

## PPA296E: INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Tuesdays 6-8:50 pm, Hybrid

- Our first meeting will be held in a virtual setting. Zoom link will be provided via Canvas.
- We will meet in person at DTN110 on Sep 2, Oct 7, and Dec 2, and the rest of the sessions will be held online.

Instructor: Dr. Ahrum Chang

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Office Hours: M & W 4:30-6 pm, DTN 230, or by appointment

### Course Description

This course will help MPPA students understand how different levels of government interact vertically and horizontally in implementing policies and delivering services. Using real-world cases, previous literature, technical reports, and in-class activities, the class will review the origins and various types of federalism in the American government system and learn collaborative competencies and strategies in multi-level governance. Beyond reading and participating in class discussions and activities, students will apply concepts from collaborative governance, intergovernmental relations, and network management to analyze and prescribe action for their local/community issues.

### Learning Objectives

PPA296E is an elective class. I design it to address five of [19 learning objectives](#) of MPPA program. The following table shows the objectives applicable to PPA296E and how they are applied in this course.

PPA Learning Objectives	Applications to PPA296E
(1) e. Draw upon multiple disciplines to understand and address policy and administrative problems	Learn different cases of state-local relations by reading papers from multiple disciplines; Learn collaborative partnership and competencies from various disciplines to address policy and administrative problems
(2) d. Frame and present problems to different audiences to optimize understanding	Explore and practice different ways of framing and presenting problems, options, and new information to various stakeholder groups.
(2) f. Use and articulate a confident style of oral presentation	Prepare discussion questions through weekly posting and practice taking the lead in mini-class discussion; Prepare an oral presentation of your case study
(3) a. Recognize the role public servants play in advancing or impeding a more prosperous, just, equitable, and inclusive society	Understand key roles and varying perspectives of public administrators and policy makers, and how they collaborate in decision-making; Learn how community partnership is made in the region
(3) d. Understand the significance of diversity in effective public governance in California	Articulate the benefits of stakeholder diversity in state-local relations and community partnership; Explore competitions and collaborations in multi-level governance in California

## Class Format & Textbook

PPA296E is a graduate-level seminar that relies heavily on student participation. Students are expected to read weekly materials and come prepared to share their thoughts with classmates through open discussions and small group activities. There is no required textbook for this course. Reading materials can be accessed through library services or Google Scholar. Weekly readings will begin after the first week, and the list will be available on Canvas on the first day of class.

## Course Schedule

This schedule provides a general outline for the course, not a strict schedule for the semester. Based on your learning pace, we may spend more time on specific topics and less on others. Additionally, I plan to invite guest speakers, which may require me to adjust class schedules. Any syllabus or course schedule updates will be shared in advance via Canvas.

Date	Topics
1. Aug 26	Welcome and Class Overview
2. Sep 2	Federalism and Democracy
3. Sep 9	Network Management and Intergovernmental Challenges
4. Sep 16	State-Local Relations: Conflicts and Cooperations
5. Sep 23	Collaborative Partnership, Competencies, and Paradoxes
6. Sep 30	Service Delivery
7. Oct 7	Policy Design and Implementation in Multi-Level Governance
8. Oct 14	Policy Learning, Transfer, and Diffusion in Multi-Level Governance
9. Oct 21	California Case 1
10. Oct 28	California Case 2
11. Nov 4	California Case 3
12. Nov 11	Veteran Day
13. Nov 18	Sustainable and Evidence-based Intergovernmental Relations
14. Nov 25	Reading Day
15. Dec 2	Public Engagement and Course Wrap-up

## Grading

Course grades will be determined by the following weights:

Netiquette	5%
Class Participation	20%
Weekly Posting & Discussion	20%
Case Study & Presentation	30%
Peer Evaluation & Reaction	10%
Public Engagement	15%

### 1. Netiquette (5%)

This is a hybrid class, and most of the sessions will be held online. Following netiquette during synchronous sessions will help us build a polite and respectful learning community.

- Please check the video, audio, and internet connection of your device before each session. If necessary, you can use student laptop checkout from CSUS. (<https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/student-technology-programs-services/student-laptop-checkout.html>)
- Join on time, use the device with a working camera and microphone, and keep your camera on during the synchronous session. To protect your privacy, consider using a virtual background.
- Likewise, respect the privacy of your classmates and instructor. You cannot record the sessions or take screenshots of others without consent.
- Separate your online course-related computer time from your personal use. Do not check your messengers, browse non-course-related content, or text others during class.
- Be aware that online communication is sometimes misunderstood. Feel free to disagree, but express your disagreement respectfully.

## 2. Class Participation (20%)

We have a tremendous opportunity to learn from each other. Aside from attendance, class participation is a key part of this class. Students are expected to engage in class discussions, participate in group activities, and actively listen to classmates.

### *Class Absence*

Email me in advance if you need to miss a class due to an emergency. Even if you cannot attend the class, you are responsible for reading assigned materials, submitting weekly postings, and meeting the deadlines announced in the syllabus/first week. At my discretion, I might give you a make-up assignment if you notify me of your circumstances and request this modification in advance. Except under very unusual circumstances, missing three classes will result in a one-grade penalty.

## 3. Weekly Posting & Discussion (20%)

A reading reflection assignment (2pts each) is due by Monday at 11:59 pm. This is a hard deadline for all, so please secure time to read and complete it in advance if you have a busy schedule. Starting in week 2, students will read the assigned materials and answer the following questions per material. There is no limit on the response length; a couple of sentences would be fine per question. Evaluation is wholly based on your level of engagement with the readings. Posts that are only summaries using AI or show minimal engagement with the material won't receive full credit.

- Main ideas
- Key takeaways (e.g., lessons, anything you (dis)agree, or relevant CA contexts, etc.)
- Question(s) you have after reading (e.g., anything you would like to discuss or share with the class, any relevant social issue or topic that comes to your mind, etc.)

We will also have time to discuss some of the questions you post weekly. Students are assigned to each article, select a couple of questions from the discussion board, and briefly lead the class discussion. Details will be available during course orientation.

#### **4. Case Study & Presentation (30%)**

This is an individual project worth 30 points out of 100 total points. Each student will select a substantive service/policy area concerning CA local government/community and state/or federal government. Examples include any service or policy issues in public health, housing, land use, economic development, criminal justice, immigration, education, transportation, energy, arts, water, wildfire, community development, etc. For the selected problem, you will summarize the case, identify how each entity cooperates and conflicts using the tools we learned during the class. Students are highly encouraged to incorporate what they learn from weeks 2 through 8. Details will be provided in the course orientation.

#### **5. Peer Evaluation & Reaction (10%)**

Students have opportunities to do peer evaluation for the case project/presentation of their classmates. Using the rubric provided by an instructor, students will submit their peer evaluation to Canvas.

#### **6. Public Engagement (15%)**

Students are expected to extend their learning outside the classroom by participating in and engaging with any community or local-level activities and events to learn more about where they live. This may broaden your understanding of how cooperations, partnerships, or conflicts exist among various stakeholders, communities, organizations, or government agencies. This may include, but is not limited to, participating in community events, voting, volunteering, visiting local centers/historic places in the community, virtually attending, or watching webinars or governing board or city council meetings for municipal governments. Students also consider listening to podcasts or reading a paper or a technical report that may help them better understand their local government or community. All these cumulative experiences of activities throughout the semester and their reflections will be shared in our last meeting (Dec 2). Details will be provided in the course orientation.

#### **Late Assignments**

I will not accept late assignments unless you encounter highly unusual circumstances. All students are expected to act professionally throughout this course. If unexpected circumstances prevent you from meeting the deadline, please email me immediately. I will work with you to find a solution that is as fair as possible for everyone involved.

#### **Academic Honesty**

Students should familiarize themselves with the University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy, particularly regarding *plagiarism*. The Student Code of Conduct defines academic misconduct, non-academic misconduct, and the consequences or penalties for each. Details are available at <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/academic-dishonesty.html>.

#### **Student with Disabilities**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADA) cover issues relating to disability and accommodations. Students with disabilities that could affect

their ability to participate in the course or perform well on graded assignments should see me early in the semester. I am receptive to these situations and will try to make any reasonable accommodations. If a student has questions or needs an accommodation in the classroom (all medical information is treated confidentially), please contact:

Services for Students with Disabilities  
Division of Student Affairs,  
(916)-278-6955, [sswd@csus.edu](mailto:sswd@csus.edu).

### **Emails and Academic Support**

I am always willing to meet students concerned about in-class activities or assignments/projects throughout the course. If you experience difficulties in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am also willing to listen to your feedback/suggestions and answer any questions regarding course materials, class topics, and activities. Questions about this course or other assignments can be emailed to me. I try to reply to your email within 24 to 48 hours on weekdays. General academic support services are available at <https://catalog.csus.edu/academic-support-services/>.