

Syllabus*

California State University Sacramento Graduate Program in Public Policy and Administration

* this is a living document that will be negotiated as the term goes along.
Changes will be posted on SacCT in **yellow** as we go along
As of May, 2013

PPA 200 Introduction to Public Policy and Administration Fall 2013

Friday September 6th 5pm – 9 pm ARC 3004
Saturday September 7th 8am – 4pm ARC 3004
Sunday September 8th 8am – 4pm ARC 3004

Tuesdays beginning September 3rd 6 pm – 8:50 pm

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Introduction

PPA 200 serves as an introduction to the foundations of public policy and administration; the theories that guide our understanding of public policy making and analysis as well as how public organizations implement those policies in pursuit of the public good. We will begin with a broad review of democratic institutions and the roles of policy making and administration, covering the State of California in some detail. We then progress to a project that allows you to practice examining a policy area in detail and producing both oral and written reports.

PPA 200 also serves as an introduction to graduate study at CSUS/PPA. The course will orient you to reading, thinking and writing in an analytical fashion. For some of you this will be old hat, for others, it will be a new skill. Part of this process will include reading several theses that students before you have completed. The course is designed to immerse you in both content and skills to prepare you for later course work and the thesis itself.

Course Objectives

Consistent with the overall plan for your Master's degree work the objectives (knowledge and skills) of this course are as follows:

- Construct clear definitions of problems
- Understand the difference between analysis and advocacy
- Understand the significance of diversity in effective public governance in California
- Consider the ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration
- Work effectively in groups
- Write clearly and succinctly as appropriate to various audiences

In addition, because this course is designated a "writing intensive" course, by the end of the semester, students will:

- Understand the major research and/or professional conventions, practices, and methods of inquiry of the discipline;

Understand the major formats, genres, and styles of writing used in the discipline;
Practice reading and writing within the discipline;
Practice reading and writing as a learning process that involves peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing

Format of Course and Expectations of students

This course is the introductory course in the PPA major. As graduate students you will learn many theories and skills. But, as much as we might wish otherwise, there are few hard and firm rules in the practical application of public policy and administration tools, and you must eventually rely on your own judgment to determine which theory or skill to apply to which problem (often after you have re-framed the problem itself). The goal of PPA 200 is to set you on a course to digest the materials you will learn in the coming two plus years. As a starting point for reading, please use the SQ4R technique in the back of the syllabus to do your initial reading.

The course is taught in a seminar style. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in conversations about the materials they have read. Study questions will be provided for some classes to give you a starting point for the class discussion.

Following the first night's picnic and introductory meeting, we will begin our time together with a long weekend (September 6-8th) designed to immerse you in background knowledge and base line skills. This weekend is especially intensive and you will have work due in advance of class. Please review the entire syllabus now and plan accordingly. Plan to use the SQ4R method (described in the appendix) as you read. As a result of this intensive weekend we will finish this course early, usually by mid-November. Understand that for those of you taking multiple courses you may literally go to class for 6-8 days in a row for the first two weeks. Plan ahead by spreading preparation for all classes out over the month prior and anticipate that the first 2 weeks will be long.

I will never lecture all day; this is hard on you and on me. Rather, I will facilitate discussions and exercises designed to further your application of the learning. The reading will provide the foundation and most class time will be spent practicing the application of what we have read, my expectation is that you will have done it thoroughly enough to pull out main ideas. If you have not done the reading, you will not be able to participate. Consistent lack of participation will result in a reduced class participation grade. I strongly discourage absences and in the intensive weekend they are not allowed.

I will make use of technologies available through SacCt (Blackboard) to do things such as make the course materials available online and possibly to hold some class discussions. You will also likely conduct at least some of your group work in this environment. This means that you will be expected to obtain and maintain a saclink account and have access to a reasonably current computer. For information about getting connected to saclink, please go to [UCCS](#). Once you have a saclink account, you will be able to access your own courses through SacCt (these will usually be available by one week before classes start and sometimes sooner).

While SacCT doesn't generally open until a week or so before classes, PPA syllabi will be available by the first week in August and most instructors have reading assigned for the first day of class. Suzi will send an email to the list serve but you should also check the PPA website.

Most faculty use SacCt and My SacState to communicate with students -- it is your responsibility to check those locations regularly, even if you have provided Suzi with an additional email.

Students are expected to turn in all assignments in a complete and professional manner. Complete and professional means typed, double spaced, proofread, well written, appropriately cited, and on time. Anyone

needing assistance in their written work will be notified quickly and strongly encouraged to seek assistance, possibly at the campus Writing Center. Papers needing additional work may be returned to be re-done at the sole discretion of the instructor, for partial improvement of grades. The goal of the first semester is to get you writing at the appropriate level. If that does not occur we may ask that you take a writing course as an elective in the spring.

Should you need assistance with portions of class due to disabilities, please let me know as soon as possible. Finally, although I do not expect any issues, please familiarize yourself with the [University's policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism](#).

Assignments and Grading

No late work will be accepted.

I understand that many students are working full-time and attending classes nights and weekends. 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, you may drop it off at my office or e-mail it to me prior to class.

All papers should be sent electronically, either by email or via SacCt as email as directed. (I am transitioning to SacCt but unsure how it will go.) Except as noted, they are due at the starting time for the class. In other words, I don't expect you to be late because you are working on a paper. It is your responsibility to insure that I have received it and that it is retrievable. You may do this by requesting a confirming email from me. I am most likely to receive it in Microsoft Word Format. In addition, we will use the papers in class to have access to an electronic or paper copy to work from.

| | |
|---|------|
| Papers and peer feedback | 65% |
| Group presentation and paper | 25% |
| Class participation | 10% |
| <u>(Attendance and engagement in conversations and in class activities contribute to this grade.)</u> | |
| Total | 100% |

The PPA program uses the APA style (which is detailed in the Hacker style manual) for ALL papers and the thesis. Please familiarize yourself with this citation process quickly as it will be required for all papers.

Paper #1. Due August 27th by 6pm. Please email this to me at kirlinm@csus.edu

Identify a current public (governmental) problem/issue that you have some interest in and provide a decision maker (like a legislator or city council member) with a 5-6 page memo about the issue and possible options to deal with it. As appropriate, consider the ethical, economic, political, and organizational and policy dimensions of the issue. Help the reader understand the complexities of the issue as well as how the issue may be understood differently by different groups of interested people. Be careful to distinguish between fact and opinion in your analysis.

This paper will provide a baseline assessment of your writing and analytical skills. I will review them quickly and contact anyone who would benefit from having writing issues addressed quickly. This first paper is worth 5% of your grade and you may use it as a basis for work later in the term in PPA 220A.

Please do not call me for additional instructions -- the assignment is somewhat vague on purpose. This paper will provide me with an initial sense of your writing skills. Few people do a perfect job on this, that isn't the goal. Just do your best, we will use them to start thinking about analysis, writing and thinking about policy issues. The paper will be returned to you during the first week of class.

Paper #2 Draft due September 6 by 5pm, final due September 17th

The Baldaserra book identifies three underlying conditions that contributed to the Orange County bankruptcy. Beginning with those three conditions as a basis for the paper, think broadly about these conditions and, drawing on the contributions of Mathews/Paul, write a 6-8 page paper that addresses the question of whether any (or all) of the three conditions still apply to the State of California today. If so, which ones and why? If not, why not? Please be sensitive to the importance of transferring "lessons" from one context to another. Sometimes it is easy, sometimes, it is not.

If you need a primer on the fiscal condition, review the State Budget introductory pages or the Legislative Analyst budget discussions. You should do this paper only after you have read all the material for the intensive weekend class.

Bring a paper copy of your draft to class on the first night of the intensive weekend. We will work with the papers in class and the final paper will be due September 17th. Worth 15%

Paper #3 Toolkit

You will turn in your "toolkit" in addition to a 5-6 page paper explaining to me what 4 or 5 of the items in your toolkit are, why they are important to you, and how you have learned to use them. We will discuss this more as the semester progresses. 15%

Paper #4

Information about this paper will come during the intensive weekend. 20%

Peer Feedback

Drafts of papers 2 and 3 will be circulated to classmates for feedback. You will be asked to review at least 2 papers and possibly 4. Your written feedback will be graded on the extent to which your feedback is thorough and beneficial. Each feedback exercise will be worth up to 5% of your grade, depending upon the number of reviews I assign. The total for feedback will be 10%.

Group project (30%)

Details about these will be distributed during the first intensive weekend. This project will include an 18-25 page paper in addition to an oral presentation.

Editing papers:

Some students are quite comfortable editing their own work and turn in polished, edited work the first time. For others this will be a new skill. In order to reinforce the notion of finished work, I may return papers for re-writing and/or editing. Papers that require further editing will not be given credit until the required editing is complete.

Important note regarding formatting papers:

All papers are to be typed, double spaced, and fall within the page limits specified. Please put a cover page on each assignment containing your name, your email, and the assignment title. Do not use more than 12 point or less than 10 point type. (No squished margins either!) Correct punctuation, spelling and citations are expected. If you are unfamiliar with the APA style, consult the Hacker style guide.

The majority of your papers will be analytical in nature, using the theories and concepts from class to illuminate a particular situation. (See the attachment, "Writing an Analytical Paper".) The toolkit paper can be in any format you wish as long as it is narrative.

Written presentation is very important. You will often be called upon to communicate your analysis and recommendations quickly, clearly and concisely in work environments. Please take this opportunity to practice and perfect this technique!

Required Texts

The books will be available in the bookstore or you can purchase them online. Just make sure you purchase the correct edition. Please bring the appropriate readings to class as we will often use them in exercises. This includes articles you retrieve electronically (electronic readings are embedded in the syllabus portion of the schedule, not here). You do NOT have to bring in theses (plural for thesis), you are skimming these to become familiar with the different ways students do a thesis project.

A TurningPoint Clicker will be required for the program. Multiple classes will use it over your study but you only need to purchase one. The bookstore will have them. The ISBN for your bookstore order is 978-1-934931-49-3

Baldassare, Mark. (1998) *When Government Fails: The Orange County Bankruptcy*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Bardach, Eugene. (2011) 4th Edition. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: the Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*.

California Legislative Analyst Office. (2013) [Cal Facts](#). You may download this document for free at the Legislative Analyst's Office site. Get the most recent version.

Doyle, Michael and David Straus. 1993. *How to Make Meetings Work*. Berkeley Trade Press

Hacker, Diane. (2011). *A Pocket Style Manual*. 6th Edition. Boston: Bedford Books. (any version in the past 2-3 years will be sufficient)

Kingdon, John W. (1999) *America the Unusual*. Wadsworth.

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.

Rainey, Hal. (2009) *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations* 4th Edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. (Please keep this text as it will be used in the 240 sequence.)

Tufte, Edward (2006) *Beautiful Evidence*. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.

Wheelan, Charles. 2010. *Naked Economics*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Recommended for those who feel a bit uncomfortable with their knowledge of basic government systems is Kettl, Donald F. and James W. Fesler. (2005) 3rd Edition will be cheaper than the 4th. Either will suffice. *The Politics of the Administrative Process*. Washington, D. C.: CQ Press

NOTE: Hacker, Bardach, Rainey and Tufte will be used in other classes so please keep them! Wheelan is mandatory summer reading.

Course Outline and Schedule

As of June, 2013

* Articles marked with one asterisk (*) will be available on the SacCt site closer to the start of the term. You can also locate most of these on line yourself.

Note that background/summer reading for everyone is *Naked Economics* by Charles Wheelan. This is an easy/fun read, sort of a more sophisticated version of *Freakonomics*. We won't have time to cover it but it will help you make sense of the world we're discussing in both PPA 200 and 220A.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Readings</u> | <u>Assignments</u> |
|--|--|--------------------|
| <p>Tuesday September 3</p> | <p>Annual Welcome Back Pizza Party from 5:00-7:00 in Alumni Grove (class will begin at 7:15 in ARC 3004)</p> <p>Introduction to PPA Introductions, resources, expectations * McSwite, O.C., (2001) "Theory Competency for MPA-Educated Practitioners", <i>Public Administration Review</i>, Vol. 61:1</p> <p>PPA 2012 Self Study (Each CSUS academic department is reviewed every five to seven years by a faculty committee. The self study document is prepared by the Department to explain the academic discipline, outline student learning goals, explain the curriculum, etc. If the final Self Study is available you can skim that. It is found under the About the Program link on our home page.)</p> <p><u>Study questions:</u> What is public policy and administration? What do you want to get from your graduate studies at Sacramento State? What does McSwite suggest you should get out of your studies?</p> | |
| <p>Friday Sept 6 5 pm – 9 pm Saturday Sept 7 8 am – 5 pm Sunday Sept 8 8 am – 5 pm Please do <u>all</u> the work for these three days in advance. We may not cover the items in the order listed</p> | <p>Before the weekend begins download the free version of mindmeister. We will use this software in class. If you have a laptop please bring it to class the long weekend as we will start working with this tool.</p> <p>Understanding the sectors for PPA Rainey, Chapter 3</p> <p>Institutional overview: American Government Federalist Papers #10 and #51 available online at several sites including Yale's Avalon Project</p> <p>Kingdon, John. <i>America the Unusual</i>, all. <u>Study question:</u> What are the key ideas that make the US political system unique?</p> <p>Group projects will be selected</p> <p>State and Local Structure and context Review the Cal Facts publication about California (most current version please, as of this posting the 2013 data is available) Skim Planning for a Better Future Public Policy Institute of California</p> | |

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| | <p>2013. Also chose two policy issues from the bullets listed and review those. Overview of Local Government Skim the Sturmfels thesis</p> <p><u>California State Political Context</u> Baldassare, all Mathews and Paul, all <u>Study Questions:</u> Do the three factors that were important in the Orange County bankruptcy still exist in CA? What are the key ideas that make the CA political system unique? How have these also made governance complex? Skim the Esquivel thesis</p> <p><u>Critical and Analytical Thinking</u> Bardach, all (just skim the appendices) For a thesis using a version of the model suggested by Bardach skim the Dickinson thesis</p> <p><u>Roots of PA: Political Science</u> *Lascher, Edward L. Jr.. 1998. "Loss Imposition and Institutional Characteristics: Learning from Automobile Insurance Reform in North America" <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i></p> <p><u>Roots of PA: Organization Theory and Social Psychology; Bureaucracy</u> Rainey, Chapter 1, 2</p> <p>*Moore, Mark H. 2000. "Managing for Value: Organizational Strategy in For-Profit, Nonprofit, and Governmental Organizations. " <i>Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly</i> 29:183</p> <p><u>Study question:</u> What role do organizations play in the study of public policy and administration?</p> <p>Skim the theses by Foster and Fox</p> <p>ASPA Code of Ethics</p> | |
| September 10 | <p><u>Writing for PPA</u> (additional reading to be assigned) I only want you to skim the following, don't read for content, read for structure. *McEwan, Patrick J. 2000 "The Potential Impact of Large-Scale Voucher Programs" <i>Review of Education Research Volume 70:2</i>. Leach, William 2008 "Shared Governance in Higher Education: Structural and Cultural Responses to a Changing National Climate" Center for Collaborative Policy</p> | |
| September 17 | Group project time | Final paper #2 due |

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| September 24 | <u>Creating, understanding and using narratives</u> <u>Collaboration</u> Doyle and Straus, <i>How to Make Meetings Work</i> . All | First outline of group project due |
| October 1 | <u>Making Effective Presentations</u> Tufte; read the Introduction and Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. Bring in at least two analytical reports you find interesting. They must include some visual presentation of information. Consider attending the December workshop in SF. It is well worth the investment. http://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/courses | |
| October 8 | No class... keep working on group projects. | |
| October 15 | <u>Ethical Dimensions of PPA</u> * Walton, John R., James M. Stearns, and Charles T. Crespy, 1997. "Integrating Ethics into the Public Administration Curriculum: A three-step Process". <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> 16. pp. 470-483. <u>Study Questions</u> : Are public administrators held to a different or higher standard than private or non-profit administrators? Is this reasonable? Why or why not? | Group project first drafts due |
| October 22 | MK in classroom meeting with individual groups | Toolkits Due |
| October 29 | <u>Group presentations</u> | |
| November 5 | <u>Group Presentations Evaluations</u> | Group project papers due |
| November 12 | | |
| November 19 | | Paper 4 due |

Writing an Analytical Paper

The easier part:

Use proper grammar, capitalization, punctuation, source citation, italics etc.

Good paragraphs have the following components:

A topic sentence, usually at the beginning

Supporting evidence

A transition to the next idea

Avoid personalizing (I will now, we do this etc...).

Answer the question asked. If it has multiple parts that are not rhetorical, answer all of them.

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 which you can support with evidence as opposed to beliefs.

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.

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 for a few days.

Make an outline.

Have someone proofread it.

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. Text books, 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. 😊

Toolkits

What is a toolkit?

It is a compilation, in whatever form works for you, of those things that help you make sense of the world, the things that provide new perspectives, new insights, and allow you to understand the complex assortment of problems and questions that are raised in the public sector. It allows you to look backward for understanding and forward to solve problems creatively.

Why do I need a toolkit?

If you are sitting in this class, you have some desire to learn, to get a better education, perhaps to further your career goals. Sitting here one night a week or a series of Saturdays will not make you a better manager, finding ways to internalize what you have learned, and will learn in other classes, *will*. By internalizing I mean making it part of how you think about the world. Few of us have time to pull a book off the shelf and thumb through it looking for a crisis that needs an answer NOW. But, most of us, in the 30 seconds it takes to draw breath to respond, can glance at the wall, or the desk, or the inside of your wrist, and look at what is in your toolkit.

Bennis talks about the fact that leaders force themselves to find time to reflect on what is going on in their lives, both past and projecting forward. These leaders are seeking to identify lessons and look forward, with some thought, to what might be happening now. Your toolkit is a way of forcing reflection. When you come upon a problem you're not sure what to do with, look at your toolkit list while you ponder the problem. Pretty soon, you won't need the toolkit list, it will be part of the way you think.

What form can my toolkit take?

3x5 cards

A sheet of paper

A binder

A collage

The key to a toolkit is to have it visible frequently, someplace where you will use it, and start to incorporate it into the way you think everyday, not just when you have the benefit of reflection. My toolkit was a 4x6 index card, taped to the wall near my phone. It had been compiled over the course of my graduate school work, in several spiral bound index card books.

What should be in my toolkit?

The most critical item about your tool kit is that it is YOURS. Not mine, not your groups, but yours. It is those tools that work for you. The thing that makes the world crystal clear for me may be simply an ancillary thought for you.

Your toolkit should contain the words and phrases and concepts that remind you of the bigger theme behind them. It should be brief, but meaningful.

For example, one of the items in my toolkit is simply the word "incentives". For me that conjures up a story I heard when I visited a friends policy class at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. The professor was talking about a state where roads where being torn up by cars and trucks. The policy wonks decided that it would be best to assess a fee to the vehicles which did the most damage. Naturally, trucks did the most damage so the policy folks suggested a per axle fee be levied against all trucks in the state. Makes sense right? Fine the guys who do the damage. Well, if you charge a fee per axle, what is the incentive you provide? For the truck drivers who want to reduce their costs, the incentive is to reduce the number of axles. As you reduce the number of axles, you increase the amount of weight per axle, further damaging the roads -- exactly the opposite affect the policy makers were trying to achieve.

At some point, policy analysts began to have a conversation about welfare benefits. If people actually made less money if they went off welfare, what was the incentive to leave the system and work? Paying attention to what it is that you are encouraging people to do helps me understand how policy solutions sometimes have unintended consequences.

"Incentive" logic can be applied to individuals as well. Understanding what motivates people can often help address workplace morale issues. Public organizations in particular seem to have trouble finding ways to reward "good" employees monetarily. Eventually it becomes clear that punching the clock and doing the minimum required gets you the same pay as going above and beyond the call of duty. So what is the incentive for an employee to work harder? What is the incentive for someone to come to work there, to stay, or to work hard?

I also occasionally think about organizations when I see the word incentive. For example, what is it that drives this organization? Is it an organization which gets its revenues from charging fines to the people it regulates? If so, then what happens if the regulatees disappear? Sometimes organizations have perverse incentives, if the EPA really cleaned everything up, it would go out of business. All these are questions I think about when I see the word "incentive".

How can I use my toolkit?

Schon talks about being a reflective practitioner, that is, the people who are the most skilled are doing and thinking at the same time, unconsciously. Weick talks about this in his piece in the Executive Mind as well. Ed St. John talks about it as individuals framing, deconstructing, and then re-framing concepts. People learn something, take it apart so its pieces make sense to them, and then reconstruct it in a way that they can "carry around". This is the art of building a toolkit. The use is in finding a way to carry around what you have learned until you no longer need to put it on paper.