Department of Public Policy and Administration

PPA 297A: Executive Fellows Seminar (Synchronous)

Course Syllabus

Fall 2023 – 3 Units

California State University: Center for California Studies

Seminar Advisor: José C. Henríquez, MPPA (he/him/his)

Phones: 916-337-0529 (c)

916-874-2937 (w) (6:30 am-4:30 pm)

Zoom number and link: https://csus.zoom.us/my/henriquez

email: henriquez@csus.edu

Office hours: By appointment

Seminars meet on the specified days at Sac State’s Downtown Center on 304 S Street, Sacramento. The Force is strong with you, but you are not a Jedi yet. While still rigorous, I promise your training will not be on the murky swamps and jungles of Dagobah.

**Catalog Description**

Seminar will enhance Executive Fellows' understanding of the state policy making and administrative process, policy implementation, and the ethical responsibilities of policy and administrative actors.

**Introduction and course objectives**

Speaking from personal experience, the opportunity to serve as a Capital Fellow is extraordinary. Specific to the Executive Fellowship program, you have a tremendous opportunity to see of the inner workings of State agencies and receive professional guidance by your placement mentor. You will certainly have an opportunity for policy implementation (taking new or existing statutes and crafting their implementation); some of you will also have an opportunity for policy creation, depending on your placement and whether you are assigned to that agency’s legislative unit. Megan Thorall, the Executive Fellowship Director, will go over with you how things will work in your placement given Covid and the new work environment that has arisen as a result of life post-pandemic.

Through your placement and this course, you will be able to build your expertise of public organizations, leadership, and public policy and hone your professional skills. The two are designed to work together -- your placement will give you “on the ground” practical experiences and your graduate work will give you the theories and backdrop that help put those experiences into perspective.

Your experience in the state bureaucracy sets this program apart from the legislative Fellows programs (Senate and Assembly). Your colleagues in those programs may spend more seminar time on specific policy or political issues, but it is legislative-centric. In our program, we also examine the role of executive branch organizations in the policy process and the factors that make those organizations more or less effective.

This class and the subsequent course (PPA 297B) cover six general topics:

1. The California context.
2. Public service, public value, and the public interest.
3. Policy design and analysis.
4. Political management
5. Leadership and organizations.
6. Skills of an effective public servant.

A student who successfully completes the course will be able to:

1.   Understand distinctive features of the California political context and processes and how those features influence policy development implementation;

2.   Learn core concepts about policy design and analysis and be able to apply them to specific policy issues;

3.   Understand your own ethical obligation to promote the public good;

4.   Learn 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 B) and is a required component of the Fellowship Program. During the orientation period we will hold seminar alongside your other activities. The goal during orientation is to prepare you to choose a placement that suits you and to give you baseline background skills and knowledge. There will be extensive reading and writing required during orientation per the syllabus.

We will begin having regular Friday morning seminar meetings on October 13th. Mentors are aware of the seminar and have been advised to ensure that Friday mornings are free for Fellows to attend the 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.  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.  I consider it fair and reasonable to call on anyone and expect them to be familiar with the key concepts from the readings.  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 to one another, and to your placement, and to be respectful of others’ ideas and contributions.

Successful completion of the Academic Component is required to maintain your Fellowship status. ***If you are dropped from the Academic Component, you will also be terminated as an Executive Fellow.***

Successful completion of the program means you will receive six units of graduate credit for this course from Sacramento State. Those of you planning to attend graduate school may be able to use the credits in a degree program. Your course work will certainly be part of your application. Graduate school grading is a bit different. Anything below a B- is not considered passing and you must maintain a 3.0 average to stay in good academic standing.

In addition, successful completion of the seminar is required in order to be eligible to earn the graduate certificate in Applied Policy and Government at the end of your Fellowship in August of next year.

Office hours with me will also be a little different… mostly because I don’t have an on-campus office; however, I do work in Downtown Sacramento. I will be happy to meet with students, in person or virtually, at a mutually agreeable time and place. Please contact me by email if you want to set up time to meet.

## Required Readings and Texts

The books may be provided by the department. You should receive them at or around September. Additional readings are embedded in the syllabus. From time to time, I may stumble upon an applicable article or two during the semester and will email you the link to those articles. Please bring the appropriate readings to class (including the hard copies or electronic material) as we will often use them in exercises. If you bring a laptop or tablet with electronic sources, be sure you can quickly access the materials. Please note that at this point I do not know what type of wi-fi access will be available at the seminar location.

Note that the syllabus is for 297A only. 297B will have a syllabus with reading materials as well.

Required texts. **These books will be provided by the program**:

Van Vechten, Reneé. (2019) 5th Edition. *California Politics: A Primer*. Sage/CQ Press.

Meltzer, Rachel and Alex Schwartz. (2019) 1st Edition. *Policy Analysis as Problem Solving*. Rutledge.

**Grading and Assignments**

In this course, I expect you to actively participate in class discussions and activities and engage in thoughtful writing assignments. We produce written work to create understanding that can be consumed without further interaction. This can be difficult to do without writing in drafts and receiving feedback on your drafts. As such, I recommend you work together on assignments and review each other’s work. See “Expectations” section below for more on this.

Participation 15%

Attendance (with on-time component) 10%

Discussion Leadership 20%

Problem Memo #1 25%

Problem Memo #2 15%

Placement Memo 15%

**Grading scale:**

A: ≥ 94%

A-: 90 – 93.9%

B+: 87 – 89.9%

B: 84 – 86.9%

B-: 80 – 83.9%

C+: 77 – 79.9%

C: 74 – 76.9%

C-: 70 – 73.9%

D+: 67 – 69.9%

D: 64 – 66.9%

D-: 60 – 63.9%

F: ≤ 59.9%

No late work will be accepted. I understand that Fellows are working full-time while taking a graduate course. This is true for all Fellows as well as most of the graduate students in the Sac State PPA Master’s program. 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. If you email it, it is your responsibility to ensure that I have received it and that it is retrievable. You may do this by requesting a confirming email from me. I prefer the assignment to be in Microsoft Word.

Should you need assistance with portions of class due to disabilities, you need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

Please complete all readings listed for the class date prior to coming to class.

Please no cell phones or web surfing in class. If laptops are being abused in class, I may prohibit their use for all.

Finally, although I do not expect any issues, please familiarize yourself with the [University’s policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism](http://www.csus.edu/admbus/umanual/UMA00150.htm). I take them seriously and expect that you do as well.

**Written Coursework**

All written coursework should have the following format:

* 12 pt Arial font
* Single space
* Use 6 point spacing between paragraphs
* One-inch margins
* Naming convention: Yourlastname\_nameofassignment

You do not need to reference your material, and if you do, I do not have preference between Chicago or APA style footnotes.

Problem Memo 1

You will identify a California public policy area you are interested in, develop a “question” using the Meltzer/Schwartz approach, and then “assemble evidence” that the problem exists and warrants public sector attention and funding. This is the first step in the Meltzer/Schwartz process and is considerably more complex than it appears. Tackle a draft based on the reading, we will then discuss in class. Four (4) pages max.

Problem Memo 2

You will use the questions in Box 2.3 on pages 48 and 49 to help you identify related and underlying problems for the problem described in Problem Memo 1. I do not need to see the answers you came up with for the questions. I only need to see 1) a restatement of the central problem and 2) a listing and discussion of the underlying and related questions. For the latter, please resist the temptation to name “the patriarchy” or “late-stage capitalism” as the root causes. Two (2) pages max.

Placement Memo:

You will write a briefing of your placement including what the organization does (its purpose), what its budget is, what the source of funding is, the size of the total department and any major policy issues they are likely to be dealing during your placement. You will 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, not just the titles). How many people work there? How are they split? Finally, describe how the leadership of the organization is selected. Are they appointees or career executive assignments (CEAs)? Two (2) pages max

Discussion Lead

Over the course of this and next semester we will work on leading discussions. The goal is to provide another vehicle to practice (or perfect) reading, comprehension and critical thinking skills, as well as hone your ability to clearly communicate complex ideas to others. Between this semester and next, I will sort you into pairs to lead a discussion on the readings for that week. The two discussion leads for the week will be expected to provide an overview of the reading assignment, in depth analysis for that week’s reading, and be able to answer questions related to the reading. Discussion leaders must submit reading and discussion questions to me by the Monday before the Friday class so that I can review and provide guidance (if any) on your discussion points. These discussion questions should show that the pair will be able to provide the detail needed to conduct a well-organized discussion on the topics covered in that week’s reading. You must prepare enough discussion points and questions to lead a discussion for at least 50 minutes. It is better to over prepare than under prepare. As a result, I recommend creating “primary” and “secondary” questions & discussion points. The former are questions/discussion points that must be covered, the latter are important, but can be discarded for the sake of time. *If during your week's assignment you feel as though your partner did not contribute to the work in a manner that constitutes giving them the same grade, please email me directly.*

**Non-Written Coursework**

Participation:

I expect students to actively and thoughtfully participate in class. This means you will have completed the readings, listened closely to what is happening class (whether it’s me speaking, your classmate, or a guest lecturer), and will engage in an appropriate and on-topic way.

Attendance (Part I)

Attendance is not simply being in the room during seminar. It is also not simply being present during seminar. It also means getting there on time. You are emerging professionals. Showing up late for a meeting is unacceptable if you can help it. Your attendance grade has an “on time” component, meaning that you will not receive a full score if you show up late for seminar.

Part II is in the “Covid-Related” section below.

Expectations about writing and peer editing

We produce written work to create understanding that can be consumed without face-to-face interaction. This is a key component of your professional development because you need to learn how to disseminate enough information so that policymakers can make informed decisions. In your professional life you will observe that, most likely, others will always preview 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 nearly all your written work this semester. That may include any work assigned to you at your placement. If you need help with writing, your peers will help. If your writing is solid, then by helping others you will become a better writer and editor. Help each other out as best as you can, since another component of professional development is to create and maintain networks. The goal is to become good writers AND good editors.

**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, and how we can best take advantage of your placements and the other learning opportunities available to you in Sacramento.  I will update this syllabus regularly and post changes by email. Please ensure 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 course includes broad content knowledge as well as skill development. Specifically, you will learn about the context of California policy making (governance structure, the use of initiatives and fiscal issues), policy analysis, organizations and leadership in complex public organizations. Throughout the term 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 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.

I have laid out the initial schedule for the October-December period. The spring schedule (297B) will be available early in December.

**Covid-Related [Attendance (Part II)]**

You should be aware by now of Sacramento State’s COVID 19 policies. You can find out more at Sacramento State’s [COVID-19 page](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/dy9tahb). We will be following those policies in seminar. Vaccines are required for everyone on campus except those who have been granted a religious or medical exemption per the [CSU’s COVID-19 vaccination requirement](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/tqauahb). You can schedule a vaccine at [My Turn California](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/9ibuahb) and find out more about vaccines and booster eligibility on the [CDC website](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/pbcuahb). Remember that COVID-19 and its variants are still a threat, even for those who are vaccinated and boosted. Please practice self-care, monitor your health for any possible symptoms of COVID-19, and contact a health care provider immediately should you believe you may be infected.

If you are experiencing any COVID- like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, loss of smell or taste, nausea, diarrhea, or headache) or have had exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID, please contact **Student Health & Counseling Services (SHCS) at 916-278-6461** to receive guidance and/or medical care. You are asked to report any possible COVID related illnesses/exposures to SHCS via this link [COVID-19 Illness/Exposure Report Form](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/). Expect a call from SHCS within 24 hours.

Indoor masking will be optional

The University strongly recommends face covering indoors and urges the campus community to show respect for each other’s choice to mask or not.

Attendance (Part II)

Do not come to class if you have COVID-19 symptoms or test positive. COVID-19 tests and safety supplies are available at many locations around campus, including the library and student union. The University will continue to offer free testing to students who are symptomatic through [Student Health and Counseling Services.](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/) To increase safety on campus, you are required to report a positive COVID-19 test. You will find a confidential reporting form on the [Student Affairs COVID-19 web page.](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/lwduahb) Everyone who tests positive, regardless of vaccination status, is required to stay home for at least 5 days. You should stay home for up to 10 days if your symptoms are not resolved or you continue to test positive. If you come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to this [flowchart.](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/1oeuahb)

If you need to isolate, please notify me immediately.

O If you are isolating and not ill, I expect you to stay up to date with your academic work remotely as best you can. Checking in with me for assignments will be your responsibility.

O If you are ill, please contact me as soon as you are well so we can work together to catch you up with the rest if the class.

O You will find the latest updates to academic continuity during COVID-19 [here.](https://t.e2ma.net/click/1kb1ig/l8251eo/hhfuahb)

**Course Accessibility**

Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are 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.”

[**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.

[**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.

**Title IX – Mandated Reporting**

The University requires faculty and staff to report any personal disclosures of sexual misconduct including rape, dating/domestic violence and stalking to the Title IX Coordinator. Students who do not wish to report their experience to me or the Title IX Coordinator may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Student Health and Counseling Services.