

2007-08 Assessment Report

Department of Public Policy and Administration

California State University, Sacramento

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Approved by: All Full-Time PPA Faculty

As requested annually by Academic Affairs at California State University, Sacramento (Sacramento State), this report offers a description of the Public Policy and Administration (PPA) Department's assessment activities during 2007-08. It builds upon a similar report dated November 5, 2007 that discussed PPA assessment activities during 2006-07. Our annual assessments since 2006-07 have developed a cycle that facilitates continuous review of the PPA Program and our steady progress toward achieving our identified learning outcomes. In this report we offer a brief background on the PPA learning outcomes targeted for assessment, measures used to evaluate progress toward these goals, what the results of these measures tell us about our program, and changes made or planned in response to the assessments.

In 2005, the Department's program review made the following recommendation:

"The review team encourages PPA faculty members to continue efforts both in development of assessment measures and in utilizing results of student learning outcomes for program improvement."

Since then, the chair and faculty of the Department of Public Policy and Administration have made a concerted effort to make assessment data, curriculum concerns, ideas for new initiatives, and other related topics a primary point of discussion at our annual retreat and at least one of the

monthly department meetings that we have during each semester of the academic year. This was again the case again for 2007-08.

Background

The PPA Department' assessment strategy is built around a set of student learning outcomes organized into five major objectives: (1) Critical Thinking, (2) Integrative Thinking, (3) Effective Communication, (4) Professional Role, and (5) Practical Applications. Within each of these five PPA macro-level learning objectives, faculty identified micro-level learning outcomes (see Table 1 in appendix). A first step in assessing whether students attain these learning outcomes is to examine the degree to which students are exposed to these knowledge sets and skills throughout the core curriculum. The matrix in Table 1 displays which courses cover which learning outcomes. An indicator of "P" (primary coverage) or "S" (secondary coverage) indicates how faculty assess how each core course addresses each learning outcome.

In addition, individual faculty who teach our nine core courses have developed specific learning outcomes for each of these courses that fall under the five major student learning outcomes listed above. As an example, for PPA 220A (Applied Economic Analysis I) there are two student macro learning outcomes that are each designed to be met in two micro-specific ways:

- Critical Thinking

(1) Be able to explain and offer examples of the five reasons that policy analysts offer for government intervention in a market economy (lack of information, firms acting as price setters, externalities, public goods, and an inequitable distribution of income/wealth).

(2) Develop the knowledge to understand the "Kaldor/Hicks" approach to justifying the efficiency of government intervention and the interaction of the three sources of wisdom illustrated in "Munger's Triangle."

- Practical Applications

(3) Have a basic understanding of some of the technical tools used in policy analysis and their application in actual policy concerns (CAM analysis, probability, time value of money, benefit/cost assessment, etc.)

(4) Understand basic microeconomic concepts such as opportunity cost, marginal decision making, supply and demand, elasticity, market equilibrium, industrial structure, etc. and their application to policy analysis using real world examples.

Our department's assessment instruments prior to 2006-07 focused on two tools: student surveys and a review of sample theses. Every semester for the last six academic years, the PPA Department has conducted end-of-semester surveys of students in each of the nine graduate core courses (excluding the thesis seminar, PPA 500, which is tailored toward meeting the particular, individual needs of students writing theses) regarding opinion on the attainment of specific course learning goals that are laid out in the syllabus. In some past years the department also conducted a review of a sample of theses completed during the previous academic year to determine how well these culminating projects reflected the skills we wanted students to have obtained by the end of their graduate studies.

For 2007-08 and beyond, the PPA Department decided to retain the student survey of core course learning objectives, and eliminate the periodic review of student theses. In place of the thesis review, we substituted the required writing by students, in both our gateway course (PPA 200) and capstone course (PPA 500), of a briefing memo of a policy topic of their choice. The thought behind doing so was that the briefing memo would give a cleaner and hence better measure of the value added, in terms of specified learning objectives, to a student completing our PPA Master's Program. It is much harder to do so with review of theses given the idiosyncratic nature of topics students choose to address. Details on the results of these two assessment instruments are offered next.

Assessment Actions Completed During the 2007-08 Academic Year

During 2007-08, PPA instructors of the nine core courses listed in Table 1 gave an end of the semester survey to students asking their opinions on the degree that the specific learning goals for a course had been achieved. The results of those surveys for fall 2007 are included in Table 3 (in the appendix of this report). For all micro learning objectives carried over from the previous year, the average score from last year is given in red and parenthesis after the average score for this year. If the score is higher this year than last, a “+” is also given; if lower, a “-.”

Some of the findings in Table 1 are worth noting. For example, in PPA 205, student assessment of learning objective achievement was lower in section 1 than in section 2. Additionally, in PPA 240A, scores went up in all the repeated categories in 2008 from 2007. I have asked the two instructors of PPA 205 to get together and talk about perhaps why the divergence in scores occurred. Is it due to real pedagogical differences, or could it be just due to a different sample of students? Such a discussion should serve to inform and improve the teaching of the course. I have asked the instructor of PPA 240A to offer a report to our annual retreat on why he thinks the scores rose. Such a report, and the discussion that follows, will get all faculty thinking about changes in pedagogy that could be used to improve the achievement of these core objective scores in the future.

Once the data comes available in mid June 2008, the information contained in Table 1 will also be created for the courses taught in spring 2008. The results in Table 1 will be presented to faculty during our June 2008 retreat and discussed among us all. The survey data will also serve as information for further department meeting discussions during the 2008-09 academic year. Faculty who received relatively low evaluations from students in regard to the achievement of specific course outcomes will be asked to consider how they can change the

pedagogy and/or content to raise these assessments in the future. If scores have dropped from the previous year, or are lower in one section than other, faculty are also asked to reflect upon possible reasons and make the appropriate changes. We thus have for both the fall 2006 and 2007 – and soon will have for spring 2007 and 2008 – student-survey assessment averages that act as a baseline of comparison for future years. These will be reported along with all future student survey assessments to see if improvement is occurring over time.

A major assessment change undertaken the last academic year was the abandonment of a randomly selected review of theses to see if they contained elements that matched our core learning objectives. Instead, as part of the reflection that occurred at our June 2007 retreat, we decided to begin the process of asking all incoming and outgoing students to craft a policy briefing memo on a topic of their choice. The incoming students are asked to do this once a year in the fall in PPA 200, while the outgoing students are asked to do it both in the fall and spring when PPA 500 is offered. The text of the specific assignment given in 2007-08 is at the top of Figure 1 in the appendix. No other instructions are given to students. The completed briefing memos are then given out to at least two PPA full-time faculty for evaluation based upon the rubric given in the lower portion of Figure 2. We have only gone through one cycle of the gateway student memo and the results are reported at the top of Table 2. Two sets of outgoing students have also written the memo and the faculty assessment results of these are at the bottom of Table 2. Also listed at the bottom of Table 2 are the averages in red for each of the 12 assessment criteria. A “+” is listed if the average for a specific assessment criterion for the outgoing group of students is greater than the incoming.

We are pleased to report that for all assessment criteria, the average for the outgoing students was higher than for the incoming. We take this as a positive indicator of value added by

taking the core courses in our PPA Master's Program. But as indicated by the last row in Table 2, the degree of improvement across the 12 criteria varies. Regarding criteria six (Overall structure) and 12 (Does it use data as appropriate?) the average improvement from incoming to outgoing students are respectively at 32% and 33%. Though this is not bad, it is still at the lower end of other improvements that are primarily above 100%. As discussed below, we believe that a reason for the lower performance in these areas may be due to us not better specifying what the memo should be about. We recognize this and plan on changing the question next year. Even so, a consideration of further possible reasons for these outcomes and pedagogical changes that could remedy them will be the subject of a discussion at our upcoming retreat.

Specific Assessment Actions to Be Completed During the 2008-09 Academic Year

As has been departmental practice for the last several years, we will hold our annual retreat in early June of 2008. A significant portion of this retreat will be used to analyze and discuss the assessment data gathered over the past academic year and summarized here in Tables 1 and 2 in the appendix. We expect that this will generate specific course and curricular changes whose efficacy in part can be tested by the same generation of data next year. This cycle of examining student surveys, and pre and post policy memos, will consistently be repeated every academic year and will be our method of generating a culture of continual improvement regarding using student assessment tools to improve student learning outcomes.

Beginning in fall 2008 we will revise the instructional language for the policy memo assignment given to both incoming and outgoing students. The new language is listed at the top of Figure 2 in the appendix and is the result of oversights we saw students make in their writing of these memos that may be the result of us not adequately laying out our expectations. In addition, Figure 2 also shows that we will go to a four point scale (zero to four) when evaluating

each of the 12 criteria that cover the achievement of our program's core objectives. Such a scale allows for the possibility of assigning a zero when a criterion is totally missed. Before, a total and partial miss was lumped together as a one. In addition, as shown in the cells that make up the rubric in Figure 2, we have specified expectations regarding the assignment of a one, two, or three in regard to each criterion. Before this was left to the individual faculty member and likely resulted in not as equal an assessment across faculty members as we hope this will.

Conclusion

This report has described the PPA Department's overall assessment strategy and methods, offered details on our response to assessment data received last academic year, provided this academic year's assessment data, and described our plans to think about and discuss this data in terms of improving the delivery of our curriculum to better achieve our core objectives. In conclusion, we wish to emphasize that it our hope that this document underscores our commitment to taking assessment seriously, our willingness to modify our assessment plan when we encounter information indicating we should do so, and our commitment to using the data to inform our teaching and curriculum design.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1: ASSESSMENT MATRIX FOR PPA CORE

| General | Specific | <u>200-</u> | <u>205-</u> | <u>207-</u> | <u>210-</u> | <u>220A-</u> | <u>220B-</u> | <u>230-</u> | <u>240A-</u> | <u>240B-</u> |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Critical thinking | | | | | | | | | | |
| | problem definition | P | S | P | P | P | | | S | S |
| | research design and causal inference | S | P | S | | | | | | |
| | delineation of options | S | | | S | P | | | S | S |
| | implementation considerations | S | | | | S | P | S | S | S |
| | ethical implications of choices | S | S | S | | S | S | S | S | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integrative thinking | | | | | | | | | | |
| (interdisciplinary skill sets | economic concepts and analysis | S | | | | P | P | | | |
| brought to bear on public | political environment and analysis | S | | | P | S | S | S | S | S |
| policy analysis) | techniques of policy analysis | S | | | | P | S | | | |
| | budgeting concepts and budget analysis | S | | | | S | S | P | | |
| | organizational analysis/change/development | S | | | | | | | P | P |
| | statistical analysis | | S | P | | | S | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Effective communication for policy audiences | | | | | | | | | | |
| | report writing | P | P | P | | S | S | | S | S |
| | memo writing | P | | | P | S | S | | S | S |
| | presentation of technical information | S | S | S | | S | S | S | | |
| | oral presentations | P | S | S | | | | | S | S |
| | effective use of presentation technology | P | | | | | | | | S |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

| Understanding professional role | | <u>200-</u> | <u>205-</u> | <u>207-</u> | <u>210-</u> | <u>220A-</u> | <u>220B-</u> | <u>230-</u> | <u>240A-</u> | <u>240B-</u> |
|--|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | role of public sector in democratic/market system | P | | | S | P | S | | | |
| | role of nonprofit sector | P | | | | | | | S | S |
| | California policy context | P | | | S | S | P | S | S | |
| | intergovernmental relations | S | | | S | | P | P | S | |
| | role of policy analyst | S | P | P | S | P | S | | | |
| | role of public manager | S | | | | | | S | P | P |
| | public sector workplace and role ethics | S | | | P | S | | | | S |
| Practical applications | | | | | | | | | | |
| | influencing the policy process | | | | P | S | S | | | S |
| | practical problem solving | | S | | | P | P | | P | |
| | data collection -- how and where to get data | | P | P | | S | S | | | S |
| | use of statistical and other data | | S | P | | | S | | | |
| | benefit/cost analysis | | | | | P | P | | | |
| | group collaboration skills | S | | | S | S | S | | | S |
| | understanding budgets | | | | | | | P | | |
| | performance measurement | | | | | | | P | S | S |
| | strategic planning | | | | | | | S | S | P |
| | conflict resolution | | | | P | | | | S | |
| Key: | | | | | | | | | | |
| | P = primary coverage | | | | | | | | | |
| | S = secondary coverage | | | | | | | | | |
| | Blank = not covered | | | | | | | | | |

FIGURE 1: 2007-08 ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION AND RUBRIC FOR EVALUATION

Assignment Description: Identify a current public (governmental) issue that you have some interest in and provide a decision maker with a briefing memo about the issue. As appropriate, consider the political, organizational and policy dimensions of the issue. Help the reader understand the complexities of the issue as well as how the issue may be understood differently by different groups of interested people. Be careful to distinguish between fact and opinion in your analysis.

Rubric for evaluating PPA briefing memos

Student's Name: _____

| | Missing/ unsatisfactory (Zero Points) | Satisfactory (One Points) | Very well done (Two Points) |
|---|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>Critical Thinking</u> (1) Is the problem/issue well defined? If research exists is it referenced? (2) Is the research design considered? Are possible options described? (3) Are implementation issues considered? Are ethical issues raised? | | | |
| <u>Integrative thinking</u> (4) Are political, economic and or administrative perspectives considered as appropriate? Are fiscal issues considered? | | | |
| <u>Effective communication</u> (5) Is the paper well written? (6) Overall structure (7) Basic grammar, appropriate citations | | | |
| <u>Professional role</u> (8) Is the memo analytical in nature? (9) Does it integrate the CA policy and political context? (10) Are public sector dimensions considered? | | | |
| <u>Practical applications</u> (11) Is the memo practical? (12) Does it use data as appropriate? | | | |

Comments?

TABLE 2: EVALUATION RESULTS FOR POLICY BRIEFING MEMO

| Incoming Students Assessment Fall 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Student Designation | Question # | | | | | | | | | | | | Avg. |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) | (11) | (12) | |
| A | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 |
| A | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.75 |
| B | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.25 |
| B | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.33 |
| C | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.58 |
| C | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.50 |
| D | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.25 |
| D | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.42 |
| E | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.75 |
| F | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.58 |
| G | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.58 |
| H | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.83 |
| I | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1.42 |
| J | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.08 |
| K | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.83 |
| L | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0.67 |
| M | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.08 |
| N | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.75 |
| P | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.08 |
| P | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 |
| P | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.42 |
| Q | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.67 |
| R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00 |
| R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.17 |
| S | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 |
| T | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.17 |
| U | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.92 |
| Avg. | 0.52 | 0.41 | 0.48 | 0.52 | 0.7 | 0.89 | 0.56 | 0.44 | 0.41 | 0.74 | 0.44 | 0.59 | 0.56 |

**Finishing Students Fall 2007 and
Spring 2008**

| Student Designation | Question # | | | | | | | | | | | | Avg. |
|------------------------|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) | (11) | (12) | |
| AA | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.92 |
| AA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.50 |
| BB | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.50 |
| CC | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.75 |
| CC | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.75 |
| DD | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.67 |
| DD | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.25 |
| EE | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.83 |
| FF | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1.92 |
| FF | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.50 |
| GG | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.08 |
| HH | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.75 |
| II | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1.17 |
| JJ | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.67 |
| KK | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.33 |
| KK | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.75 |
| LL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 |
| LL | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.67 |
| MM | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.50 |
| MM | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.58 |
| MM | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1.17 |
| NN | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.83 |
| NN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.75 |
| NN | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.33 |
| OO | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.75 |
| OO | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0.75 |
| PP | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.92 |
| PP | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.83 |
| QQ | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1.50 |
| QQ | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1.42 |
| QQ | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.58 |
| RR | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.83 |
| RR | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1.17 |
| RR | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.58 |
| SS | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.50 |
| SS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0.75 |
| TT | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.67 |
| TT | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.67 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| TT | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1.42 |
| UU | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.33 |
| VV | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 |
| VV | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.25 |
| WW | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 |
| XX | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0.83 |
| XX | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.67 |
| YY | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 |
| YY | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1.33 |
| ZZ | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1.75 |
| ZZ | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.83 |
| AAA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.42 |
| AAA | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.83 |
| AAA | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.67 |
| BBB | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.75 |
| BBB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.08 |
| CCC | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1.42 |
| CCC | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.33 |
| CCC | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.67 |
| Avg. | 1.07 | 0.65 | 1 | 1.04 | 1.2 | 1.18 | 1.12 | 0.95 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 0.98 | 0.79 | 1.04 |
| Incoming Avg. | 0.52 | 0.41 | 0.48 | 0.52 | 0.70 | 0.89 | 0.56 | 0.44 | 0.41 | 0.74 | 0.44 | 0.59 | 0.56 |
| Improvement ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| % Improvement | 106 | 59 | 108 | 100 | 75 | 32 | 200 | 113 | 206 | 68 | 121 | 33 | 86 |

Cell scores are designated as: 0 = "missing/unsatisfactory," 1 = "satisfactory," and 2 = "very well done."

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF CORE ASSESSMENTS
(2006 Results in Red)

Results of Course Assessments Fall 2007

Department of Public Policy and Administration
California State University, Sacramento

| Instructor | Course Learning Objective | Enrolle | Polled | Ranked | | | | | | | | | | average | |
|--|---|---------|--------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|------|----------|-------|----------------------------|--|
| | | | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 5 = excellently, 4 = very well, 3 = satisfactorily, 2 = poorly, 1 = not accomplished | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>PPA 205 Research</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| section 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 . Appreciate some of the ethical considerations applicable to social science research | 18 | 17 | <u>5</u> | 29.4% | <u>9</u> | 52.9% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | 3.94 (4.59)- | |
| | 2 . Appreciate the use of literature in developing sound research question | 18 | 17 | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>5</u> | 29.4% | <u>5</u> | 29.4% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.12 (4.59)- | |
| | 3 . Appreciate the use of theory in the research design process | 18 | 17 | <u>5</u> | 29.4% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>4</u> | 23.5% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.94 (4.76)- | |
| | 4 . Develop skills for effective research presentation | 18 | 16 | <u>6</u> | 37.5% | <u>5</u> | 31.3% | <u>3</u> | 18.8% | <u>1</u> | 6.3% | <u>1</u> | 6.3% | 3.88 (4.59)- | |
| | 5 . Understand how to find and use archival data | 18 | 16 | <u>2</u> | 12.5% | <u>2</u> | 12.5% | <u>8</u> | 50.0% | <u>1</u> | 6.3% | <u>3</u> | 18.8% | 2.94 (4.18)- | |
| | 6 . Understand key methods of assessing research reliability and validity | 18 | 17 | <u>8</u> | 47.1% | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>2</u> | 11.8% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.24 (4.47)- | |
| | 7 . Understand the importance of the "front end" of the research process | 18 | 17 | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>2</u> | 11.8% | 3.82 (4.65)- | |
| | 8 . Understand the principles of survey and interview protocol design | 18 | 17 | <u>8</u> | 47.1% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.29 (4.65)- | |
| | 9 . Understand the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies | 18 | 16 | <u>8</u> | 50.0% | <u>5</u> | 31.3% | <u>2</u> | 12.5% | <u>1</u> | 6.3% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.25 (4.49)- | |
| | Overall Averages for section | | | <u>6</u> | 36.7% | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>3</u> | 18.0% | <u>1</u> | 5.3% | <u>1</u> | 0% | 3.94 (4.49)- | |
| section 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 . Appreciate some of the ethical considerations applicable to applied social science research. | 9 | 9 | <u>7</u> | 77.8% | <u>2</u> | 22.2% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.78 (4.59)+ | |
| | 2 . Appreciate specific design principles that are common to a number of different types of research. | 9 | 9 | <u>5</u> | 55.6% | <u>3</u> | 33.3% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.44 (4.59)- | |
| | 3 . Appreciate the importance of "front end" of research (i.e., research | 9 | 9 | <u>8</u> | 88.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.78 (4.76)+ | |
| | 4 . Appreciate the importance of thinking systematically about establishing causality. | 9 | 9 | <u>6</u> | 66.7% | <u>3</u> | 33.3% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.67 (4.59)+ | |
| | 5 . Understand and appreciate the appropriate use of case studies. | 9 | 9 | <u>8</u> | 88.9% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.89 (4.18)+ | |
| | 6 . Understand how to find and use archival data. | 9 | 9 | <u>6</u> | 66.7% | <u>2</u> | 22.2% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.56 (4.47)+ | |
| | 7 . Understand how to proceed from a concept to a means of measuring the concept. | 9 | 9 | <u>6</u> | 66.7% | <u>2</u> | 22.2% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.56 (4.65)- | |
| | 8 . Understand the differences between experimental and non-experimental research. | 9 | 9 | <u>8</u> | 88.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>1</u> | 11.1% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.78 (4.65)- | |
| | 9 . Understand the principles of survey design. | 9 | 7 | <u>5</u> | 71.4% | <u>2</u> | 28.6% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.71 (4.49)+ | |
| | Overall Averages for section | | | <u>7</u> | 74.7% | <u>2</u> | 19.0% | <u>1</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.68 (4.49)+ | |

Results of Course Assessments Fall 2007

Department of Public Policy and Administration
California State University, Sacramento

| Instructor | Course | Learning Objective | Enrole | Polled | Ranked | | | | | | | | | | average |
|--|--------|--|--------|--------|----------|--------|-----------|--------|----------|-------|----------|------|----------|------|---------------------|
| | | | | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 5 = excellently, 4 = very well, 3 = satisfactorily, 2 = poorly, 1 = not accomplished | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PPA 200 Intro to PPA | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| section 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 . Develop a more analytical approach to problem definition | 17 | 17 | <u>8</u> | 47.1% | <u>5</u> | 29.4% | <u>3</u> | 17.6% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.18 |
| | | 2 . Develop an appreciation of the complexity of approaches that must be employed to fully understand public issues | 17 | 17 | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>10</u> | 58.8% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.24 (4.75)- |
| | | 3 . Familiarize students with the key instutitional features of government especially at the California state and local level | 17 | 17 | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>8</u> | 47.1% | <u>2</u> | 11.8% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.12 (3.38)+ |
| | | 4 . Familiarize students with the major intellectual traditions of the study of public policy and administration including political science, economics and social psychology/administration | 17 | 17 | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>8</u> | 47.1% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.53 (4.44)- |
| | | 5 . Improve the capacity of students to think and write analytically and practically about public problems | 17 | 17 | <u>4</u> | 23.5% | <u>9</u> | 52.9% | <u>3</u> | 17.6% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | 3.88 |
| | | 6 . Sensitize students to the complexities of making ethical decisions in the public sector | 17 | 16 | <u>3</u> | 18.8% | <u>8</u> | 50.0% | <u>4</u> | 25.0% | <u>1</u> | 6.3% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.81 |
| | | 7 . Understand the role of the policy analyst and public manager | 17 | 17 | <u>3</u> | 17.6% | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.65 |
| | | 8 . Work towards development of strong oral presentation skills | 17 | 17 | <u>3</u> | 17.6% | <u>7</u> | 41.2% | <u>6</u> | 35.3% | <u>1</u> | 5.9% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.71 |
| | | Overall Averages for section | | | <u>4</u> | 25.2% | <u>8</u> | 45.2% | <u>4</u> | 23.7% | <u>1</u> | 5.2% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.89 (4.29)+ |
| section 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 . Develop a more analytical approach to problem definition | 14 | 4 | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>4</u> | 100.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4 |
| | | 2 . Develop an appreciation of the complexity of approaches that must be employed to fully understand public issues | 14 | 4 | <u>4</u> | 100.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 5 (4.75)+ |
| | | 3 . Familiarize students with the key instutitional features of government especially at the California state and local level | 14 | 4 | <u>3</u> | 75.0% | <u>1</u> | 25.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.75 (3.38)+ |
| | | 4 . Familiarize students with the major intellectual traditions of the study of public policy and administration including political science, economics and social psychology/administration | 14 | 4 | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 3.5 (4.44)- |
| | | 5 . Improve the capacity of students to think and write analytically and practically about public problems | 14 | 4 | <u>3</u> | 75.0% | <u>1</u> | 25.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.75 |
| | | 6 . Sensitize students to the complexities of making ethical decisions in the public sector | 14 | 4 | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.5 |
| | | 7 . Understand the role of the policy analyst and public manager | 14 | 4 | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.5 |
| | | 8 . Work towards development of strong oral presentation skills | 14 | 4 | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>1</u> | 25.0% | <u>1</u> | 25.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.25 |
| | | Overall Averages for section | | | <u>2</u> | 50.0% | <u>2</u> | 40.6% | <u>0</u> | 9.4% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.41 (4.29)+ |

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Results of Course Assessments Fall 2007

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----|----|-----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|----|----------|----|---------------------|
| behavior and human relations in public agencies. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 . | Familiarity with problems in organizations "when generations collide," and strategies for solving the generational puzzle in the public sector workplace. In doing so, we will examine the generational puzzle aspects of organizational disasters such as the City of Sacramento Fire Department scandal, and the steps that can be taken to prevent such | 30 | 30 | <u>21</u> | 70.0% | <u>3</u> | 10.0% | <u>6</u> | 20.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.5 |
| 4 . | Familiarity with the concept of "organization culture" and how crucial understanding org culture is to creating a healthy and well-functioning workplace. We will examine the role of org culture in contributing to and - in the future - preventing and correcting organizational disasters such as the Space Shuttle Challenger tragedy. | 30 | 30 | <u>21</u> | 70.0% | <u>6</u> | 20.0% | <u>3</u> | 10.0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.6 (4.48)+ |
| Overall Averages for section | | | | <u>20</u> | 66.7% | <u>6</u> | 19.2% | <u>4</u> | 14.2% | <u>0</u> | 0% | <u>0</u> | 0% | 4.53 (4.21)+ |

Results of Course Assessments Fall 2007

Department of Public Policy and Administration
California State University, Sacramento

Overall Totals and Averages

Fall 2007

| Number Enrolled | Number Polled | ranked5 | ranked4 | ranked3 | ranked2 | ranked1 | Overall Average |
|--------------------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| 747 | 576 | 282 | 184 | 86 | 16 | 8 | 4.24 (4.39)- |
| 100% | 77.11% | 37.75% | 24.63% | 11.51% | 2.14% | 1.07% | |

FIGURE 2: REVISED 2008-09 ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION AND RUBRIC FOR EVALUATION

Assignment Description: Identify a current public (governmental) problem/issue that you have some interest in and provide a decision maker with a briefing memo about the issue and possible options to deal with it. As appropriate, consider the economic, political, organizational and policy dimensions of the issue. Help the reader understand the complexities of the issue as well as how the issue may be understood differently by different groups of interested people. Be careful to distinguish between fact and opinion in your analysis. How you would recommend appropriate option(s) to deal with chosen problem/issue.

Rubric for evaluating PPA briefing memos

| | Missing (Zero Point) | Included but unsatisfactory (One Point) | Satisfactory (Two Points) | Very well done (Three Points) |
|--|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| <u>Critical Thinking</u> (1) Is the problem/issue well defined? (2) Are possible options described? (3) Appropriate research design/causal inference to examine options? (4) Are implementation issues considered regarding options? | | Problem/issue identified but real problems in clarity. Some options described, but not enough and/or could be stated much more clearly. Some mention of design/inference to explore options, but much improvement needed. A brief mention of implementation issues, but problems in thinking about and/or much more needed. | Problem/issue identified clearly but could be improved upon. Reasonable amount of options stated, but could be improved upon. Design/inference mentioned and a specific plan of carrying out described, but could be improved upon. Implementation issues adequately covered, but room for improvement in how described. | A full appropriate problem/issue statement included. Amount and clarity of options highly appropriate. Design/inference covered and plan to carry out is highly appropriate. Issues of implementation of options fully covered in an appropriate manner. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <u>Integrative thinking</u> 5) Are appropriate economic, political, economic, policy, budget, and/or administrative concepts and analyses considered? | | A mention of some of these concepts, but not adequate and/or mistakenly applied. | All appropriate concepts described, but mistakes/confusion in application. | All concepts considered; little room for improvement. |
| <u>Effective communication</u> (6) Is memo well written? (7) Is previous findings and technical info appropriately presented? | | Written at a minimally acceptable level. Grammatical, organization, and/or style concerns remain. Minimal previous findings and tech info, but much more needed. | Written at a basic level appropriate for someone earning a Master's degree. Still room for some minor improvements. Previous findings and tech info offered at an acceptable level, but still room for improvement. | Superb writing. No concerns and a pleasure to read. Appropriate amount of previous findings and tech info included. The issue is framed well by this inclusion. |
| <u>Professional role</u> (8) Is the role of public and/or non-profit sector appropriately recognized? (9) Does it integrate the political context? (10) Are intergovernmental dimensions appropriately considered? | | Role of public/non-profit sector mentioned, but in far too little detail. The politics surrounding the chosen problem/issue are only mentioned, but covered in far too little detail. Intergovernmental dimensions are only mentioned in passing. | Public/non-profit sector role described adequately, but could improve upon and/or something left out. A serious attempt is made to integrate the political context of the problem/issue but still lacking in some way. A serious attempt is made to discuss the intergovernmental issues, but it is still lacking in some way. | Excellent coverage of these sectors in memo in a manner that fully clarifies their role. Political context is appropriately and fully described. Intergovernmental issues are appropriately covered and there is little to criticize. |

