

PPA 200: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION
FALL 2026

This is a living document subject to change and revision as we progress through the semester.
LAST UPDATED: AUGUST 25, 2026

Schedule

Mondays: 6:00pm-8:50pm, DTN 104/105 (Section 1)
Tuesdays: 6:00pm-8:50pm, DTN 104/105 (Section 2)

Combined intensive: Saturday, September 27: 9am-3pm

Teaching Team

Instructor:

Dr. Amal Kumar, Ph.D. (kumar@csus.edu)

Office hours: DTN 225 or by Zoom

Monday: 5:00-5:30pm

Tuesday: 4:00-5:30pm

Wednesday: 3:00-4:00pm

Or by appointment

General assistance:

Sovannra Yos, PPA Department Coordinator (yos@csus.edu)

Course Description

In addition to being an introduction to the MPPA program, PPA 200 is an introduction to the conceptual foundations of the study of public policy and administration.

First, PPA 200 is a broad, interdisciplinary survey exploring the problems and problem-solving processes in the public sector. This course is intended to offer each of you an opportunity to step back from the details of your day-to-day work, map the broader landscape of public policy and administration, and see the connections between the different components of the policy process. It is also designed to introduce you to the content and skills you will need to master in later coursework and your PPA culminating project.

We will begin with a broad review of democratic institutions and the roles of policymaking and administration, and we'll cover the State of California in some detail. We will then survey several conceptual frameworks to make sense of the policy process and how policy gets translated and implemented through public administration. Through the course assignments, you will have opportunities to apply these frameworks to a policy arena of professional or personal interest to you.

Second, this course is an introduction to professional writing and argumentation—important skills in which you will need to develop proficiency to succeed in the MPPA program and your careers as public service leaders. Writing is a skill. Giving and receiving feedback on writing are also skills. In this course, as in your professional careers beyond this program, you will have to give—and receive—feedback on your own and others’ writing. Learning how to give feedback with kindness and rigor and responding to feedback with grace are key objectives of this course. The course assignments are deliberately structured to give you multiple opportunities to write, give and respond to feedback, and rewrite.

Finally, this course serves as an introduction for each one of you to the community that you will build with your colleagues over the next few years. We learn best in community, with each other and from each other. This course will help you form the bonds and establish the norms that will serve as the foundation for your learning community through this program and a professional network that you can carry well after you graduate.

Learning Goals

MPPA Learning Objectives	Application in PPA 200
<i>1. Critical and Integrative Thinking</i>	
c) Construct clear problem definitions with attention to client interests and varied stakeholder perspectives	Use different conceptual frameworks to understand policy formulation and implementation, with particular attention to the role of various stakeholders throughout.
<i>2. Practical Applications</i>	
b) Work effectively in groups	Support colleagues in their writing and argumentation by working collaboratively and offering constructive peer feedback; deepen understanding of content in small- and large-group classroom settings.
e) Write clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences	Practice writing clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences in multiple writing assignments with opportunities to provide and receive feedback and revise and resubmit writing.
f) Use effective modes of verbal presentation with an awareness of audience and purpose	Practice using effective oral communication in group discussions and in-class presentations.
<i>3. Professional Role</i>	
a) Recognize the role public servants play in advancing or impeding a more prosperous, just, equitable, and inclusive society	Identify and explore the institutional systems, policies, and norms that constitute U.S. and California governance with special attention to the varied roles and responsibilities of policymakers and administrators.
b) Understand obligations to advance public value consistent with rule of law and an enduring search for reasonable and just action	
c) Consider ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration	Examine issues of inequity and inequality in public policy/administration; consider the tradeoffs and choices that policymakers and administrators confront in their work; explore the role of scholars and practitioners in advancing the public good in the public sector
d) Understand differences between analysis and advocacy including insider and outside roles	Understand the role(s) of various actors and stakeholders in the policy process; acknowledge and articulate personal and social values that inform policy analysis or administration

4. Writing Intensive	
a) Understand the major research and/or professional conventions, practices, and methods of inquiry of the discipline.	Write clearly and succinctly in the forms of weekly reading responses and longer analytic papers summarizing public policy and administrative concepts.
b) Understand some formats, genres, and styles of writing used in the discipline.	Apply instructor and peer feedback to strengthen writing practices.
c) Practice reading and writing within the discipline and as a learning process that involves peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing.	Explain claims and conclusions effectively based on appropriate evidence. Provide constructive peer feedback.

Course Format:

My goal as an instructor is to create a community of learners, and I count myself in that community. We each bring our own expertise and experiences to bear on the course material, and it is imperative that you share your expertise with your colleagues and learn from theirs. This course is accordingly structured as a discussion-based course, which means that I will never lecture for the full class period. Rather, I will facilitate discussions and group exercises designed to further application of the learning.

The readings will provide the foundation. We'll spend most of our time together applying what we have read and putting the various readings in dialogue with each other in a way that matters for your professional and academic growth. My expectation is that you will have read thoroughly enough to pull out main ideas. I recommend coming to class with the main points of each reading with you ([take good notes!](#)).

Required Texts/Readings

This course has no required textbook. All required readings are open-access and publicly available, or accessible through the [Sacramento State University Library databases](#), or will be posted as PDFs on the course Canvas website.

Weekend Intensives: Saturday, October 3 and Saturday, October 17

On two Saturdays this semester, October 3 and October 17, we will have a full day together across both sections of PPA 200. These meetings will be opportunities for you to continue to get to know each other across sections and deepen your connections. We will also cover the major conceptual frameworks for public policy and public administration and set up the first drafts of your course papers, which will be due at the end of the following week.

Since the two Saturdays front-load quite a bit of class time, we will finish this course before Thanksgiving. The reading load will also get lighter as we progress through the semester.

Because these meetings are the equivalent of two weeks of class each, there is a considerable amount of reading for that meeting. Please review the syllabus now and plan accordingly. You must do all the readings ahead of time. I recommend breaking down the reading into chunks each week during the semester and taking good notes so that you're not left with too much to do the week of the intensive.

Course Expectations:

1. "Letter to your professor"	5%
2. Course engagement	15%
3. Weekly reading reflections	25%
4. Wicked Problem Paper	55%
4.1. First draft	5%
4.2. Second draft	10%
4.3. Peer Review memo	10%
4.4. Final draft	30%
5. Total	100%

Grades

A	94-100%	A-	90-93%		
B+	87-89%	B	84-86%	B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%	C	74-76%	C-	70-73%
D+:	67-69%	D	64-66%	D-	60-63%
F:	<60%				

This course will practice mastery-based grading, which means that you will focus on doing high-quality work in a timely matter, giving and receiving substantive feedback, and iterating from that feedback until you have mastered the key skills and concepts of this course. You will have several opportunities to demonstrate mastery of each learning objective. The grade you earn in this course will be based on how well you eventually demonstrate mastery. If you show up, engage in class discussions, do all the work in a timely manner, and demonstrate effort and improvement, you will likely earn the A range in the course.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All assignments have two deadlines listed. If you are enrolled in Section 1 (Monday), your deadline is the first of those two dates. If you are enrolled in Section 2 (Tuesday), your deadline is the second of those two dates. Please check the Canvas website for your specific assignment deadline.

IMPORTANT NOTE 2: All assignments must be submitted double-spaced, with one-inch margins, using a standard 12-point font.

1. “Letter to your professor” (5%)

Due by: 11:59pm, Sunday, August 30, emailed to me at kumar@csus.edu

Subject line: PPA 200 [First Name] [Last Name] Letter

This “assignment” is designed to help me get to know you better and plan our course meetings to facilitate your learning.

Please write me a short email (1-2 paragraphs) telling me anything you think I should know about you to support and challenge you as a learner in this class. For example: where do you work, or where do you hope to work after you complete the program? What are you excited about, what are you worried about, what are your superpowers? Do you have preferred pronouns, or a nickname you prefer to go by, or a particular pronunciation of your name? You don’t have to answer these questions specifically—just tell me what you think will help me support you as an individual and a learner.

2. Course engagement (15%):

In this course, we will be drawing on several texts including case studies, newspaper and other media articles, policy briefs, and scans of research and practice. We will also be drawing on the rich and diverse experiences of our learning community in the classroom. Putting all these ideas in dialogue with one another requires active class participation in both small and large groups. It also requires you to be really prepared for discussion.

For the in-class component of participation, quality is more important than quantity. Good class participation is not about how much you talk, but rather about what you say. In this course, participation means listening actively, deepening the discussion, challenging assumptions, and using the relationships you have invested in with each other to help both individuals and our collective learning community continue to develop as scholars and leaders.

You will have a variety of ways to demonstrate your participation and engagement: we will have large and small group discussions, short reflective writing exercises, and some role-plays to help us see policy and administrative concepts in action. No matter how you choose to participate, because this class will be run as a professional learning community, you are expected to attend all classes. If you need to miss a class, please email us as soon as possible. Barring emergencies, absences are not allowed for the two Saturday intensives.

3. Weekly reading reflections (25%):

Grading basis: 0-1-2

Due by: 11:59pm the night before class

Every week, except as indicated in the syllabus, you will submit a reading reflection to help you prepare for our class discussion. By midnight the day before class, please submit a short (~500 words) reflection into Canvas. I will not be grading these on “correctness”—we haven’t discussed the concepts in class yet! Rather, I will be evaluating these responses in terms of how thoughtfully you engage with the week’s readings. As you read, think about:

1. *What are the big ideas of the week?*
2. *Why does it matter? To whom does it matter? What’s at stake here?*
3. *Why did I assign these readings together? How do the ideas speak to (i.e., complement, contradict, complicate) each other?*
4. *What are implications of these complications and contradictions for our work as public administrators?*

Important Note #1: The purpose of the reading responses is not to have you answer these questions in a plug-and-chug manner. This is a graduate course, and I leave these questions here as illustrative of the kind of critical reading I want you to do as you prepare for class. Ultimately, write about whatever is most useful to you in your preparation, as long as it is thoughtful and integrative.

Important Note #2: These reading reflections are not reading summaries. It will not be sufficient to summarize each of the readings. The key to a good reading reflection is to tell me how you *make sense of* what you have read, or how that *applies* in your workplace or other organizations you are a part of, or how the week’s readings connect to each other and to our class discussions in earlier weeks. What is really, really important is your attempt to synthesize, apply, and communicate your understanding.

There are many ways to write a good reading response. I do not expect a particular format. I do, however, expect full sentences and paragraphs and evidence that you have read and reflected on all the assigned readings for the week.

I will not be checking for an exact word count. What is most important is that you engage deeply with the ideas in the texts to help you prepare for the class discussion, rather than worry about whether your response is at 480 or 520 words.

There are 7 required reading reflections plus two extra-credit reflections (for the two Saturday intensives). Because the purpose of this assignment is to help you prepare for class, I will not accept any late submissions.

4. Wicked Problem Paper (55%)

The overall goal of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to practice nuanced analysis of a “wicked” public policy problem of interest to you, and to practice the learning that comes through iteration and feedback. These skills are essential for public sector leadership and successful completion of this program, and thus we will practice them.

Your audience here is the educated layperson—someone who is interested in the problem you’re analyzing but does not have your expertise. Your goal in this paper is to bring them up to speed: what do they need to know to engage with the complexity and nuance of problem and solution?

You will work through this paper iteratively, with support from me and your colleagues in the classroom, and in stages throughout the semester. In addition to practicing the learning goals of this course, this step-by-step and iterative structure will help you see how large, complex projects can be broken down into discrete, manageable tasks. In my experience, papers benefit from iteration and feedback—all of us benefit from other people asking us questions and pointing out gaps in our understanding.

By the time you submit your final paper, you will have had multiple opportunities to write and rewrite this paper with feedback from me and your peers. Your grade will be based on a rubric that I will distribute early in the semester, so that you know what our expectations are for the final draft even as you write your first draft. Your final grade will reflect both the quality of the final paper and the quality of revision from the first draft to the final.

Your final submission will be 10-12 pages excluding references and tables/figures, formatted double-spaced with one-inch margins and using a standard 12-point font.

4.1. First Draft: Wickedness + Stakeholders (5%)

Due by: 11:59pm, Sunday September 27 / Monday, September 28

Part I: (~2-3pp)

In this assignment, you will identify a “wicked” policy problem of interest to you and describe/justify its “wickedness.” You will identify key stakeholders at the federal, state, and/or local levels, as appropriate, and explain each stakeholder’s problem-framings, proposed solution(s), and the conflicts/tensions between those framings.

This paper should be 2-3 pages excluding references and tables/figures, formatted double-spaced with one-inch margins and using a standard 12-point font.

4.2. Second Draft: First Draft + History + Public Policy + Public Administration (10%)

Due by: 11:59pm, Sunday, October 25

Once you have systematically analyzed the current state, you will choose one policy intervention that has been implemented and explore it in greater detail by tracing its history and analyzing it through the lens of the public policy and public administration frameworks we will learn about during the Saturday intensives.

Part I: (~2-3pp) – updated and revised as needed, PLUS

Part II: (~5-7pp)

Drawing on course readings, our class discussions, and your own research, you will first build on your stakeholder analysis and develop a policy history of the wicked problem: how have problem framings changed over time? What kinds of prior interventions have created path dependence? You will then analyze your chosen policy intervention using one of the three public policy analysis frameworks of your choosing: when and how did the intervention come about? How did it get on the agenda? Why did it pass? You will integrate this analysis with a critical policy lens to examine how the evolving constructions of the problem/solution reflect social power imbalances: whose interests were served by the status quo and who benefited under the implemented solution? Who lost out?

Part III: (~2-4pp)

You will then draw on one of the public administration frameworks and explain how your policy intervention has been implemented. In your analysis, you should first summarize the key features of framework, *citing appropriate course texts*, and then consider the implementation features that are made salient through that lens. Be sure to discuss tradeoffs: what are the benefits of implementing the solution this way? What are the drawbacks? Again, regardless of which framework you use, be sure to make an argument with each of your claims appropriately supported by evidence.

Regardless of which policy problem or analytical framework you use, be sure to make an argument, with each of your claims appropriately supported by evidence.

This draft should be 10-12 pages excluding references and tables/figures, formatted double-spaced with one-inch margins and using a standard 12-point font.

4.3. The Peer Review (10%)

Due by: 11:59pm on Friday, November 6/ Saturday, November 7

During our class meeting on November 2/3, we will spend some time working with a peer-review and feedback protocol to deliver and receive feedback on our first drafts. Using the 'track changes' and 'comments' feature, please provide feedback to your partner: be sure to specifically identify areas of strength and conceptual weaknesses and offer concrete suggestions to help your colleague make the argument they are trying to make.

I will grade your peer review based on the depth and thoughtfulness of your suggestions. It must be clear that you have a) closely read the paper; b) you understand its argument; c) your feedback is actionable and responds to your partner's asks; and d) you have identified other areas of strength and areas of development as relevant.

4.4. Final Draft (30%)

Due by: 5:59pm on Monday, November 16 // Tuesday, November 17

Drawing on the feedback you have received from me and your peer reviewer, you will revise the first half of your paper to incorporate and/or respond to their comments, strengthening your argument.

For this draft, you will include a 1-2 page memo at the top of your paper responding to my feedback and your peer reviewer. Address each key concern, common areas of feedback (or disagreement), and describe the changes you have made or not made. It is okay not to make all (or any!) of the suggested changes, but you must have a clear and well-justified rationale either way.

Your final drafts will be 11-14 pages: 1-2 pages of your response memo PLUS your 10-12 page final paper, excluding tables/references, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins using a 12-point standard font. Your final paper should be in narrative, paragraph form, with fully developed arguments, backed by evidence, justifying your analysis of the policy problem. All citations should be appropriately formatted.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is an essential quality in public service, including academic integrity. A former professor told me to care for my academic integrity as I would for all dimensions of my integrity, and I encourage you to do the same. Please read the [academic honesty policy](#) and consult the Sacramento State library's [tutorials](#) if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism. Many times, plagiarism is unintentional, but it is plagiarism regardless.

AI Policy

Artificial Intelligence can be a very helpful research tool. The key here, as with any tool, is in *how* and *why* it is used. I am not reflexively opposed to the use of AI tools in PPA 200, but I will insist on integrity: i.e., that work that you claim to be yours is, in fact, yours. It is allowable to use Generative AI to refine your writing (e.g. grammar, style, typos), but you may not use AI tools of any kind to write drafts or parts of drafts.

If you use AI tools beyond basic refinement as described above for any assignment in PPA 200, please describe HOW AND WHY you used it in an AI Appendix (does not count towards word count). You should include a list of all prompts given to the AI tool, explain why you asked the

AI tool these specific questions, and how you modified your submission in light of the AI tool's response.

If you did not use an AI tool beyond basic refinement, you must include an AI disclosure in a footnote asserting that you did not use any AI tools beyond basic grammatical refinement.

If you did not use an AI tool at all, you must include an AI disclosure in a footnote asserting that you did not use any AI tools at all.

Generative Artificial Intelligence tools are not appropriate sources for your assignments, in the same way that you would not cite Google or Wikipedia as sources. AI tools can be helpful in finding appropriate sources—like a turbocharged Google search—but can hallucinate, invent sources, and misapply concepts. Your responsibility is to read and cite the primary sources and fully understand their contents.

Any writing you submit to me must be substantially yours. Be judicious—excessive AI use, even if fully explained, is not your original work, and I will insist that the work you submit be your original work. A helpful rule of thumb is the “ask a human” rule: would you ask a colleague in class to do what you are asking the AI assistant to do? Or, if a colleague asked you to do it, would you do it? If you wouldn't ask a human to do it, you probably shouldn't ask AI.

It is your responsibility to verify that all sources cited actually exist and your interpretation is defensible. Citing sources that do not exist as cited is tantamount to inventing sources, which is academically dishonest. Submitting material that is not substantially developed by you is academically dishonest. Failure to disclose AI use is academically dishonest. I take academic integrity very seriously. I reserve the right to deduct points for insufficient originality of submitted material.

Important Notes about Inclusion

In this course, we join with our colleagues across Sacramento State to help students develop the cultural competencies necessary to be effective public sector leaders. I look forward to building a learning community together in which we can bring our whole complex selves and talk about how our own multiple identities intersect with systems and with other people, and what that means for public policy and administration. We will explore and encourage different points of view, learn, make mistakes, fail forward, and celebrate our successes, because that's what it means to be a community of leaders and learners.

Sacramento State provides a host of services to support your whole complex selves both inside and outside the classroom. Please reach out to these offices should you need their assistance! They are here to help.

[Services to Students with Disability \(SSWD\)](#)

I want all learners to have the supports they need to thrive. I encourage students needing accommodations in instruction or evaluation to notify SSWD early in the semester. Getting in touch with SSWD is important because no accommodations can be made without authorization from that office. If you already have an accommodation for this course, please provide me with that information privately so that I can make those adjustments in a timely manner. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

[Student Health and Counseling Services](#)

"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 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."

[Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support \(CARES\)](#)

"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](#)

[University Grading Policy](#)

[University Academic Advising](#)

[Information Resources and Technology](#)

[Support Centers and Programs](#)

[Reading & Writing Center](#)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

Unit 1: Wicked Problems, Federalism, and California Government

Week 1. Aug 31/Sep 1: Introductions/Wicked Problems

No reading reflection due this week

The study of “wicked problems”

- Crowley, K., & Head, B. W. (2017). The enduring challenge of ‘wicked problems’: Revisiting Rittel and Webber. *Policy Sciences*, 50(4), 539–547. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-017-9302-4>
- Lowi, T. (2003). Law vs. Public Policy: A Critical Exploration. *Cornell Journal of Law and Public Policy*, 12(3), 493–502. <https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cjlp/vol12/iss3/2>

Week 2, Sept 7/8: LABOR DAY // NO CLASS

Week 3, Sep 14/15: Federalism and California

Wicked Problems (continued)

- Head, B. W. (2022). Wicked Problems in Public Policy: Understanding and Responding to Complex Challenges. Palgrave Macmillan. [pp. 7-35]. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94580-0>
 - Read Chapter 1 (Debates in Public Policy”) & Chapter 2 (“The Rise of Wicked Problems”)

Federalism

- Cain, B.E., Hui, I., Gibson, K., Gordon, K., Popp, O., & Brady, H.E. (2023). The Future of Federalism and Foreign policy. <https://california100.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/The-Future-of-Federalism-and-Foreign-Policy-ISSUE-REPORT.pdf>
 - Read pp. 10-31 (From “An Overview...” until “Energy and Water Case Studies”).
- Peterson, P. E. (1995). Who Should Do What? Divided Responsibility in the Federal System. *The Brookings Review*, 13(2), 6–11. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20080549>

State & Local Budgets [skim for key concepts]

- Graves, S. (2025). *Guide to the State Budget Process*. California Budget & Policy Center. <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/a-guide-to-the-california-state-budget-process/>
- Graves, S. (2025). *Guide to the County Budget Process*. California Budget & Policy Center. <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/california-county-budget-process-guide/>
- Mischynski, D., & Mejia, M. C. (2011). *The State-City Fiscal Relationship in California*. Public Policy Institute of California. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/the-state-city-fiscal-relationship-in-california/>
- Graves, S., & Nair, N. (2025). Understanding Realignment: California’s Shifts in State and County Responsibilities. *California Budget & Policy Center*. <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/understanding-realignment-californias-shifts-in-state-and-county-responsibilities/>

Week 4, Sep 21/22: Direct Democracy, Nonprofits, and Advocates

The Initiative Process

- Dyck, J. J., Hussey, W., & Edward L. Lascher, J. (2019). American State Ballot Initiatives and Income Inequality. *Politics and Governance*, 7(2), 380–409.
<https://www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance/article/view/1873>
- Simmons, C. W. (1997). *California's Statewide Initiative Process* (CRB-97-006). California Research Bureau. <https://www.library.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/crb-reports/97006.pdf> [pp. 1-15]
- Zócalo Public Square (Director). (2022, May 11). *Is This What Direct Democracy Looks Like? At Zócalo Public Square*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luNe2n5l3k8>

Nonprofits and advocates

- California Association of Nonprofits & The Nonprofit Institute. (2019). *Causes Count: The Economic Power of California's Nonprofit Sector*. California Association of Nonprofits.
 - Read closely pp. 5-10, 45-56; 71. Skim the rest
- Kettl, D. F. (2000). The Transformation of Governance: Globalization, Devolution, and the Role of Government. *Public Administration Review*, 60(6), 488–497.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/977432>
 - Read pp. 492-497 (starting at "Devolution")
- Avner, M. A. (2016). Advocacy, Lobbying, and Social Change. In D. O. Renz & R. D. Herman (Eds.), *The Jossey Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management* (pp. 396–426). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119176558.ch14>

Unit 2: Public Policy Analysis

Week 5. Sep 28/29: Policy History

First drafts due Sunday, September 27 // Monday, September 28

- Spector, B. (2014). Using History Ahistorically: Presentism and the Tranquility Fallacy. *Management & Organizational History*, 9(3), 305–313.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17449359.2014.920261>
- Pierson, P. (2005). The Study of Policy Development. *Journal of Policy History*, 17(01), 34.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/jph.2005.0006>
- Dennis, E. M., Blomquist, W., Milman, A., & Moran, T. (2020). Path Dependence, Evolution of a Mandate and the Road to Statewide Sustainable Groundwater Management. *Society & Natural Resources*, 33(12), 1542–1554. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2020.1772926>

Weeks 6+7. October 3: Public Policy Analysis [SATURDAY INTENSIVE #1]

Reading reflection OPTIONAL [extra credit]

Policy process theory

- Cairney, P. (2017, July 11). Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Policy Process. *Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy*. <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2017/07/11/policy-concepts-in-1000-words-the-policy-process/>

Theoretical Frameworks

- Multiple Streams:
 - Cairney, P. (2013, October 31). Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: Multiple Streams Analysis. *Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy*.
<https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2013/10/31/policy-concepts-in-1000-words-multiple-streams-analysis/>
 - Hoefler, R. (2022). The Multiple Streams Framework: Understanding and Applying the Problems, Policies, and Politics Approach. *Journal of Policy Practice and Research*, 3(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42972-022-00049-2>
- Punctuated Equilibrium Theory
 - Cairney, P. (2013, October 29). Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: Punctuated Equilibrium Theory. *Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy*.
<https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2013/10/29/policy-concepts-in-1000-words-punctuated-equilibrium-theory/>
- Advocacy Coalition
 - Cairney, P. (2013, October 30). Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Advocacy Coalition Framework. *Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy*.
<https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/policy-concepts-in-1000-words-the-advocacy-coalition-framework/>
- Critical Policy Analysis
 - Diem, S., Young, M. D., Welton, A. D., Mansfield, K. C., & Lee, P.-L. (2014). The intellectual landscape of critical policy analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(9), 1068–1090.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2014.916007>

Applications:

- Cook, J. J. (2018). The EPA, NHTSA, and the Multiple Streams drive climate policy outcome. *Environmental Practice*, 20(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14660466.2018.1424489>
- Beard, V. (2013). A Theoretical Understanding of Housing and Homelessness: Federal Homelessness and Housing Policy Through the Lenses of Punctuated Equilibrium Theory and Advocacy Coalition Frameworks. *Poverty & Public Policy*, 5(1), 67–87.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/pop4.16>
- Mosley, J. E., & Gibson, K. (2017). Strategic use of evidence in state-level policymaking: Matching evidence type to legislative stage. *Policy Sciences*, 50(4), 697–719.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-017-9289-x>

Week 8, Oct 5/6: Writing Workshop

No reading reflection due

Writing

- Coven, Martha B. (2022). [Podcast] “Writing on the Job”
<https://spia.princeton.edu/news/endnotes-writing-job-martha-coven>

- Federal plain writing guidelines: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>

Argumentation

- Fallacies [Handout]. The Writing Center, UNC Chapel Hill (2020). <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/fallacies/>
- Evaluating Digital Sources, Purdue OWL: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/conducting_research/evaluating_sources_of_information/evaluating_digital_sources.html

Week 9, Oct 12/13: Evidence and Evidence-based policy

Evidence and evidence-based policy:

- Greenhalgh, T., & Russell, J. (2009). Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Critique. *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 52(2), 304–318. <https://doi.org/10.1353/pbm.0.0085>
- Keohane, Joe (2010). “How Facts Backfire - Researchers discover a surprising threat to democracy: our brains” *The Boston Globe*. http://archive.boston.com/news/science/articles/2010/07/11/how_facts_backfire/?page=full
- Review Mosley & Gibson (2017) for uses of evidence vs. advocacy coalition framework

Unit 3: Public Administration & Public Management

Weeks 10+11, Oct 17: Bureaucracy and its discontents [SATURDAY INTENSIVE #2]

Reading reflection OPTIONAL [extra credit]

Bureaucracy (“Public”)

- Chapter XI, “Bureaucracy.” In Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology* (G. Roth & C. Wittich, Eds.). University of California Press. [pp. 956-965, until “Excursus on Tax-Farming”; pp. 973-975 “Technical Superiority...”] <https://archive.org/details/MaxWeberEconomyAndSociety>
- Olsen, J. P. (2006). Maybe It Is Time to Rediscover Bureaucracy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui027>

New Public Management (“Private”)

- Hood, C. (1991). A Public Management for All Seasons? *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.1991.tb00779.x>
 - Read until “three clusters of administrative values” (p. 10)

- Box, R. C. (1999). Running Government Like a Business: Implications for Public Administration Theory and Practice. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 29(1), 19–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02750749922064256>
 - Read only until p. 38 (“Services the public sector should provide”)
- Ferlie, E. (2017, March 29). *The New Public Management and Public Management Studies*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.129>
 - Skip pp. 7-9 (“Vignettes of non-UK countries” until “Literature Review”)
 - Read only until p. 12 “Putting Public Management Scholarship Back...”

Public Value Governance (“Collaborative”)

- Stoker, G. (2006). Public Value Management: A New Narrative for Networked Governance? *The American Review of Public Administration*, 36(1), 41–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074005282583>
- Krogh, A. H., & Triantafillou, P. (2024). Developing New Public Governance as a public management reform model. *Public Management Review*, 26(10), 3040–3056. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2024.2313539>
 - Stop at Section 5 (“Grasping the Quiet Revolution...”)
- Clark, J. K. (2021). Public Values and Public Participation: A Case of Collaborative Governance of a Planning Process. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 51(3), 199–212. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074020956397>

Week 12, October 19/20: Writing + Synthesis week

Second draft due October 25

Attendance is optional. I will hold additional in-person office hours from 5:30-8pm.

Week 13, October 26/27: Equity & Administrative Burden

- Herd, P., Hoynes, H., Michener, J., & Moynihan, D. (2023). Introduction: Administrative Burden as a Mechanism of Inequality in Policy Implementation. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 9(5), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2023.9.5.01>
- Norman-Major, K. (2011). Balancing the Four Es; or Can We Achieve Equity for Social Equity in Public Administration? *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 17(2), 233–252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2011.12001640>
- Lowrey, A. (2022, April 25). \$100 Million to Cut the Time Tax. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/code-for-america-time-tax/629655/> [Available on Canvas]
- Optional, but worth a read:
 - Lowrey, A. (2021, July 27). The Time Tax. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/07/how-government-learned-waste-your-time-tax/619568/>

Week 14, Nov 2/3: Special Topics: Technology & Wicked Problems

Peer reviews due November Friday, November 6 // Saturday, November 7

Technology & wicked problems

- Kumar, A. (2025). Productizing pedagogy: Educational television, wicked problems, and the study of social innovation. In S. Dorado, H. Haugh, R. D. Wadhwani, & R. Hamann (Eds.), *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* (Vols. 96, Big Picture Approaches to the Impact of Social Innovations, pp. 51–70). Emerald Publishing Limited.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X20250000096003>
- Estruth, J. A. (2024). Biden's CHIPS and Science Act in Historical Perspective. *California History*, 101(2), 68–79. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ch.2024.101.2.68>
- Baykurt, B. (2025). Gov-tech as capture: Public infrastructures under data capitalism. *Information, Communication & Society*, 28(15), 2795–2810.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2025.2479788>.

Peer reviewing:

- <https://hbr.org/podcast/2016/02/how-to-give-constructive-feedback>
- Read your assigned peer's first draft

Week 15, Nov 9/10: Role of the Public Administrator

No reflection due this week.

- Read through my comments + your peer reviewers' comments on your drafts
- McSwite, O. C. (2001). Theory Competency for MPA-Educated Practitioners. *Public Administration Review*, 61(1), 100–115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-3352.00010>
- Chapter 8 "Policy Analysis in Practice." In, Meltzer, R., & Schwartz, A. (2018). *Policy Analysis As Problem Solving: A Flexible and Evidence-Based Framework*. Taylor & Francis Group.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/harvard-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5611552>

Week 16, Nov 16/17: Wrap up, debrief

Final drafts due by 6pm on November 16/17.