# **PPA 220A: APPLIED ECONOMIC ANALYSIS (3 Units)**

**MASTER'S PROGRAM IN PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION**

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO**

**FALL 2021**

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Office Hours: Monday, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. and by appointment if necessary

Class Location Rooms 104/105 Sac State Downtown Center Building

Class Time Tuesday, 6 to 8:50 p.m., August 31 through December 7

Textbooks and Other Resources

(1) ***The Economics Anti-Textbook***, 2010, Rod Hill and Tony Myatt, Fernwood

Publishing, <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1842779397/robwassmershomep>,

(2) ***Policy Analysis as Problem Solving***, 2019, Rachel Meltzer and Alex Schwartz, Routledge, <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1138630179/robwassmershomep>, *also required for PPA 200 and 220B,*

(3) ***Behavioral Economics (The Basics)***, 2018, Philip Corr and Anke Plagnol, Routledge, <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1138228915/robwassmershomep>,

(4) ***Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts, and Practices***, 2000, Michael Munger, Norton, <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/0393973999/robwassmershomep>,

(5) ***Khan Academy Microeconomics***, <https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics>, *use for a video review of topics taught in your microeconomics prerequisite course (appropriate link offered in schedule),*

(6) ***Weekly CalMatters***, subscribe now at <https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=faa7be558d&mc_cid=3122a10f9f&mc_eid=789e065aef>, use for weekly discussion and HW #1 at the start of class.

Course Learning Objectives

There are ten learning objectives for this course that are part of a broader set of learning objectives for the MPPA degree at <https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/public-policy-administration/_internal/_documents/guide-mapping-ppa-specific-learning-objectives-2020.pdf>.

Column 1 in the table below contains the general learning objective for the PPA Program. Column 2 contains its application in this course.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 method described in Meltzer and Schwartz, construct a clear definition of an appropriate policy problem warrants public intervention. |
| 1 d. Identify reasonable alternatives to address problems. | Using the method described in Meltzer and Schwartz, identify reasonable alternatives to address a clearly defined policy problem. |
| 1 e. Apply context-appropriate criteria to analyze and evaluate alternatives and offer solutions with attention to implementation strategies. | Based on the method described in Meltzer and Schwartz, use appropriate criteria to evaluate the desirability of alternatives offered to solve a policy problem. |
| 1 g. Draw upon multiple disciplines to understand and address policy and administration problems. | Understand and apply the roles and interactions of markets, politics, and experts in offering wisdom and accountability in public policy formulation as conveyed through Munger's Triangle. |
| 2 e. Write clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences. | Practice writing clearly and succinctly on public policy concepts and the use of rational policy analysis in the forms of short summaries and a medium-length policy brief to an audience of policymakers and practitioners. |
| 3. c. Consider the ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration. | Comprehend, practice, and realize the challenges when using the appropriately defined ethical code for policy analysts described in Meltzer and Schwartz. |
| **Writing-intensive**: Understand the significant research and/or professional conventions, practices, and methods of inquiry of the discipline. | Understand the basic professional conventions, practices, and research-based methods of rational policy analysis. |
| **Writing-intensive**: Understand some formats, genres, and styles of writing used in the discipline. | Practice explaining concepts from microeconomics as applied to rational policy analysis through short summaries and a medium-length briefing paper. |
| **Writing-intensive**: Practice reading and writing within the discipline. | Read the various formats available to conduct policy analysis and summarize/interpret a policy-analysis-appropriate written form. |
| **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 of public policy analyses through peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing. |

The PPA Department will gather your opinion on how well this course has satisfied the learning goals in column two through a survey at the end of the semester.

Graduate Writing Intensive Course

Receiving a B or better in this course satisfies your graduate writing intensive (GWI) requirement at Sacramento State.

Writing induces anxiety. At CANVAS, I have included a PowerPoint presentation on this topic and a collection of readings that it references. Please take a moment to look this over before class starts. Though we will not cover it during class, I will 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.

Internet and CANVAS Access

Before 5 p.m., on a Friday before the class meets, I will post at CANVAS the PowerPoint slides covering the material discussed in the following week's class. Information on CANVAS is at [https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/CANVAS/CANVAS-for-students.html](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/canvas/canvas-for-students.html). Please visit the site after you have secured a SacLink account number and password from Sacramento State. I will also correspond with you by email through CANVAS (delivered to your "\*@csus.edu" email account, so make sure you check it) and ask you to read material from the Internet.

In-Person/Remote Attendance

I will deliver this course in an in-person format that abides by all Pandemic Protocols in place during the meeting times. That said, the university requires for fall 2021 that those not comfortable with this can access the class through remote delivery. The details of this are still in process but will likely be in a recorded format to watch after class is completed and/or in a Zoom format in real-time. Nevertheless, be aware, the preferred method of attending this class is in-person. I have, or will, make pedagogical choices to deliver best using this preference. My advice for fall 2021 success all PPA courses is complete vaccination and in-person attendance.

Overview

PPA 220A expands upon your prerequisite knowledge of microeconomics' basic concepts and tools as they apply to public policy analysis. We will study how economists think about consumers, businesses, and government decisions, and importantly, the relevance of this to making 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 will also allocate considerable course time extending your policy-relevant knowledge of microeconomics to the new thinking offered through behavioral and equity-focused economics.

The prerequisite for this course is the receipt of a B grade or higher in a previous introductory (undergraduate) course in microeconomics. **If your microeconomics is a bit rusty, be sure to watch the *Khan Academy Microeconomics*** videos referenced above and specifically listed for some class meetings. I am pleased to offer further explanations on introductory microeconomics during office hours.

Microeconomics offers many insights into understanding how people, businesses, and government policymakers make choices and interact with these choices. Some of the most severe challenges (climate change, wealth/income inequality by race/ethnicity, housing affordability/homelessness, etc.) that individuals and society face are, at least in part, based on economics. An understanding of economics is, therefore, an essential part of deriving solutions to these challenges. As a future public policy analyst and/or public administrator, understanding the economic principles taught in this course is essential to your ability to offer sound advice in your chosen profession.

My goal has always been to improve the teaching of microeconomics to university students. I would consider myself a success if I could get you to understand more microeconomic theory, appreciate its value to the career choice you have made, and have a **part** of your brain think like an economist. Note that I emphasize only apart of your brain. Good analysts must consider relevant political and administrative issues and proposed public policies' social/equity ramifications. We accomplish much of this through the other courses you take in our master's program; however, at the same time, it is integrated here.

I encourage you to share your opinion on any of my pedagogical methods and offer constructive suggestions to improve them. I truly appreciate such input and use it to try and continually improve the way I teach this course. To help achieve this goal, I ask in week six (October 5) that you complete the teaching evaluation instrument that you will again fill out at the end of the course. Using the responses, I will do my best to adapt my pedagogy to address your concerns in the remaining portion of the course.

PPA 220A consists of one 170-minute meeting a week for 15 weeks. **Each week you should also plan to devote at least 4.5 hours of study outside of the classroom to this course.** A 15-minute break occurs in the middle of each class. If I go past 7:30 p.m., please remind me that it is due without giving you a break.

If there are concepts or ideas covered in a Tuesday night class that you did not understand, it is vital to your overall success that you get these misunderstandings resolved before the next time we meet. 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 in the Tuesday 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. office hours, (3) sending an email question to me at rwassme@csus.edu, and/or setting up a Zoom meeting between us at a time that is convenient to both of us. I promise to respond to your Monday through Friday email within 24 hours (and more likely less than 2 hours).

I am pleased to discuss a suggestion on pedagogy, economics in general, the MPPA Program, and/or your career plans during office hours. Also, utilize the PPA advisor you have chosen or assigned to you. To ensure a strong participation grade, please visit office hours regularly, or make a point to chat with me during break or after class.

As a well-prepared student, you will need to 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 *CalMatters Weekly* email regularly, and actively participate in the small-group and full-class discussions. I will call upon those who do not voluntarily participate. The appropriate pedagogy is not <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhiCFdWeQfA>.

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, if possible, in note form, and take your 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>.

Weekly Assignments

To measure your attendance and to prepare for your participation in class discussions, I ask that for each night we meet (except the first) that you submit either:

**(HW Type #1)** A two-page (maximum), double-spaced, 12 fonts in Word form, portfolio entry into what you think is the most important or relevant or talked about policy issued presented in the *Weekly CalMatters*. You can only turn these into CANVAS on the day of the meeting you will attend in electronic Word form before 6 p.m. The content of the portfolio entry must have the following sections that use these headings and are underlined (a) Your Name and Date, (b) Name and Describe the Policy Issue that the Govt Should Correct, (c) Why Should the Govt Do Something About this Policy Issue, (d) What Policy Intervention Should Govt Pursue and Why, and (e) APA Style Reference List (must cite *Weekly CalMatters* and at least one other source).

*Note: I will not grade your portfolio entry. Though, I will acknowledge its receipt in CANVAS. I will assign a grade when you accumulate all your seven entries at the end of the semester. To get this grade, you must submit in one document all your HW Type #1 submissions and write a reflective statement on how and why they have evolved over the semester.*

**(HW Type #2)** A two-page (max), double-spaced, 12 fonts in Word form essay that answers the discussion question assigned to you. I will post these questions on CANVAS by Friday at 5 p.m. before the class meeting. You can only turn these into CANVAS on the day of the meeting you will attend in Word Electronic form by 6 p.m. I will look them over and return them to you by the next class meeting with a grade based upon how well you satisfy the rubric (included below) for these.

The schedule regarding when weekly assignment (1) or (2) is due relies upon the first letter of your last name:

**Last Names A – H:**

Meeting Date 9/7 (Assignment #1), 9/14 (2), 9/21 (1), 9/28 (2), 10/5 (1), 10/12 (2), 10/19 (1), 10/26 (2), 11/2 (1), 11/9 (2), 11/16 (1), 11/23 (2), 11/30 (1), 12/7 (2),

**Last Names I – Z:**

Meeting Date 9/7 (Assignment #2), 9/14 (1), 9/21 (2), 9/28 (1), 10/5 (2), 10/12 (1), 10/19 (2), 10/26 (1), 11/2 (2), 11/9 (1), 11/16 (2), 11/23 (1), 11/30 (2), 12/7 (1).

Homework Question Feedback, Revision, Reflection, and Self-Editing

This course qualifies for Graduate Writing Intensive approval (necessary to receive a master's degree in the CSU) because it involves receiving comments on your written work from me (the instructor) and a peer, reflecting on these comments self-editing your previously written material. We accomplish this through your weekly homework questions of Type #2.

I offer two examples of HW Type #2 on CANVAS submitted by PPA 220A students in fall 2020 that received a grade of "A" (4.0). Look these over before writing up your HW Type #2 and mimic the format and style. Also, look carefully over the rubric (at the end of this syllabus) that I use to grade your HW. We will discuss this further at our first meeting.

If you receive less than an A- (3.7) grade from me on your bi-weekly HW Type #2, you must rewrite it after reflecting upon my comments, and upon the comments you will solicit from one of your peers. When you submit your revision back to me, please include with it the original marked-up version and grading rubric that I completed and the same from your chosen peer-review writing partner. When requested to view someone's writing assignment as a peer reviewer, you will have a maximum of one week to get your comments back. If it takes longer and the person you are reviewing complains to me, you will receive a failing grade in one of your required writing assignments. Everyone needs only to act as a peer reviewer twice. Please turn down a request to review a third time.

You may revise a maximum of two assignments. If you have two or more assignments with less than an A- grade from me, two need revision. The revision process must begin the week after receiving less than an A- on any homework question. When you have feedback from your peer reader and me for your first revision, you must drop into the Monday, 4 to 5:30 p.m. office hours or schedule a private one to discuss in person your planned revision. The requirement is to do this once, but you may do it for both of your revisions if desired. Submit all revised assignments to me within two weeks of receiving less than an "A-" on any. I will accept no HW revisions after the final paper is due (December 14).

Academic Honesty

When you write for this class or any class at Sacramento State, you must consider plagiarism to avoid it. If done, plagiarism can become grounds for dismissal from the University.

*Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of cheating. At Sac State, plagiarism uses distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgment of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporation of another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgment. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of proper credit and gives credit to someone who has not earned it. Acknowledgment is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge. Plagiarism at Sac State includes, but is not limited to:*

*The act of incorporating into one's work the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another's work without giving appropriate credit, thereby representing the product as entirely one's own. Examples include copying another's work, the paraphrase (i.e., rewriting another's work while still using the other's fundamental idea or theory); fabrication (i.e., inventing, or counterfeiting sources), ghost-writing (i.e., submitting another's work as one's own) and failure to include quotation marks on acknowledged material.*

See <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/academic-dishonesty.html>.

Final Policy Prospectus

Details on the final policy prospectus paper are below. We will discuss this assignment further in class. It is due on December 14, but I encourage you to get it in earlier.

Grading Procedure

Where appropriate, I base grades on the following table:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Percent Correct** | **Letter Grade** | **Number Grade** |
| 100-97 | A+ | 4.3 |
| 96-93 | A | 4.0 |
| 92-89 | 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 |

I assign a number grade (column 3 above) at CANVAS to everything you do. Your overall course grade comes from these number grades. Receiving any course grade at or above a B- (2.7) is a passing grade for credit toward your MPPA. Nevertheless, be aware that you need to maintain an overall GPA in the MPPA Program of B (3.0) to remain in good standing. I base the calculation of your final grade using the following weights:

Policy Portfolio based upon *Weekly CalMatters* write-ups(HW Type #1): 30%

Average Grade Earned on Seven Weekly Required HW essays (HW Type #2): 30%

Final Policy Prospectus: 25%

Classroom and Office Hour Participation: 15%

**I strictly follow University policy for dropping and receiving an incomplete for this course. You must complete all four components of calculating your final grade to pass this class.**

Schedule

The following schedule lists the topics covered and the assigned material that accompanies them. I reserve the right to make minor changes and additions to the schedule.  I expect that every student reads/listens/watches all the material listed for each meeting and comes with the knowledge necessary for active discussion. **You must complete one HW assignment (Type #1 or Type #2) each week, but you should look over and think about the other one not doing. Be prepared to lead the discussion on your HW question and actively participate in the discussion of all other HW questions.**

I reserve the right to add or substitute readings/podcasts/videos from the Internet that I locate after distributing this syllabus. I will note these updates in red on the electronic syllabus posted at CANVAS and through an email note sent to you.

**Meeting 1 (August 31) – Neoclassical Microeconomics, Market Outcomes, and Public Policy**

*Review Syllabus and HW Format*

H&M, Ch. 1, *What is Economics? Where You Start Influences Where You Go*

[*https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/basic-economic-concepts-gen-micro*](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/basic-economic-concepts-gen-micro)

C&P, Ch. 2, *The Ascent and Descent of Economics*

Munger, Ch, 2, *Deciding How to Decide: Experts, the People, and the Market.*

**Meeting 2 (September 7): Neoclassical Approaches to Product Markets**

H&M, Ch. 4: *People as Consumers*

<https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/choices-opp-cost-tutorial>

C&P, Ch. 4: *Human: More Homer (Simpson) than "Homo Economicus"*

H&M, Ch. 5: *The Firm*

<https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/firm-economic-profit>

H&M, Ch. 3: *How Markets Work (In an Imaginary World)*

Freakonomics Podcast, #373, Why Rent Control Doesn't Work, <https://freakonomics.com/podcast/rent-control-rebroadcast/>.

**Meeting 3 (September 14): Rational Policy Analysis I**

M&S, Ch. 1: *What is Policy Analysis?*

M&S, Ch. 2: *Defining the Problem and Setting the Stage*

**Meeting 4 (September 21): Rational Policy Analysis II**

M&S, Ch. 3: *Devising Alternative Policy Options*

M&S, Ch, 4: *Objectives and Criteria*

**Meeting 5 (September 28): Rational Policy Analysis III**

M&S, Ch. 6: *Analysis and Making Recommendations*

Munger, Ch. 1: *Policy Analysis as a Profession and a Practice*

Wassmer, *What to Do About Scrap Tires? Options for Productive Waste Management*

@CANVAS

M&S, CH. 8: *Policy Analysis in Practice*

**Meeting 6 (October 5): Externalities (and Public Goods) as a Justification for**

**Munger's Efficiency Policy**

H&M, Ch. 7: *Externalities and the Ubiquity of Market Failure*

<https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/market-failure-and-the-role-of-government>

Planet Money Podcast, *The Pigou Club,*

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/29/774494691/episode-949-the-pigou-club>.

Think Like an Economist, *Externalities – The Full Cost of Choices We Make,*

<https://art19.com/shows/think-like-an-economist/episodes/a03a7d9d-05b7-43c2-bcb7-706fecf3eb02>.

*Preliminary Teaching Evals Given Out*

**Meeting 7 (October 12): Rational Policy Analysis Applied to Climate Change**

Post-Crisis Economics Podcast, *Climate Change*,

<https://www.audible.com/pd/Climate-Change-Podcast/B095M8Q2FJ>.

Brookings Institution, *We Can't Beat the Climate Crisis Without Rethinking Land Use,*

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/we-cant-beat-the-climate-crisis-without-rethinking-land-use/>.

Brookings Institution, *Environmental Racism, and the Struggle for Climate Justice,*

[*https://www.brookings.edu/podcast-episode/environmental-racism-and-the-struggle-for-climate-justice/*](https://www.brookings.edu/podcast-episode/environmental-racism-and-the-struggle-for-climate-justice/)*.*

Legislative Analyst's Office, *Assessing California's Climate Policies,*

[*https://lao.ca.gov/handouts/resources/2019/Assessing-California-Climate-Policies-022019.pdf*](https://lao.ca.gov/handouts/resources/2019/Assessing-California-Climate-Policies-022019.pdf)*.*

**Meeting 8 (October 19): Market Structure as the Justification for Munger's Efficiency Policy**

H&M, Ch. 6: *Market Structure and Efficiency – Or Why Perfect Competition is Not so Perfect,*

[*https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/perfect-competition-topic*](https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/perfect-competition-topic)

**Meeting 9 (October 26): Rational Policy Analysis Applied to the Breakup of Amazon or Google**

Intelligence Squared Debate, Should Washington Break Up Big Tech?

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/news/blog/agree-disagree-should-washington-break-big-tech>.

Planet $ Podcast, *Rigging the Economy*, <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2018/03/09/592393083/episode-829-rigging-the-economy>.

Crazy/Genius Podcast, *Should the U.S. Break Up Amazon?*

[*https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/05/should-the-us-break-up-amazon/560597/*](https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/05/should-the-us-break-up-amazon/560597/)*.*

WSJ Podcast, *Congress's Case to Break Up Amazon,*

<https://www.wsj.com/podcasts/the-journal/congress-case-to-break-up-amazon/e4816494-3bc5-4cac-aec8-fe87fc42fb5e>.

Planet $ Podcast, *Antitrust 2: The Paradox,* <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2019/02/20/696342011/antitrust-2-the-paradox>.

Planet $ Podcast, *Antitrust 3: Big Tech*, <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2019/02/22/697170790/antitrust-3-big-tech>.

**Meeting 10 (November 2): Information Asymmetry and Manipulation as the Justification for**

**Munger's Efficiency Policy**

C&P, Ch. 5: *Manners, Monkeys, and Moods*

C&P, Ch. 6: *Whys, Ways, and Weasels*

*The Most Relevant Biases in Behavioral Economics,* <https://thedecisionlab.com/biases>.

The Hidden Brain, *Theory Vs. Reality: Why Our Economic Behavior Isn't Always Rational*,

<https://www.npr.org/2020/05/28/864335677/theory-vs-reality-why-our-economic-behavior-isnt-always-rational>.

**Meeting 11 (November 9): Rational Policy Analysis Applied to Mask/Vaccine Resistance**

Atlantic Magazine, *Vaccine Refusal Will Come at a Cost – For All of Us,*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/04/vaccine-refusal-hesitancy-economic-costs/618528/>.

PPIC Video, *Vaccinating California*,

<https://www.ppic.org/blog/video-vaccinating-california/>.

Intelligence Squared Debate, *Do We Need Vaccine Passports?*

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/news/blog/agree-disagree-covid-series-do-we-need-vaccine-passports>.

No Stupid Questions Podcast, #57, *Which Incentives are Best at Boosting Vaccination, and Why?*

[*https://freakonomics.com/podcast/nsq-vaccines-superheroes/*](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/nsq-vaccines-superheroes/)*.*

New England Journal of Medicine, *Beyond Politics – Promoting COVID-19 Vaccination in the U.S.,* <https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMms2033790>.

**Meeting 12 (November 16): An Ethical and Social Justice Evaluation of Market Outcomes**

Michael Sandel, *Why Economics Needs a Moral Dimension,*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOAvo88gitc>.

Human Rights Careers, *What Does Social Justice Mean?*

<https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/what-does-social-justice-mean/>.

United Nations, *Social Justice in an Open World,*

<https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/ifsd/SocialJustice.pdf>.

PPIC, *Who's in Poverty in California?*

<https://www.ppic.org/interactive/whos-in-poverty-in-california/>.

Stanford Center on Poverty & Inequality, *Hispanic Poverty, and Inequality,*

<https://inequality.stanford.edu/cpi-research/area/hispanic-trends>.

LAO, *Cal Facts 2018,*

<https://lao.ca.gov/Publications?productid=3>.

PPIC, *Poverty in California,*

<https://www.ppic.org/topics/trending-poverty-in-california/>.

California Budget & Policy Center, *Work, Income, and Poverty,*

<https://calbudgetcenter.org/issues/work-income-poverty/>.

**Meeting 13 (November 23): Lack of Human Capital/Discrimination as the Justification for Munger's Equity Policy**

H&M, Ch. 8: *Marginal Product Theory of Income Distribution*

<https://www.khanacademy.org/economics-finance-domain/microeconomics/micro-factor-markets>

CalMatters, *Mind the Achievement Gap: California's Disparities in Education, Explained*,

<https://calmatters.org/explainers/achievement-gap-california-explainer-schools-education-disparities-explained/>.

Legislative Analyst's Office, *Narrowing California's K-12 Education Achievement Gaps*,

<https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2020/4144/narrowing-k12-gaps-013120.pdf>,

Freakonomics Podcast, #460, *The True Story of the Minimum Wage Fight,*

<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/minimum-wage/#:~:text=The%20True%20Story%20of%20the%20Minimum-Wage%20Fight>.

Freakonomics Podcast, #232, *The True Story of the Gender Pay Gap,* <http://freakonomics.com/podcast/the-true-story-of-the-gender-pay-gap-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/>.

**Meeting 14 (November 30): "Inequitable" Income/Wealth as the Justification for**

**Munger's Equity Policy**

H&M, Ch. 9: *Government Taxation and the Redistribution of Income*

Intelligence Squared Debate, It's Time to Redistribute the Wealth,

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/its-time-redistribute-wealth>.

Freakonomics Podcast, #284, *Is Income Inequality Inevitable*,

<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/earth-2-0-income-inequality/>.

Peterson Institute, *How to Fix Economic Inequality*,

<https://www.piie.com/microsites/how-fix-economic-inequality>.

**Meeting 15 (December 7): Ways of Achieving Greater Equity After Market Outcomes:**

**Cash Transfers, Commodity Transfers, or Institutional Changes?**

Brookings, *Time Will Heal: Five Ways to Address the Inheritance of Black Poverty, Starting Now,*

[*https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2021/06/11/time-will-not-heal-5-ways-to-address-the-inheritance-of-black-poverty-starting-now/*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2021/06/11/time-will-not-heal-5-ways-to-address-the-inheritance-of-black-poverty-starting-now/)*.*

Freakonomics Podcast, #466, *She's from the Government, and She's Here to Help,*

<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/cecilia-rouse/>.

Ozy, *A Job for Everyone? This 21st-Century Keynes Says it's Possible*,

<https://www.ozy.com/the-new-and-the-next/a-job-for-everyone-this-21st-century-keynes-says-its-possible/88688/>.

Intelligence Squared Debate, *The UBI is the Safety Net of the Future,*

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/universal-basic-income-safety-net-future>.

Freakonomics Podcast, #427, *The Pros and Cons of Reparations,*

<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/reparations-part-2/>.

Discuss your Final Policy Prospectus Topic

**Final (December 14) Policy Analysis Due No Later Than 6 p.m.**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Grading Rubric for Weekly HW Type #2 Essays**

**PPA 220A - Fall 2021**

"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)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 full HW assignment/question reproduced, (2) two-page full-length body of the essay, and (3) separate final page with the reference list in APA style. Use Times New Roman 11 Font only with one-inch margins all around. No footnotes or endnotes. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use the Editor function in Word with "passive voice" detection. Eliminate all forms of passive voice in your writing. The best way to do this is to write in the first person. Also, correct any other grammatical errors flagged by the Word Editor. I will run your essay through the Editor and deduct points for flagged items not corrected. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Begin your essay 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 essay with a final paragraph that states a 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, which is standard for all writing in PPA and ULD 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)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Final Policy Prospectus**

**PPA 220A – Fall 2021 – Professor Rob Wassmer**

**Due on December 14, 2021, at 6 p.m.**

**One Grade Deduction Taken for Every Portion of a Day Late**

**Submit Only a Word electronic copy in one file to** [**rwassme@csus.edu**](mailto:rwassme@csus.edu)

***I reserve the right to make slight modifications to this before December 1.***

Overview

You must write no more than a seven-page, typed, and double-spaced document (Times New Roman 12 Font, one-inch margins all around). The document is a policy prospectus to your elected or appointed boss (on how to take a Meltzer and Schwartz rational-based approach to think about, defining, and offering a solutionto your **choice of a state or local public policy concern that is related to one of the CA public policy concerns covered in your *Weekly CalMatters*** portfolio.

I will use the rubric contained on the next page to score your policy prospectus and assign it a grade. Pay careful attention to what this rubric is asking for and the further instructions offered below. Think about writing a paper that incorporates the concepts/approaches learned in this course. Thus, write something that you would not have been able to do before taking this course.

Instructions

Structure this policy prospectus as an essay with an appropriate cover page. Also include an introductory section describing what is in the essay, section headings covering the requested material, and a concluding section. You will need a reference list at the end, and **citations must be in APA style**. Tables and figures should be in the appendix to the essay and do not count toward your seven-page limit. I will not read beyond seven pages. (Your cover page, tables/figures, and reference list are not part of this seven-page limit.) Besides these constraints and the mandatory components below, the remaining form of the write-up is up to you.

Specifics To Include

1. Identify the elected or appointed government official reading your essay. Write at a level of explanation and tone for someone in this position. (They are likely college-educated but do not assume any prior economic or policy analysis knowledge.)

1. Be clear on the purpose of this document in an introductory section and describe at the close of your introduction how you structure your write-up into specific sections. The first paragraph should end with something like: "In this summary of proposed policy analysis, I will…" Use section headings throughout the paper. End with a section that features your specific conclusion(s). Thus, a statement like: "In this prospectus of a proposed policy analysis, I have…."
2. Place in **bold** in your introduction a one-sentence **problem statement** in the form suggested by Meltzer and Schwartz, Chapter 2. Also, include additional paragraphs that describe the magnitude of the policy problem you have chosen, the magnitude of change required for a solution, and why the problem warrants public intervention based on one or more of the sides of Munger's Triangle. (Is it an "efficiency," "equity," or both public policy problem?)
3. The section after the introduction should be at least two pages long and describe the public policy problem in appropriate detail within the context of the economics and policy framework learned in this class. Carefully look over your notes and describe the economic and policy concepts you learned that help your client better understand why the government should get involved with this problem and the alternatives you are proposing. Consider this a section that you could not have possibly written before taking this class – so demonstrate to me that you have learned. **Also, include at least one figure/diagram/chart/etc. to stimulate interest in your topic.**
4. Choose three **alternatives** that could help solve the policy problem. Describe each of these alternatives in more detail in a half-page or more. Chapter 3 in Meltzer and Schwartz can help in the construction of these alternatives. If possible, base one of these alternatives on behavioral economics.
5. Choose and describe three different **criteria** to evaluate the desirability of the three alternatives put forward. I suggest these criteria be **some measure of cost efficiency, some measure of equity, and the third related to administrability.** Describe each criterion in a half-page or more. Address whether different weights apply to criteria when deciding the best alternative.
6. Conclude with your recommendation on what alternative to pursue to tackle the policy problem. Be sure to detail your justification for choosing this alternative through first a qualitative Criteria-Alternatives-Matrix (CAM) that then translates into a quantitative CAM.
7. Turn on the Editor in Microsoft Word (or use another one) and be sure to correct all issues. I will do the same when grading and grade you down for common grammar/spelling problems flagged. **Eliminate the presence of passive voice**.

**Grading Rubric for Policy Prospectus**

**PPA 220A - Fall 2021**

"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)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Required Content*** | **20** | **19** | **18** | **17** | **16** | **15** | **14** | **10** | **5** | **0** |
| **Organization & Presentation** done as asked for in instructions; grammar, punctuation, and spelling up to Word Editor standards and no passive voice; at least one appropriate table/figure; APA citation method used with a reference list including class citations and at least three from outside of class |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Public Policy Problem Statement/Elaboration** follows the principles laid out in Bardach and Melzer/Schwartz; drawn from CA policy issue discussed in class, and justification for govt intervention based upon what learned from microeconomics and Munger's Triangle |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Choice & Description of Policy Alternatives** follows the principles laid out in Bardach and Melzer/Schwartz; justification for why would solve policy problem; and one alternative uses a behavioral economics concept if possible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Choice & Description of Criteria & Weights** follows the principles laid out in Bardach and Melzer/Schwartz; justification for why using a criterion and weight applied to it; and political acceptability considered in a final policy recommendation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **My Overall Impression as a Concise, Information-Packed Prospectus to an Elected Official on the Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Criteria Alternative Matrix (CAM) Methodology** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Score (100 Possible)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Student Services Information and Links**

1. [Services to Students with Disability (SSWD)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/)  
   *"Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where the course or instructional content is usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that 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."*
2. [Student Health and Counseling Services](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/)  
   *"Your physical and mental health are 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 during your time 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. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost."*
3. [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 that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student*
4. [Drop and Withdrawal Policy](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/internal/_internal/_documents/drop-and-withdrawal-policy.pdf)
5. [Grading Policy](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad/umg05150.htm)
6. [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://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/)

[Reading & Writing Center](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0119.htm)