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**Fall Semester 2023**

**PPA 220A – APPLIED ECONOMIC ANALYSIS I1**

**Master’s Program in Public Policy and Administration**

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| **Faculty Core Elements** | |
| **Last Revised** | 8/7/2023 |
| **Contact Information** | **Instructor:** ProfessorRob Wassmer, Ph.D.  **Email:** [rwassme@csus.edu](mailto:rwassme@csus.edu)  **Phone:** (916) 752-2910 [cell]; (916) 278-4556 [office]  **Office:** Room 226 Sac State Downtown Bldg (@ 3rd and S) **Hours:** Monday and Thursday, 4 – 5:30 pm and by appointment (in-person or Zoom)  **Monday Classroom:** Room 110/111 Sac State Downtown **Thursday Classroom:** Room 104/105 Sac State Downtown **Hours**: 6 to 8:50 pm **Delivery:** In-person  [**Website**](https://www.csus.edu/faculty/w/rwassme/) |
| **Prerequisites** | Undergraduate courses in Intro Microeconomics and American Govt with B grades or better |
| **Catalog Course Description** | PPA 220A presents the basic microeconomic concepts, tools, and models in the context of public sector choices. The standard market demand and supply model is developed and used to analyze the effect of public policies (particularly those of California state and local governments) on consumers and businesses. The principles of welfare economics are presented and used to evaluate economic performance.  (I use this catalog definition as a base, but we go beyond it.) |
| **Required Materials** | (1)***Rebooting Policy Analysis: Strengthening the Foundation, Expanding the Scope***(2023), Peter Linquiti, Sage/CQ Press; purchase at Sac State bookstore, [Amazon](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1544372604/robwassmershomep), or your favorite internet bookseller; Kindle Version ~ $35, Paperback Version ~ $95 (used again in PPA 220B)  (2) Load the free [**Weekly Cal Matters**](https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=faa7be558d&mc_cid=3122a10f9f&mc_eid=789e065aef)subscription, used for HW and class discussion  (3) Load the free [**Bing Search Engine**](https://www.bing.com/new) and Edge Browser on the laptop or desktop computer you use for this class to access ChatGPT-4. Listen to this Freakonomics Podcast for background: [*Satya Nadella’s Intelligence Is Not Artificial*](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/satya-nadellas-intelligence-is-not-artificial/)  (4) Load the free [**Grammarly**](https://app.grammarly.com/) proofreading tool on the laptop or desktop computer you use for this class and use it for all HW assignments |
| **Overview** | PPA 220A expands your prerequisite knowledge of microeconomics as it applies to government choices in a capitalistic economy. We study how economists think about consumers, businesses, and government decisions and, importantly, the relevance of such thinking to public policy. We devote much of our time to understanding the role that government could/should play in altering these economic decisions to better society. I also allocate considerable course time to extending your policy-relevant knowledge of traditional microeconomics to the new thinking offered through behavioral and equity-focused approaches. If your recollection of microeconomics could be more robust, watch the appropriate [Khan Academy microeconomics videos](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics). I am pleased to provide further explanations on microeconomic concepts and applications during office hours.  Last year, I adopted a new textbook that critically appraises using only an economic or "classical" approach to policy analysis. I am excited to use this text that reviews policy analysis through the economic lens and the equity, political, institutional, legal, sustainable, behavioral, and science/tech lenses. You will learn and apply the logic of these lenses to contemporary California policy issues.  Please share your opinion on my pedagogical methods and offer constructive suggestions. I appreciate and continually use such input to improve how I teach this course. To help achieve this goal, I ask in week seven (October 9 and 12) that, you anonymously complete the teaching evaluation instrument that you will again fill out at the end of the course. Using your responses, I will adapt my pedagogy to address your concerns in the remaining portion of the class.  PPA 220A typically consists of one 170-minute meeting a week for 15 weeks. This fall, Sac State’s academic calendar grants you time off from a class meeting on Monday, September 4 (Labor Day), and Thursday, November 23 (Thanksgiving). During those weeks, the students in the Monday or Thursday section still scheduled for a course session will meet with me remotely over Zoom in an assigned 10 to 15-minute block (further details forthcoming).  A 15-minute break occurs in the middle of each class. If I go past 7:30 pm, please remind me that we are beyond the scheduled break time.  Suppose you need help understanding concepts or ideas that I covered in a Monday or Thursday night class. In that case, it is vital to your overall success that you resolve these misunderstandings before the next meeting. You can do this by (1) talking to your classmates (I encourage you to form an electronic study network with some of your classmates), (2) visiting me on the following Monday or Thursday during office hours before class, (3) sending a question by email to me at [rwassme@csus.edu](mailto:rwassme@csus.edu), and (4) setting up a Zoom meeting with me at a time that is convenient to both of us. I am pleased to discuss a suggestion on my pedagogy, public policy in general, the MPPA Program, and your career plans during office hours.  For at least your first semester, I will be the academic advisor for first-year MPPA students. Please visit me at least once in my office during the first three weeks of class. If you cannot make the before-class office hours, let’s chat during a break or after class. I will record your completion of this and save that record when I consider the “participation” portion of your course grade.  You should devote about three to four hours of study outside the classroom each week to this course. As a well-prepared student, you must complete all readings before attending class. Also, look over the PowerPoint notes, formulate answers to the discussion questions poised each week (you should think about all the questions asked and not just the one assigned to you that week), read the Weekly Cal Matters email content regularly, and actively participate in the small-group and full-class discussions. I will call upon those who do not voluntarily participate. I stress that your approach to absorbing the material offered in class differs from what is displayed [here](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=ferris+bueller+economics+teacher&qpvt=ferris+bueller+economics+teacher&FORM=VDRE).  I will do my best to conduct this class in the format of active learning, discussion, and participation. I will not run through the PowerPoint slides word-for-word. Instead, we will rely upon discussions of your prepared answers to the weekly questions, additional discussion questions I pose in class, and various class discussion strategies. Before class, I suggest you download the PP notes, study them, print them out in note form, and take your handwritten notes directly on the PP notes. My reasoning has [scientific support](https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478). Mindfulness toward the material covered in class requires that laptops be closed. |
| **Course Learning Objectives** | This course has seven learning objectives that are part of a broader [set of learning objectives](https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/public-policy-administration/_internal/_documents/guide-mapping-ppa-specific-learning-objectives-2020.pdf) for the MPPA degree. The PPA Department will gather your opinion on how well this course has satisfied these learning goals in column two through a survey at the end of the semester. As listed below, Sac State has also established four learning goals that all graduate-level writing-intensive classes must satisfy.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **PPA LEARNING OBJECTIVE** | **HOW APPLIED IN PPA 220A** | | 1 c. Construct clear problem definitions with attention to client interests and varied stakeholder perspectives | Using the methods described in Linquiti for retrospective policy analysis, clearly identify the policy problem under consideration and interested/ clients and stakeholders | | 1 d. Identify reasonable alternatives to address problems | Using the methods described in Linquiti for retrospective policy analysis, clearly identify the intervention used to address a policy problem and the reasonableness of its efficacy | | 1 e. Apply context-appropriate criteria to analyze and evaluate alternatives and offer solutions with attention to implementation strategies | Using the methods described in Linquiti for the retrospective form of policy analysis, use appropriate criteria to evaluate the success of an intervention already in place to address a previously identified public policy problem. | | 1 g. Draw upon multiple disciplines to understand and address policy and administration problems | Using the methods described in Linquiti, learn the importance of applying various lenses (economic, equity, political, institutional, legal, sustainable, science/tech) and considering human biases when considering public policy | | 1 e. Apply context-appropriate criteria to analyze and evaluate alternatives and offer solutions with attention to implementation strategies | As conveyed through Munger's Triangle, understand the roles and interactions of markets, politics, and experts in offering wisdom and accountability in public policy formulation. | | 2 e. Write clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences | Practice writing clearly and succinctly on public policy concepts and analyses in short summaries and a medium-length policy brief to a specified audience of the public, policymakers, and practitioners | | 3. c. Consider the ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration | Comprehend, apply, and consider the challenges when using the various ethical codes for policy analysts described in Linquiti’s appendix | | **Writing-intensive**: Understand the significant research and professional conventions, practices, and methods of inquiry of the discipline | Understand the basic professional conventions, practices, and methods of public policy analysis | | **Writing-intensive**: Understand some formats, genres, and styles of writing used in the discipline | Practice explaining concepts from economic and other lenses as applied to policy analysis through short summaries and a medium-length briefing paper | | **Writing-intensive**: Practice reading and writing within the discipline | Read policy analyses and practice writing in short and long forms in their style | | **Writing-intensive**: Practice reading and writing as a learning process that involves peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing | Improve your writing in the style of policy analysts through peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing | |
| **Graduate Writing Intensive Course** | A B or better in this course satisfies your graduate writing intensive (GWI) requirement at Sacramento State. Writing induces anxiety. I have included a PowerPoint presentation on this topic at CANVAS and a collection of readings it references. Please take a moment to look this over before class starts. Though we will not cover this writing-related material during the course, I am pleased to chat with you about it outside of class during office hours. PPA 200 will also cover this topic.  Complete all writing during the MPPA Program in APA style. I have included a PDF copy of an APA style guide at CANVAS.  New this semester to my teaching of public-policy-related writing is the recognition that it is inappropriate to ignore the existence of ChatGPT. We will work together to formulate its appropriate use and identify what it does well and potential pitfalls. When you use this tool in your research or writing for this class, I require you to include a short statement of exactly ChatGPT’s use. |
| **Course Delivery & Attendance** | Before 5 pm, on a Friday before the class meets, I will post the PowerPoint slides covering the material discussed in the following week's class at CANVAS. At that time, I will also post the HW assignment due the following week. Information on CANVAS for Sac State students is [here](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/canvas/canvas-for-students.html). Please visit the site after you have secured a Sac Link account number and password from Sacramento State. I will also email you through CANVAS (delivered to your "\*@csus.edu" email account, so make sure you check it). I also reserve the right to ask you to read additional (not on the syllabus) web-based material. |
| **Course Grading Scale** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Percent Correct** | **Letter Grade** | **Number Grade** | | 100-94 | A | 4.3 | | 93-89 | A- | 3.7 | | 88-85 | B+ | 3.3 | | 84-81 | B | 3.0 | | 80-77 | B- | 2.7 | | 76-73 | C+ | 2.3 | | 72-69 | C | 2.0 | | 68-65 | C- | 1.7 | | 64-61 | D | 1.0 | | <61 | F | 0.0 | |
| **Final Grade Calculation** | Class participation and visits outside of regular class (15%)  Average of five highest weekly short-form HW grades (15%)  Final evaluation of a retrospective policy evaluation (30%)  Average of five highest weekly long-form HW grades (40%) |
| **Student Core Elements** | |
| **Student Services Information & Links** | [Services to Students with Disability (SSWD)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/disability-access-center/student-resources.html#:~:text=Who%20we%20serve%3A%20The%20Disability%20Access%20Center%20%28DAC%29,with%20disabilities%20receive%20appropriate%20accommodations%20at%20Sac%20State.) *"Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where all students and faculty use the course or instructional content. If you believe you require disability-related academic adjustments for this class, please immediately contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) to discuss eligibility. A current accommodation letter from SSWD is required before any modifications, above and beyond what is otherwise available for all other students in this class, will be provided."*  [Student Health and Counseling Services](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/) *"Your physical and mental health is important to your success as a college student. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy at Sac State. SHCS offers Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education, and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. The Health Services fee covers most services and is available at no additional cost."*  [Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support (CARES)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/crisis-assistance-resource-education-support/) *"If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial, or other unique circumstances impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student.*  [Drop and Withdrawal Policy](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/internal/_internal/_documents/drop-and-withdrawal-policy.pdf)  [University Grading Policy](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad/umg05150.htm)  [University Academic Advising](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/)  [Information Resources and Technology](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/)  [Support Centers and Programs](https://webpages.csus.edu/wiscons/more/SacStateCampusResources.html" \l ":~:text=Student%20Support%20Centers%20%26%20Programs%201%20Asian%20Pacific,8%20Full%20Circle%20Project%20%28FCP%29%20...%20More%20items)  [Reading & Writing Center](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html)  [Student Rights and Responsibilities](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/policies.html) |
| **Academic Honesty** | When you write for this course or any course at Sacramento State, you must be aware of plagiarism and how its practice can become grounds for dismissal from the university. Details are [here](https://csus.libguides.com/plagiarism). The following is also helpful:  *"****In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or online, manuscripts, and other student writers' work****."* At Sac State, it may result in a lowered grade, a failed grade for the course, suspension, or even expulsion.  Often, the writer **does not intend** to plagiarize but has failed to cite sources correctly. It is essential to avoid plagiarism by understanding what needs to be noted and how to cite all sources used properly. I will use the *Turn-It-In* plagiarism check on Canvas for your HW and final paper. So please run your documents through it before submitting the final draft. Many times, plagiarism is unintentional. This check flags potential sentences you may not have considered possible plagiarism when written. Remember, the job of an analyst is often to read the findings of others and put them in their own, more simplified words for a client or the public. I desire you to practice that through your HW assignments and final paper.  We await a formal Sac State/CSU policy on using ChatGPT in work assigned to the university’s courses. Until then, if using ChatGPT, always include a brief footnote stating its use and be specific about the manner used. |
| **Schedule**  (*material under each meeting is subject to slight change and additions*) | |
| **Meeting One**  **August 28 or 31** | * Syllabus Review * Linquiti, Preface * Linquiti, Classical Models and Their Limitation (pp. 1-12) * Cal Matters, [*California spent $600 million to house and rehab former prisoners — but can’t say whether it helped*](https://calmatters.org/justice/2023/07/california-prisoner-rehabilitation-centers/) * Cal Matters, [*California Democrats keep spending money but fail to make sure it’s helping*](https://calmatters.org/commentary/2023/07/california-democrats-spending-money-helping/) * Cal Matters, [*California lawmakers want to know why billions in spending aren’t reducing homelessness*](https://calmatters.org/housing/homelessness/2023/04/california-homeless-spending-audit/) * Linquiti, Ch. 1, Retro Program and Impact Eval (pp. 41-50) |
| **Meeting Two**  **September 4 or 7** | No meeting on September 4 (Labor Day) Individual Zoom meetings on September 8   * Freakonomics Podcast, [*Should We Really Behave Like Economists Say We Do?*](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/should-we-really-behave-like-economists-say-we-do/) |
| **Meeting Three**  **September 11 or 14** | * Linquiti, Ch. 9, Economic Lens, pp. 317-324, 326-327 * [Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics), Unit 2: Supply, Demand, & Market Equilibrium; Unit 5: Consumer Theory; Unit 3: Elasticity; Unit 4: Consumer/Producer Surplus & Market Interventions and Deadweight Loss * Freakonomics Podcast, [*Is Your Plane Ticket Too Expensive — or Too Cheap?*](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/is-your-plane-ticket-too-expensive-or-too-cheap/) |
| **Meeting Four**  **September 18 or 21** | * [Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics), Unit 6: Production Decisions & Economic Profit; Unit 7: Forms of Competition * Cal Matters, [*Californians: Here’s why your housing costs are so high*](https://calmatters.org/explainers/housing-costs-high-california/) * [Freakonomics Podcast](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/why-rent-control-doesnt-work-ep-373-rebroadcast/), Why Rent Control Does Not Work |
| **Meeting Five**  **September 25 or 28** | * Linquiti, Ch. 9, Economic Lens, pp. 331-339, 345-351 * [Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics), Unit 9: Market Failure * Think Like an Economist Podcast, [*Externalities – The Full Cost of Choices We Make*](https://art19.com/shows/think-like-an-economist/episodes/a03a7d9d-05b7-43c2-bcb7-706fecf3eb02) * Munger’s Triangle, find PDF @ Canvas * Policy 360 Podcast, [*Carbon Tax*](https://sanford.duke.edu/story/carbon-tax-podcast/) |
| **Meeting Six**  **October 2 or 5** | * Linquiti, Ch. 4, Metacognition of Your Own and Others' Biases * The Decision Lab, [*The Most Relevant Biases in Behavioral Econ*](https://thedecisionlab.com/biases) * Harvard Gazette, [*When We Can’t Even Agree on What Is Real*](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/06/study-finds-political-bias-skews-perceptions-of-verifiable-fact/) |
| **Meeting Seven**  **October 9 or 12** | Mid-term Student Assessment of Teaching   * Linquiti, Appendix 15-A, Ethics Codes from Four Organizations * NPR, [Ethics Code](https://www.npr.org/ethics) * Linquiti, Ch. 8, Equity Lens, pp. 273-294 |
| **Meeting Eight**  **October 16 or 19** | * Linquiti, Ch. 8, Equity Lens, pp. 294-315 * Freakonomics Podcast, [*The Pros and Cons of Reparations*](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/the-pros-and-cons-of-reparations-ep-427/) |
| **Meeting Nine**  **October 23 or 27** | * Linquiti, Ch. 10, Political and Institutional Lens * NPR, [Politics Podcast](https://www.npr.org/sections/politics/) |
| **Meeting Ten**  **Oct 30 or Nov 2** | • Linquiti, Ch. 11; Legal, Sustainable, and Science/Tech Lenses   * Open to Podcast, [*It's Time to Expand Nuclear Power*](https://opentodebate.org/podcast/its-time-to-expand-nuclear-power/) * CAL Matters, [*Five things to know about nuclear power in California*](https://mysacstate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/sac65434_csus_edu/Documents/Teaching/PPA/220A/2023/Five%20things%20to%20know%20about%20nuclear%20power%20in%20California) * NCSL, [*States restrictions on new nuclear power facility construction*](https://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/states-restrictions-on-new-nuclear-power-facility.aspx) |
| **Meeting Eleven**  **November 6 or 9** | * Linquiti, Ch. 2, Retrospective Program and Impact Evaluation * [PPIC](https://www.ppic.org/), [Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO)](https://www.ppic.org/), [CA Budget and Policy Center](https://calbudgetcenter.org/), [Policy Analysis for CA Education](https://edpolicyinca.org/) * CA State Auditor, [*About Us*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/aboutus)[*Mission, Authority, & Standards*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/aboutus/mission) * CA State Auditor, Reports   + [*State Surplus Property: The State Should Use Its Available Property More Effectively to Help Alleviate the Affordable Housing Crisis*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2021-114/index.html)   + [*California Community Colleges: Increasing Full-Time Faculty and Diversity Remains a Challenge*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2022-113/index.html)   + [*California Air Resources Board: Improved Program Measurement Would Help California Work More Strategically to Meet Its Climate Change Goals*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2020-114/index.html)   + [*Batterer Intervention Programs: State Guidance and Oversight Are Needed to Effectively Reduce Domestic Violence*](Batterer%20Intervention%20Programs)*=*   + [*California Department of Technology: Weaknesses in Strategic Planning, Information Security, and Project Oversight Limit the State's Management of Information Technology*](https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2022-114/index.html) |
| **Meeting Twelve**  **November 13 or 16** | * Linquiti, Ch. 3, Obstacles to Using Classical Policy Analysis * Visit by Analyst(s) from CA State Auditor’s Office |
| **Meeting Thirteen**  **November 20 or 23** | Individual Zoom meetings on November 20  No meeting on November 23 (Thanksgiving) |
| **Meeting Fourteen**  **November 27 or 30** | * Linquiti, Ch. 7, Mindset of Effective Policy Analyst * Linquiti, Ch. 6, Collecting and Evaluating Evidence |
| **Meeting Fifteen**  **December 4 or 7** | * Audit Report Student Panel Presentations and Discussion |
| **Final**  **December 11 or 14** | Last Day to Turn Final Paper into CANVAS by 6 pm |

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| **Grading Rubric for Weekly HW Essays** "A" Grade (20 to 18 points), "B" Grade (18 to 16 points), "C" Grade (16 to 14 points), "D" Grade (Less than 14 points), Absent (0 points) |

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| **Required Content/Points** | **20** | **19** | **18** | **17** | **16** | **15** | **14** | **10** | **5** | **0** |
| Submit through CANVAS, in Microsoft Word form with: (1) cover page containing only your name, date due, and whole HW assignment/question reproduced, (2) a two-page full-length body of the essay, (3) a separate page with the reference list in APA style, and (4) final page with this rubric reproduced. Use Times New Roman 11 Font only with one-inch margins: no footnotes or endnotes. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use Grammarly proofreading tool and correct all flagged spelling, grammar, and style corrections. Pay particular attention to the [passive voice](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/active-vs-passive-voice/) detected and rewrite in a manner that eliminates. I will run your essay through the same proofreader and deduct points for flagged items. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Always compose your essay in the first-person form. Begin with an introductory paragraph that offers a brief background on the issue and concludes with a sentence like "[i]n this essay I will …" that summarizes the content of the essay's body paragraphs. Finish your piece with a final section that states the conclusion drawn from the essay. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cite at least one reference in your essay from the syllabus and at least one other reference drawn from a Google search. Use the [APA citation method](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_basic_rules.html), which is standard for all writing in PPA courses. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The content of the essay answers the question/issue posed in the HW assignment clearly and concisely. The style and content are appropriate for a college-educated reader with no expertise in microeconomics. It is practitioner-friendly to read. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Points (100 possible)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |