

Public Policy and Administration

Syllabus PPA 297A

Executive Fellows Seminar

**This is a living syllabus. Things will be added and changed as we progress.*

Fall 2015 (the spring syllabus will be released later in the term)
Orientation and Fridays (as specified) 9:00 pm – 12:00 pm

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Introduction and course objectives

The opportunity to serve as an Executive Fellow is extraordinary. Not only do you have the experience of a bird's eye view of the inner workings of public organizations but you are given time (Friday mornings) to attend the graduate level seminar that accompanies the placement. The two are designed to work together -- your placement will give you "on the ground" practical experiences and your graduate work will ground you in the theories that help make sense of those experiences.

The specific learning objectives for the course(s) are as follows:

1. Understand your own ethical obligation to promote the public good;
2. Understand distinctive features of the California political context and processes and how those features influence policy development and implementation;
3. Learn core policy analysis concepts and use them to understand policy issues;
4. Improve your ability to communicate effectively for policy audiences, with an emphasis on writing and visual presentation of analytical information.

Format of course

The seminar consists of two separately graded 3 unit graduate seminars (PPA 297A and 297B) and is a required component of the fellowship program. During the Orientation period we will hold intensive seminar sessions along side your other activities. The goal of Orientation is to give you baseline knowledge about the California political and structural context and prepare you to choose a placement that suits you. There will be extensive reading and writing required during Orientation. Please review the syllabus in it's entirety so you are prepared for what is expected.

Your placement starts just prior to Thanksgiving and we will begin having regular Friday morning seminar meetings beginning December 4. Mentors are aware of the seminar and understand that Friday mornings are to be free for Fellows to attend seminar. **You are expected to attend every seminar.** You may miss one class, for a work-related purpose, without penalty, **if you notify me first.** If you miss more than one class (illness aside), your course grade will be reduced, without exception. **You are also expected to arrive on time.** Excessive late arrival will result in a reduced course grade.

This is a graduate seminar with graduate-level academic content. It is not only an opportunity to share experiences from your placement. You are expected to do the reading and think about the key concepts before class. We will use seminar time largely to move *beyond* the readings – applying them to current events and your placements. A portion of your grade is based on class participation – reflecting your ability to draw out the key concepts from the readings, to relate readings across the course and your placement, and to be respectful of others’ ideas and contributions.

Presuming you receive a passing grade, you will earn six units of graduate credit for this course. Those of you planning to attend graduate school may be able to use the credits towards a degree program. However, note that graduate school grading is a bit different. Anything below a B- is not considered passing.

My formal office hours are as indicated on the cover sheet but I will be happy to meet with students at mutually agreeable times. Please contact me by email if you want to set up a separate time to meet. Once seminar begins I will hold regular “coffee shop” office hours downtown on Fridays before seminar. This is an excellent place to seek assistance with writing. I can often meet after seminar as well but setting a time by email is always best.

Required Texts

The required books may be purchased through Amazon or another on line provider (many students use www.half.com or even ebay.) The bookstore on campus will have some of these but due to bureaucratic issues on our side we can’t order them specifically for this class.

In an attempt to reduce cost and stay current, many additional readings are embedded in the syllabus. Please bring the appropriate readings to class (hard copies or electronic materials) as we will often use them in exercises. If you bring a laptop or kindle with electronic sources be sure you can quickly access the materials.

Other than *California Crack Up*, books have historically been used over both semesters.

Required texts:

Bardach, Eugene. (2011) 5th Edition. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: the Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. CQ Press College. (The 5th edition is out as of September 28, 2015)

Mathews, Joe and Mark Paul. (2010) *California Crack Up: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schedule and Assignments

Any schedule of classes is subject to change but that is especially true in this setting. I anticipate being adaptable as I learn more about you, what you want to learn, how we can best take advantage of our time prior to your placements and the other learning opportunities available to you in Sacramento. I will update this syllabus regularly and post it by email. Please insure that I have an email that you will see regularly although I do not recommend that you use a placement (publicly funded) email for this purpose. I will highlight any changes.

The two-semester course includes broad content knowledge as well as skill development. Specifically, you will learn about the context of California policymaking (governance structure, the use of initiatives and fiscal issues), Policy Analysis, Organizations and Leadership in Complex Public Organizations. Throughout the year we will work on skills sets including writing, analysis, making oral presentations and displaying graphical data. To the extent possible each seminar will include a combination of discussion of the readings, developing skills, and working on application of theory and skills to your placements.

I have laid out the initial schedule for the October-December period. As indicated, I anticipate the schedule will change to accommodate changes in the flow of learning, guest speakers and opportunities that arise. There may well be sessions where reading is assigned but something comes up and we do not discuss it. I expect you to do the reading, work to understand it, and be prepared to use it in future sessions. Much of being a professional in this arena means taking initiative to learn and integrating what you are learning into your professional setting, even if there isn't a test or paper. The most efficient way to do this, and to practice efficient reading, will be to develop a short SQ4R for each assigned reading.

Grading

Participation	10%
First policy memo	5%
24 hr memo 10/21	15%
CA memo 10/31	15%
Policy memo 11/23	20%
Placement memo 1	15%
Placement memo 2	15%

First Policy memo

You will receive written instructions about this memo approximately one week before seminar begins. This assignment is designed to get a first glance at your writing and analysis skills.

CA memo

A new person has just been appointed to a senior role in the executive branch. They are arriving from DC with considerable experience in their policy field but no knowledge of the CA context.

Prepare a 4 page (maximum) memo that gives this individual an orientation to the salient features of CA government focusing on how the policy making systems work including, obviously, the history and role of initiatives.

Think about what they would already know, coming from DC and the federal government, and what would be different. What is important for them to understand in order to get up and running quickly? You may use any of the written materials we have used so far to help you with this. This is factual; the memo could be going to a Republican or Democrat. It lays out the features in a clear, accurate fashion without slipping into partisan discourse. This does not mean you can't discuss the partisan issues in the state. But ideally both "sides" would say it's a fair representation.

Policy memo

Identify a California public policy area you are interested in, develop a "question" using the Bardach approach, and then "assemble evidence" that the problem exists and warrants public sector attention and funding. These are the first two steps in the Bardach process and are considerably more complex than they appear. Tackle a draft based on the reading, we will then discuss in class.

Placement memo 1

Write a briefing of your placement including what the organization does (it's purpose), what its budget is, what the source of funding is, and any major policy issues they are likely to be dealing during your placement. 2 pages max

Placement memo 2

Describe where your placement sits in the state organization chart. Where do the “bosses” report? Next describe the organization itself, how is it structured, what are the major functions (tell me what they DO, now just the titles). How many people work there? How are they split? Finally, describe how the leadership of the organization is selected. Are the appointees? CEA’s? 2 pages max

General Thoughts about Writing Assignments

No late work will be accepted. I understand that this term Fellows are involved in many orientation activities, going through the placement process, and eventually working full-time while taking a graduate course. I will accommodate work "issues" as much as possible but expect you to complete your assignments on time. If you must miss class when an assignment is due e-mail it to me prior to class. I generally will not confirm receipt but if I’m missing something and you forward the original email I will accept it. Please send documents in Microsoft Word Format.

Expectations about writing and peer editing

We produce written work to create understanding that can be consumed without face-to-face interaction. Others have previewed well-done writing before it is complete, especially when concepts are as complex as they often are in policy work. To that end, I expect that you will identify at least two peer editors who will review your written work this year. That can include seminar or placement writing. If you need help with writing, your peers will help. By helping others, you will become a better writer. I want you to become good writers AND good editors.

Some specifics about writing for policy/political environments are in the attached “Writing for Analysts” piece.

Fellows Seminar Schedule as of September 2015

This is a living syllabus, subject to change.

If you don't already, please begin reading the [Sacramento Bee](#), [Rough and Tumble](#), and [Around the Capitol/The Nooner](#) on a regular basis. These three sources will give you a good head start on most CA issues.

Date	Activity/Topic	Reading	Assignments
Oct 10			First writing assignment due by email to Mary Kirlin
Oct 20 9am-12	Introduction to Seminar and public service		
Oct 21 1-5 pm	Writing for Fellows "Gov 1" for Fellows		Bring first paper to class (hard copy or electronic, as long as it's accessible to you)
Oct 23 9am-12	California State Government	CalFacts , all. Peruse this, paying special attention to the first two sections	
Oct 28 All day	Understanding California	California Crack Up (all) California's Political Reforms (PPIC 2015) (all) California Voters (PPIC 2015) Guest: Jim Mayer, CEO, CA Forward	CA memo: Email draft to me before class begins and bring working draft to class. Final due via email by noon November 1.
November 4	Placement Fair Preparation (2-5)		
Nov 6	Placement Fair		
Nov 9-13	Interviews		
Nov 17	Policy analysis	Bardach, The Eight	Policy paper:

	(all day)	fold Path (all including appendix B)	Email a draft to me before class and bring hard copy to class. Final paper due Nov 23 close of business.
Nov 19	Major issues in CA (All day)	California's Future (PPIC 2015) (all)	
Nov 20	<i>Placement breakfast</i>		
Nov 27	Thanksgiving no class		
Dec 4	Understanding the CA budget	Understanding the Budget Process Budget Process flowchart	
Dec 11	Placement Briefing #1		
Dec 18	Placement Briefing #2		
			Any outstanding re-writes due by Dec 20.

Writing for Analysts

The easier part:

Use proper grammar, capitalization, punctuation, source citation, italics etc. (Microsoft word tries valiantly to help you with this, use it.)

Good paragraphs have the following components:

- A topic sentence, usually at the beginning
- Supporting evidence
- A clear connection to the overall point

Avoid the passive voice. YOU are the analyst, take responsibility by using the right pronoun (I will now, we recommend, etc...).

Answer the question asked. If it has multiple parts that are not rhetorical, answer all of them. Make sure you have the question framed correctly.

Tell the readers what you are going to say. It is much easier to read analytical work if you know where the author is going. This is not a mystery novel.

Start at the beginning of the thought, not in the middle. (How much can you reasonably assume the reader knows? Who is audience and what is the purpose?)

Make statements that you can support with evidence as opposed to beliefs. NEVER make it up or make assumptions.

Every sentence should make or support a point, hopefully one that is connected to your overall argument.

Avoid long explanations of details that are irrelevant. This is probably not the time to dazzle someone with your specialized knowledge of a particular project.

Watch your choice of words, both incorrect and unintended meanings can get you in trouble.

Pick a method for citing references and use it consistently.

The harder part:

Give your total paper a framework, a line of thought that defines and answers the questions posed.

Use the literature (hopefully multiple authors) to ground your work.

Be analytical, not editorial or colloquial.

Use parallel construction.

No sentence should be solely descriptive. If you follow this rule (which is nearly impossible to do all the time) your papers will be excellent.

Use the right analytical framework and avoid confusing applications. Don't use a tool for analyzing policy and programs to analyze an organization. This is hard to learn, do it consciously..."what level of analysis is this tool designed for? Is that what I am applying it to?"

Take the time to make the document shorter, clearer.

Tips

Think about the question being asked.

Make an outline.

Have someone proofread.

Do logic checks...that is, this is a topic sentence and it is supported by the following evidence, this is the analytical tool I'm trying to use because...etc.

SQ4R

Reading for Comprehension for Graduate Students

The SQ4R technique is designed to help you begin to read for comprehension and understanding. The goal is not to read faster, it is to read more effectively the first time and retain the important concepts.

Scan:

The first task is to scan the material you about to read to determine the point of the piece. Review the title, the table of contents, the book jackets, the preface, introduction and conclusion if appropriate. Well-written books and articles *tell you what they are going to tell you*.

As you scan, look for context, topic, main ideas, authors perspective or bias, main arguments made, etc.. How does this fit with other material you've read about this topic?

Questions:

What question(s) is this author trying to tell you? What question(s) is he trying to answer? What should you know or better understand as a result of reading this piece?

Many books and most articles at the graduate level have a particular perspective. Textbooks, of course, are a bit different as much of what is conveyed in those is factual information rather than perspective or viewpoint. Some texts will contrast several theories. Articles and most books however are trying to address a particular question, theory, or convey an idea.

Write down the questions you have identified before you begin to read the then look for the answers to your questions.

The 4 R's:

Read: Once you have your questions identified, begin to do the reading. First, glance at the material, is it organized into subsections that are logical? If it is, then it may make sense to scan them for content. Much of the reading assigned at this level has a main point and the author tells you what it is in an introduction or overview chapter. Skim the areas that make sense at first glance and read more in depth in the areas you didn't understand as well. I tend to skim examples or illustrations unless I don't understand the point they are explaining. Look at graphs, charts and tables as sources of summary information as well.

Remember what your questions are. Read sections of material at a time, not the whole thing from beginning to end (unless it's short). As soon as you feel yourself straying mentally, stop reading! Stretch, get up, do whatever you need to in order to get your focus back. Review where you left off to make sure you didn't stray much earlier 😊!

The zebra stripe problem...

“Highlighting” can confuse you more than help you. Wait until you have completed the reading and answered the questions before you highlight. Then, you know what the truly important points are, and you can annotate them with your own thoughts. Otherwise, you wind up with the dreaded zebra stripe... lots of yellow and white stripes with no real meaning.

Reflect: Think about what you just read. Can you answer your questions? Your roommate asks what you're reading, can you say "This chapter is about the way people behave in organizations, right now I'm reading about how we motivate people.", instead of saying, "My Public Affairs stuff."?

Recite:

Saying things out loud really does help retention of the information. Just that act of putting it into words means you have to understand it at some level. So, tell someone the summary of what you just read, or say it to yourself out loud. Think of examples that you know of that help illustrate this point. Ideally, get into a study group and share your questions and answers, after everyone has done their initial reading.

Review:

Review what you have written down. Is it in your own words? Does it make sense to you? Can you make sense of it 3 days later? What about 3 weeks later? Notes that don't mean anything to you, either from class or from readings, are not worth the time it took to write them down. If your notes don't make sense now, they never will. One hint on notes is to use your own words 99% of the time. Someone else's quote won't have quite the same meaning as your own words.

Sources:

Petrie, Trent A., Lisa Pinkenburg Landry, and Kimberly Bobinski Edwards, 1999, Achieving Academic Success, Ron Jon Publishing

Lecture notes from Dr. Ross Clayton and Dr. John Kirlin, University of Southern California a very long time ago. 😊

Schedule as of February 26, 2014

February 28	Paired presentations	Start reading Bolman and Deal Part 1 and Preface.
March 7	Intro to organizations James Goldstene, guest	Finish Bolman and Deal Part 1 and Preface
March 14	FPPC Guest Gary Winnuck, Chief Enforcement Division Structure and Politics in Organizations	Bolman and Deal Chapter 3-5 Bring in the organization chart for your Department or Agency (the whole thing, not just your unit) Bolman and Deal Chapter 9-11
March 21	Organization Culture	Bolman and Deal Chapter 11 *Memo: Does your organization's "form follow function"?
March 28	Spring Break No class	Please read <i>Deep Survival</i> over the break For April 4 you will read Bolman and Deal 12-15, Ashworth memos skim October (why would it make me grumpy?) and read December and January.
April 4	Solving problems in organizations using different frames	Bolman Deal Chp 15 Skim Bolman Deal chap 16 *Describe the culture of your placement. Which parts are conducive to the purpose, which (if any) make it harder to achieve the purpose?
April 11	Leadership	Bolman Deal Chp 17 ** Identify an issue percolating in your

		placement. Show how different frames allow you to understand the issue(s) from multiple perspectives.
April 18	Change	Bolman and Deal 18 and 20 **Identify (discreetly) a leader and describe the match between the leader and the organization. No names of people or places in this memo please.
April 25	No Seminar* - please use the morning to work with your group. Practice your presentation and get the timing down.	
May 2	No seminar* – you will “self manage” a critique of everyone’s presentations. Details to come. James Goldstene	
May 9	Group project presentations	
May 16	Wrap up (review of projects, next steps etc) Guest Daniel Kim	

*I will be conducting interviews for the incoming class of Executive Fellows on these dates.