participation grade will reflect the quality of your participation and your contributions to your in-class group activities. While I understand that different people have different comfort levels with talking in a group setting, I don’t believe that one can be an effective public servant, and certainly not an effective public leader, without the capacity to participate in group discussions. Verbal contributions can be learned. Thus, you should respect colleagues who are acquiring participation skills. My job is to make the seminar environment as welcoming of everyone’s contributions as possible. Your responsibility is to contribute constructively and appropriately.

FORUM:
Occasionally, either during or following the seminar we will incorporate a separate “Forum” platform that has three purposes:

1) Fellows Forum:
Throughout the fellowship, fellows are embedded in an environment of coaching and mentorship. Some of the best mentoring can happen in informal group settings, where the fellows have the opportunity to share with one another in a confidential and open setting. Periodically, we'll have specific topics to discuss.

2) Leaders In Action:
A “brown bag” conversational series where management or political leaders will talk with us about what they do. We want to talk with leaders on how they “lead” as a supplement to what is in the literature.

3) Building Your Professional Tool Kit
Combining knowledge and practice – This section is designed as a fun problem solving or issues discussion session. (e.g. hot topics of the day, useful things to learn professionally)

We expect your attendance at these Forum sessions unless there is a placement obligation.

Seminar participation will account for 15% of the seminar’s final grade. This includes participation in the above referenced Forum meetings. My standards are quite simple: useful rather than voluminous contributions are desirable.

Writing Assignments:

Your writing assignments will consist of three items:

1. A series of nine weekly memos responding to questions or prompts posted in the syllabus or on line. Most of these questions deal with the selected readings. Each memo should not be longer than 600 words. (Accounting for 25% of the course grade.)

2. An organizational design analysis. This assignment asks you to solve a generic organizational issue or problem. (20% of the course grade.)

3. A group project involving both a written and oral presentation on an issue of your collective choice. (40% of the course grade.)
A. Weekly memos in response to readings
Through Week 19 you will submit a total of nine (9), 600 WORD, memos, in response to the prompts on the syllabus. You may choose which weeks to write a memo – keeping in mind that there are 16 weeks from which to choose. Again, don’t exceed 600 words.

They are to be written and submitted electronically no later than midnight before the seminar meeting (to my semler@csus.edu account) in a standard format (addressed to me, a subject line, and using headings and bullets) and should be concise and easy to read. The subject line of the memo heading must include the week and which number memo of yours it is (e.g., Week 5, Memo#3). Don’t be fooled that writing “just” a one-page memo is easy. It’s harder than writing a longer one because you have to be very careful, clear, and concise. I am looking for evidence that you have read, absorbed, thought about, and applied the readings to the question at hand. You will be graded on content and writing. Writing should be logical, clear, concise, and have no grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors. Memos must address the current weekly topic. Only one memo each week is permitted. No make-up memos will be allowed in weeks when there is no class. That means you need to plan accordingly – you have 16 possible weeks to write 8 memos.

B. Organizational Design Analysis
By March 10 each person will analyze his/her organization from both an external and internal perspective. Externally, you will examine the pressures and contexts that make the organization and its leaders behave as they do. Similarly, you will examine the internal dynamics or informal rules that permit managers to operate or inhibit/misdirect the organization. The basis of your responses should come from seminar readings and discussion. Examples of key questions: how well does the organization accomplish its stated mission, how have external pressures modified the organization’s strategies and mission, how well have the leaders or managers directed the staff, and how do field staff operate in line with what management expects?

C. Group Project
You will be placed into six groups of three to analyze a policy issue for your final project. I will provide a list of possible topics – specific enough to get you moving but broad enough to give you the flexibility to focus it to best match your interests. The objective is to prepare an analysis of the particular issue – using either Stone’s Policy Paradox in Action (pp.384-414) or Bardach’s Eight-Step model as a guide.

Your group will (1) produce a written policy brief (not written as an academic paper but as a readable policy brief of perhaps 10-15 pages with visuals and graphics, (2) deliver a 20-30 minute oral presentation (weeks 21/22), and (3) prepare a handout (no more than two pages, front/back allowed) to accompany the presentation. Use of Power Points are strongly discouraged in order to have more time to work on the policy brief and handouts as visual aids. (There is a piece from the NY Times on the web site describing problems using Power Point.)

You will use (1) the tools of Stone’s Policy Paradox to understand and make sense of the political and policy dimensions of the various sides of the issue, (2) the concepts from Moore, Wilson and Kettl about political management and the need to align mission, political support, and organizational capacity around a policy objective, (3) the research strategies of Bardach to help you
define the issue and identify the appropriate sources of information, and (4) any other concepts from seminar that are relevant to use, particularly leadership issues as they relate to key players in the issue area. Your instructor, Forum guests, and materials placed in the class website also are available for assistance. Other concepts likely to be useful include key features of California’s political and governance contexts, the role of the media, framing as a strategic tool, public accountability for results v inputs (i.e., how discussions about program effectiveness are carried out), and public mood and perceptions of government.

**Writing standards**

Working in the public sector requires development of communication skills. I believe that among the best ways to acquire and improve writing skills is to write a great deal. We are, therefore, planning to give you feedback on your writing and give you an opportunity to re-write all of your submittals. I provide this opportunity in all my classes because feedback and corrective action provides you a safe way to learn.

It should be obvious; however, I wish to make clear that you should be wary of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic standards and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or course. I urge every student to review the University’s Honesty Policy concerning these standards: [http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/UMA00150.htm](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/UMA00150.htm)

**Plagiarism is, however, not uncommon** in the public sector – people copy from existing publications, lawyers and others demand precise language but management apprehension also contributes to its proliferation. In an academic setting it is totally unacceptable.

**READINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kettl, Donald</td>
<td>The Next Government of the United States, Why Our Institutions Fail us and How to Fix Them, Norton, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, Mark</td>
<td>Creating Public Value, Strategic Management in Government, Harvard University Press, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone, Deborah</td>
<td>Policy Paradox, The Art of Political Decision Making, Revised Edition, Norton, 2002 (Note the Revised or 2nd edition is substantially different from the first edition.)</td>
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</tbody>
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SEMINAR SESSIONS
(the referenced articles are found in SacCt class website)

**Orientation Session (Nov. 19) Is California Governable?**
Read: “An End to California?” George Will
“California is Governable” Time magazine cover story
“California 2025, Planning for a Better Future” PPIC 2010 update

**Week 1 (Dec. 3) Where do public and private organizations differ?**
Read: Case study
“Creation of the EPA”
“California Adoption Care Agency”
Laurence Lynn, “Public Management,” December 2001

**Week 2 (Dec. 10) Ethics in the Public Sector**
Applying ethical criteria by administrators in the operations of public agencies
Read: Case study -- “Granite City”
“Pat Brown and Caryl Chessman”
“Integrating Ethics into the Public Administration Curriculum: A Three-Step Process” by John Walton, James Stearns, and Charles Crespy
“American Values” background on ethics in American political debate
“Ethics Frameworks for Analysis”
“Arizona Transplant debate materials”

**Week 3 (Dec. 17) Welcoming new governors---congratulations, now the problems begin**
Read
“New Governors” A series of new governors’ interviews conducted by the National Governors Association following the 1990 election

**Week 4 (January 7) Inaugurating a “new” governor -- the historical setting and issues facing the new governor**
Read
“The Pacific Republic”
“Hell in the City of Angels”
“Jerry Brown, background”
“LAO – Cal Facts, 2011”

**Week 5(January 14) Organizational Issues --- An overview using Governor Reagan and Governor Brown’s experiences**
Read
“Governor Reagan, Governor Brown”
Memo Topic
Governors, like other executives, operate as a function of personalities, policy goals, their ability to hire qualified or capable staff, and the organization they create or inherit.
Compare the two governors on a set of criteria (your choices). A chart might help. Specify where were they similar and dissimilar?
Week 6 (January 21)  Organizational Structure and Decision Making
Read
   Wilson, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2
   Kettl, Chapters 1 and 2
Memo Topic
   How can a public, accountable organization deal with “Mildred’s Paradox” at the same time resolve the issues arising from “Mildred’s corollary?”

Week 7 (January 28)  Organizational pressures from external sources (A)
Read
   Wilson, Chapters 3 and 4
   Kettl, Chapter 3 and 4
Memo Topic
   What were FEMA’s main tasks? How did they arise and change over time?

Week 8 (February 4)  Organizational pressures from external sources (B)
Read
   Wilson, Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16
Memo Topic
   One way of describing the relationship between interest groups, legislators, and public agencies is to consider it mutual beneficial triangle; previously it was referenced as an “iron triangle.” Wilson describes the interplay of forces as “the context” in which bureaucracies operate. Who are the players in your organization’s iron triangle? Where does the influence arise and become evident?

Week 9 (February 11)  Internal Organizational Dynamics (A)
Read
   Wilson, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 18
Memo Topic
   The idea of culture in organizations has been used almost everyone to explain, describe and reflect about organizations and their success and failures. The overuse of the concept might be its undoing. Nevertheless, try using the idea of culture to describe how your organization performs. This involves looking at the informal operations and interactions.
Week 10 (February 18)  Internal Organizational Dynamics (B)
Read
Wilson, Chapters 9, 10, and 11
Memo Topic
Wilson develops a four-fold typology of organizations based on two criteria and these are associated (causal relationships are not established) with unique “leadership types or behavior.” Apply this typology and leadership types to your organizations. Does the model help to explain how your organization’s procedures or outputs operate? Can you find steps to make your organization “better?”

Week 11 (February 25)  The public policy analysis process -- rationale and pitfalls
Read
Bardach – Entire book
Stone – Policy Paradox in Action (pp.384-414)
Memo Topic
Stone provides the example of the affirmative action policy controversy to show how to use the tools of her book to think about an issue, analyze and critique arguments for and against, and argue persuasively for a policy position. Bardach presents an eight-fold path that is primarily aimed at helping policy analysts develop recommendations for solving policy problems. Both are aimed at analysts, each presents a view of policy analysis, and both discuss the importance of defining problems and evaluating options in terms of criteria such as efficiency and equity. Do you find one approach more compelling, or potentially more useful, than the other?

Week 12 (March 4)  The public policy analysis process – how problems arise
Read
Stone, Chapter 1, Part III: Problems
Wilson, Chapter 17
Memo Topic
Stone tells us that problem definition is strategic because every description of a problematic situation is a portrayal from only one of many possible points of view. With reference to a policy issue with which you are familiar describe at least two different portrayals of what the problem is and note what tools and approaches are used by those who put forth that definition (e.g., symbols/frames; numbers/data; heroes/villains; cause-effect story).

Week 13 (March 11)  Making Choices – what standards and who decides
Read
Stone, Part II: Goals
Memo Topic
Drawing from Stone’s premise that there are usually competing claims as to what specific policy satisfies various goals, in this case the goal of equity: describe some public service that is provided through a public program with which you are familiar and discuss at least two competing views about what is the fairest way to distribute the service or the resources that fund the service. Two examples: is it most fair to distribute school funding so that each district gets the same amount per student, or is some other distribution more equitable? Is it most equitable to distribute First 5 grant funds to counties on the basis of which counties
serve the neediest pre-school age children? In the example you pick, describe the arguments for different definitions of what is a fair distributions and take a position as to which is most fair.

**Week 14 (March 18) Implementation – what strategies are available; what should be used**

*Read*

Stone, Part IV: Solutions  
Stone, Conclusion and re-read Policy Paradox in Action  
Moore, Chapter 1 and Conclusion  

**Memo Topic**

Stone tells us that policy responses to problems are not typically *solutions* or permanent fixes but are *ongoing strategies* or next moves: “Policy is more like an endless game of Monopoly than a bicycle repair,” she writes. Using the topic of your final group project (if you can), describe a bit of the progress of the monopoly game. That is, describe some of the policies that have been adopted in recent years – or at least proposed – to try to move the pieces around the board (hopefully not to land in jail!). And describe how those policies have moved the issue along, e.g., have they improved things, changed the nature of understanding the problem, etc. In other words, don’t just list bills or new policies but say something about them.

**March 25 --- No seminar: University’s Spring Break**

**Week 15 (April 1) The Budget making process amid California’s continuing fiscal crisis**

*Read*

Legislative Analyst’s Tax Primer  
Budget Act time line  
Are California’s Fiscal Constraints Institutional or Political?  
Schiffren: California’s Budget  
Almost Never on Time  
Handicapped Budget process  
Dan Walter’s commentary

**Memo Topic**

Unlike in the private sector, a government budget reflects societal values. Thus, public budgets are political and adopted through a political process. But like the private sector, budgets are a method of management control. Generally, there are two budget making techniques: a line item or incremental budget making process or a program planning or rational-comprehensive process. California departments and leaders publically treat the budget as policy oriented document even though managers often operate in the context of “lines.” How do these two approaches work in the context of your department? Follow the budget process of a specific program or describe how your manager treats the budget both formally and informally.
Week 16 (April 8)  Creating Public Value
Read
Moore, Parts I and II
Memo Topic (choose one)
You’ve been asked to review your organization’s mission. Are the operations meeting the department’s legally mandated mission? Are your “customers” satisfied?

What is your reaction to Moore’s views about the role of politics in management and to the three dimensions of management (up, out, down)?

Describe your mentor’s or someone else use of “political management” skills to accomplish a specific goal. Who are the important players in the political environment that must be managed?

Week 17 (April 15)  Leading Organizational Change
Read
Moore, Part III
Robert Behn, “What right do public managers have to lead?”  (Symposium: Leadership, Democracy, and the New Public Management)
Memo Topic (choose one)
Moore stresses the need for an organization’s core internal processes and culture to be aligned with the organization’s mission. This view is common place in the organizational literature. But how do we know they are aligned? Comment on the core process (i.e., the means by which your organization uses its resources to produce goods and services for the public) of your (or some) organization and its organizational culture and whether they appear to be well aligned with what the organization is expected to accomplish?

Moore says that change in organizational culture can be powerful, yet it is hard to accomplish. What strategies does he suggest that could be applied to your organization or one with which you are familiar?

Week 18 (April 22)  Perspectives on Leadership
Read
Morrell and Capparell’s book on Shackelton’s leadership process
Memo Topic
What lessons do you draw from the Morrell and Capparell book that you would want to apply if and when you had an opportunity to lead a public organization?

Because we will be interviewing prospective 2011-12 fellows, one or two seminar meetings will be rescheduled.
Week 19 (April 29)  **Leadership Strategies**

Read
Robert Behn, “Performance Leadership: 11 Practices that can ratchet up performance”
“America’s Best Run City?”
Kettl, Chapters 6 and 7

Memo Topic
Even though public expectations are continuously changing, government leaders have to provide services efficiently. What do you propose to do to make your organization accountable AND efficient?

Week 20 (May 6)  **How can we make California’s governments operate more effectively?**

Read
Little Hoover Commission “Too Many Agencies, Too Many Rules” review
“California’s Legislators Rarely Cross Party Lines”
Rob Wassmer’s proposals
“Efforts to Overhaul California’s Governance at a Crossroads”

Memo Topic:
There are many proposals to reinvent or reformulate or realign California’s governmental institutions. Make a proposal and provide a justification --- change the Constitution, change the funding and responsibility relationship, or simply get better “bureaucrats?”

Week 21 (May 13)  **Policy Analysis – Group presentations**

Policy project presentations
- Summary of the policy problem or question
- Principal actors and political players who have influence on the decision
- What were the proposed actions/solutions/alternatives that were analyzed
- What goals/criteria are being used to analyze the actions/solutions/alternatives. E.g., equity (in all its complicated facets), effectiveness in addressing the problem, cost, cost-effectiveness, and political feasibility.
- Your assessment of your own recommendations success.

Week 22 (May 20)  **Policy Analysis – Group presentations**

Policy project presentations
- Summary of the policy problem or question
- Principal actors and political players who have influence on the decision
- What were the proposed actions/solutions/alternatives that were analyzed
- What goals/criteria are being used to analyze the actions/solutions/alternatives. E.g., equity (in all its complicated facets), effectiveness in addressing the problem, cost, cost-effectiveness, and political feasibility.
- Your assessment of your own recommendations success.
CALIFORNIA READINGS (use as background material)

A. Biographies

Arax, Mark & Rick Wartzman
The King of California: J.G. Boswell & the Making of a Secret American Empire

Blitz, Michael & Louise Krasmiewicz
Why Arnold Matters: Anatomy of a Cultural Icon

Cannon, Lou
Governor Reagan: His Rise to Power

Cannon, Lou
Ronnie and Jessie: A Political Odyssey

Cray, Ed
Chief Justice, A Biography of Earl Warren

Griswold del Castillo, Richard & Richard A. Garcia
Cesar Chavez: A Triumph of Spirit

Jacobs, John
A Rage for Justice: The passion and politics of Phil Burton

Lower, Richard
A Bloc of One: The Political Career of Hiram W. Johnson

Mills, James
A Disorderly House: The Brown-Unruh Years in Sacramento

Mitchell, Greg
The Campaign of the Century; Upton Sinclair’s Race for Governor and the Birth of New Media Politics

Rarick, Ethan
California Rising, The Life and Times of Pat Brown

Rapoport, Roger
California Dreaming: The Political Odyssey of Pat & Jerry Brown

Richardson, James
Willie Brown: A Biography

Shilts, Randy
The Mayor Castro Street; The Times and Life of Harvey Milk

B. California’s current or recent political landscape

Mark Baldassare
California in the New Millennium, The Changing Social and Political Landscape

Baldassare, Mark

Bowler, Shaun
Citizens as Legislators

Cain, Bruce
The Reapportionment Puzzle

Kahrl, William
Water and Power

Krolak, Richard
California’s Budget Dance
Mathews, Joe and Mark Paul  
California Crack Up, How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It

Pincetl, Stephanie  Transforming California: A Political History of Land Use and Development

Ramakrishnan, S. Karthick and Mark Baldassare  
The Ties That Bind: Changing Demographics and Civic Engagement in California, ” PPIC, 2005

Reisner, Marc  Cadillac Desert

Peter Schrag  Paradise Lost, California’s Experience, America’s Future, updated in 2004  
California: American’s High Stakes Experiment, 2006

C. California Textbooks

Field, Monica and Brian Kennedy, The People and Promise of California, Pearson, Longman
Lawrence, David   California, the Politics of Diversity, Prentice Hall
DeBow, Ken and John Syer,   Power and Politics in California
 Gerston, Larry and Terry Christensen   California Politics and Government
Korey, John   California Government
Hyink, Bernard and David Provost Politics and Government in California

D. California History materials

Brechin, Gary Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruins 1999
Rawls, James and Walton Bean California, An Interpretive History (now in 9th edition)

The following material is on the class web site in SacCt:
Angel Island – history of Asian immigration
Unrest in California, Kearney and the Workingman’s Party
Odom, Mary “City Mothers and Delinquent Daughters”
Sides, Josh “L.A. City Limits, African-American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the present”
Hansen, Gladys “Relocation of Chinatown”
Freeman, John “(SF) Street Renaming” an interesting picture of SF post the 1906 Earthquake
Nolte, Carl “Pearl Harbor was a close thing for the city in 1941”