

PPA240A: PUBLIC MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION I

Class Time: Tuesdays 6:00-8:50 pm
 Class Location: Sac State Downtown (304 S. Street) Room 110

Instructor: Dr. Ahrum Chang
 Email: ahrum.chang@csus.edu
 Office: Sac State Downtown office 230
 Office Hours: 5-6 pm on Tuesdays & Wednesdays and by appointment; If you would like to meet me outside of office hours, please email me at least 24h in advance to set up the time.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course will help you understand basic concepts, foundational theories, and general themes in public management and organizations. Using various cases and in-class activities, you will engage in a discussion about public management, critically think about issues, and develop a sense of analyzing them from various perspectives. The PPA240A and PPA240B sequence is about understanding and improving the function of public organizations and employees therein. In PPA240A, you will have opportunities to 1) learn various concepts and theoretical frameworks in the field of public management and 2) use them in your class discussion, literature review, and group project.

PPA240A addresses five learning objectives that are part of [19 learning objectives](#) of our MPPA program. The following table shows the objectives applicable to PPA240A and the way they are applied in this course.

PPA Learning Objectives	Applications to PPA240A
(1) c. Construct clear problem definitions with attention to client interests and varied stakeholder perspectives.	Work with group members to explore practices and social problems in the state of California and develop a clear problem statement with attention to client interests and identify varied stakeholders’/clients’ roles and interests.
(1) h. Critically review literature to help understand and address a problem from various perspectives.	Prepare literature review by critically reading the previous literature to identify what has been underexplored on the topic of your interests; Become familiar with various authors and how they address and analyze the problem in various ways.
(2) e. Write clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences.	Practice writing clearly and succinctly in your policy memo, literature review, and group project.
(3) b. Understand obligations to advance public value consistent with rule of law and an enduring search for reasonable and just action.	Understand public value by learning various concepts such as public service motivation, public interests, and ethics; Work with group members to identify conflicting values, think about potential actions, and seek to feasible solutions that can advance the public value consistent with rule of law.
(3) c. Consider ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration.	Draw lessons from cases that have ethical dilemmas in the field of public policy and administration; In your group, discuss what would be the best decisions to make and share this to the entire class.

Class Format & Textbook

PPA240A is a seminar-style class where students are expected to engage in discussion and activities. During each session, students will focus on concepts or theoretical frameworks in assigned readings and apply them to cases or do activities in group. Therefore, students are encouraged to come to class prepared to actively participate in conversations and activities. Different from previous 240A classes, there is no required textbook for this class. Reading materials will be uploaded or announced via Canvas.

Assignments and Grading

1. Class Participation & Engagement (20%)

Class participation and engagement are the most basic and important components of this course. Consistent lack of participation will result in a reduced class participation grade. Your participation and engagement will be measured in three different ways: (1) preparation for each class, (2) contribution to weekly group discussion or activities, and (3) contribution to group project and presentation.

2. Literature Review (30%): Due Dec 1st

A literature review is a select analysis of existing research which is relevant to your topic, showing how it relates to your investigation. It is not a list of descriptive summaries of journal articles you have read on the topic. A good literature review includes both summary and synthesis of previous literature on the topic. By critically reading the previous literature on the topic of your interest, identify the gap(s) in the literature and underexplored areas within that topic. This will make you develop your own research question(s) and prepare a short literature review on that topic. Detailed guidelines will be announced later.

- Topic check-in (5%)
- Progress check-in (5%)
- Peer Feedback (5%)
- Paper (15%)

3. Group Project (50%)

3.1. First Group Project (25%): Due Nov 7th

The first group project is to write a one-page policy memo to a specific client in CA (e.g. a city mayor, a member of city council, or a head/chief of the organization such as public university, police department, state/local agencies, nonprofit associations in CA). Policy memos are written by public managers to analyze problems and to recommend courses of action for public or nonprofit organizations. These short writing exercises challenge students to offer concise reflection on a problem and seek an actionable suggestion to their client.

With your team members, discuss workplace practices, traditions, or procedures that either positively or negatively impact organizational performance, organizational culture, workplace diversity, employees therein (e.g. employee engagement and retention, job satisfaction, pay gap, work-life balance, etc.), or clients (e.g. citizens who receive those services). Here, the workplace practices, traditions, or procedures can be found in mentorship or job training program, hiring practices, professional career development,

team culture, meeting practices, telework, incentives and awards, digital transformation or automation (e.g. go paperless), mode of service delivery, data archive and privacy, and so on. You can draw from your experience either as a public/nonprofit sector worker or as a citizen who receives those services. Next, list all practices with your team members and identify either the best or the worst practice based on group discussion. If your group chooses the best practice, develop that practice as an actionable plan/program and write a one-page memo to your client to propose that practice. If your group selects the worst practice, develop an actionable plan/program that alleviates/prevents that worst practice and write a memo to propose that plan/program.

Each group will share their policy memo to class and briefly prepare a presentation of less than 15 minutes. Detailed guidelines will be announced later.

3.2. Second Group Project (25%): Due Dec 5th

While the first group project investigates issues either at the individual- or organizational-level, the second project aims to analyze the problems in our society. Students will be placed into groups of up to four and required to come up with one incident, social issue, program, or policy in CA that affects/is related to public interests/value.

For example, unhoused people living along the Two Rivers Bike Trail on the American River Parkway are being told they have to leave. Although those homeless have nowhere to go, a spokesperson for Sacramento County said the notices were given due to public safety and concerns about the stability of trees following weeks of severe weather in the area. Another example is lack of affordable housing, NIMBYism in the neighborhood, and the conflict between state and local governments—the state government recently sued the city of Elk Grove for rejecting a proposal for a 66-unit permanent supportive housing project for people experiencing homelessness. Also, we can think about gender pay gap in the state. Studies estimate that women living in CA earn only 88 cents for every dollar earned by a man, and Black, Latina and Native American women face a much larger pay gap. Although state government took a step to reduce that staggering number by signing the California Equal Pay Pledge, there are still unconscious and implicit bias in recruitment, pay, and promotion process. Please pick one problem in your group and prepare a group presentation in the last week of class. In your presentation, following questions should be answered:

1. What is the problem? (In most cases, problems are not just one. Define all of them clearly and concisely.)
2. Who are the stakeholders and what are their respective roles and interests?
3. Relatedly, what are the multiple conflicting values? Make sure to include what public value is involved.
4. What are the potential actions for each stakeholder and expected outcome? What is your group's suggestion or strategy to advance public value consistent with rule of law and resolve the dilemma?
5. If your group's suggestion is implemented, what are the potential barriers and expected outcomes?

It is highly recommended that you incorporate learnings from class readings and group discussions. Please use PowerPoint for your presentations. All members should contribute to oral presentation and the presentation should be less than 15 minutes. Each group will present in a public forum setting, and the class will ask pertinent questions. There is no writing requirement for this project.

Course Schedule

This schedule will serve as a general plan for the course, not a rigid constraint through the semester. Every semester, I conduct a mid-course evaluation to reflect your feedback and suggestions to the course. Depending on your needs and interests, we may spend more time on a certain topic and less on another. Also, we will spend some time preparing for your group projects during class. Any changes to the syllabus or course schedule will be announced in advance.

Week. Date	Topic
1. Aug 29	Welcome and Course Intro (no reading required)
2. Sep 5	Organizational Structure and Technology
3. Sep 12	Organizational Goals, Resources, and Performance
4. Sep 19	Organizational Culture and Ethics
5. Sep 26	Bureaucratic Representation
6. Oct 3	HR1: Public Service Motivation
7. Oct 10	HR2: Employee Turnover
8. Oct 17	HR3: Recruitment
9. Oct 24	Public Service Delivery, Co-production, and Cross-Sector Collaborations
10. Oct 31	Literature Review Workshop & Group Project Preparation
11. Nov 7	The First Project Presentation and Discussion
12. Nov 14	Inquiry for Public Value and Behavioral Public Administration
13. Nov 21	No class (Thanksgiving week)
14. Nov 28	Peer Feedback on Literature Reviews & Group Project Preparation
15. Dec 5	Public Forum for the Second Group Project

Class Absences

We have a tremendous opportunity to learn from each other. Please notify me in advance if you need to miss a class for an emergency. Even if you are unable to attend the class, you are responsible for reading assigned materials, getting notes from your classmates, and also meeting deadlines already announced in the syllabus/first week. At my discretion, I might give a make-up assignment if you notify me of your circumstances and request this modification in advance. Except under unusual circumstances, I will penalize you one full grade if you miss three classes and give you a failing grade if you miss more than three classes.

Electronic Devices

To create a conducive learning atmosphere for all students, laptop use should pertain to in-class exercises, article-readings, and note-takings only. Please refrain from using cell phones, laptops, or any other electronic devices to browse and read non-course relevant information or send messages. Studies have shown how off-topic device usage impedes class engagement and student performance. For example, students who texted typically during the class took lower quality notes, retained less information, and performed worse than those who did not (e.g. Kuznekoff & Titsworth, 2013; Lee et al, 2017; Rosen et al, 2011). These findings are also consistent with my previous experience and observations in classroom. I expect a high level of courtesy and professionalism in the classroom.

Late Assignments

I will not accept late assignments unless you experience highly unusual circumstances. All students are expected to behave professionally throughout this course. For example, if you have issues on your laptop and still have some days to work on your assignment, you may use computers in campus library or student technology equity program (<https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/csusuccess/student-laptop-checkout.html>) instead of requesting deadline extension. If unexpected circumstances arise that prevent you from meeting the deadline, please email me ASAP. I will work with you to arrive at a solution that is as fair as possible to you, me, and the other students.

Academic Honesty

Students should familiarize themselves with the University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy, particularly as it relates to *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) covers 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.

Emails and Academic Support

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

Diversity and Inclusion in Classroom

All students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, occupations, political affiliations, religion, sexual orientation, marriage, disability, or any identity category or background, are valued and equal members of this class. When we have class conversations and group activities, please feel free to discuss openly, interact with each other actively, and listen carefully to what others are saying. However, avoid assumptions about any member of the class and generalizations about social groups.