

POL 108: Education Policy
Spring Quarter 2019
Fridays 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
UCSC

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Course Objectives:

This course in education policy has two objectives. One is to examine the landscape of education policy and governance in the United States with a particular focus on California. This will examine the role government--federal, state, and local--the courts, media, constituency and special interest groups in shaping education policy. We will examine the aims of federal and state policy intervention and its impact on students, teachers, and schools. The second objective is to provide students with an understanding of the major education policy issues that have been at the center of policy debates in CA over the past 40 years. They include the following.

- Education finance policy. How schools are funded. The underlying theories of school finance models.
- Accountability. Who is to be held accountable and for what. Strategies for school improvement.
- Reconsidering educational policy in CA: alternative approaches to policy including school choice and education vouchers.
- Policies related to equity, access, and adequacy
- Issues related to the teaching profession including tenure, preparation, salary structure.
- Higher education in California: Efforts to create a rational and efficient higher education system in California.
- Academic preparation and access to higher education. The role of the higher education system with regard to K-12.

An over-riding theme of our examination is to assess the impact of the past 40 years of policy intervention. Have they achieved their objectives? Are students, teachers, communities better off? A constant theme of education policy since the Brown v. Board decision has been the equality of educational opportunity. Another has been to increase the educational achievement of American students. Have these goals been realized? Many policy researchers contend that we have made little progress. Is this so? If yes, why? Have the huge investments over the past 40 years in educational improvement been worth the cost?

Readings:

Readings will be assigned for each week of the course. They will be available at Canvas, listed by the author's name. Students may download or print the articles. All of the assigned reading for a given week, plus associated discussion questions, should be completed before coming to class. The book chapters are available in the Center's student lounge. The books are:

David F. Labaree (2010). *Someone Has to Fail: The Zero-Sum Game of Public Schooling*.
Harvard Univ. Press

David K. Cohen & Susan L. Moffitt (2009) *The Ordeal of Equality: Did Federal Regulation Fix
Schools?* Harvard University Press

WEEK	DATE	INSTRUCTOR	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT	CLASS ASSIGNMENT
1	Friday 4/5	Timar	The governance structure of education in the US and CA	LAO: CalFacts PACE: CA and Public Education, 2019 Poll	
2	Friday 4/12	Timar	Education for the 20 th Century: From Citizen to Consumer	Labaree: Chapter 3, Progressive Education; Significant education policy streams over the past 100 years.	List as bullet points and be prepared to discuss the major changes to K-12 education as a result of the Progressive Movement.
3	Friday 4/19	Timar	Issues in CA governance for education Financing schools: <i>Serrano</i> , Prop. 13, Prop 98	The Little Hoover Commission: Educational Governance & Accountability: Taking the Next Step	List the most significant change(s) in educational governance in CA. Since the 1950s. Be prepared to explain what you believe was the most significant change. Be prepared to discuss in class the pros and cons of centralized and decentralized governance of schools.
4	Friday , 4/26	Timar	The search for educational equity and adequacy: federal and state policy and the role of the courts. Policy implementation; policy and practice	Cohen & Moffitt: Ch. 2, "Policy and Practice." Ch. 8, "Epilogue: What is to Be Done?"	List what Cohen and Moffitt argue are the primary challenges of converting policy into practice. Make sure that you define what is meant by "practice."

5	Friday , 5/3	Timar/ Murdoch	Assessment and accountability. What are we measuring? How does policy connect to assessment? LCFE and LCAP categorical funding	Fullan: <i>California's Golden Opportunity</i>	Prepare three questions related to the readings and be prepared to discuss them.
6	Friday , 5/10	Timar	Charter schools	Legislative Analyst's Office: Charter Schools Overview	Make a list of the pros and cons of charter schools and be prepared to discuss them in class.
7	Friday , 5/17	Timar	The teaching profession: credentialing, tenure, salaries Select one of the topics to research: 1) teacher preparation 2) teacher tenure and salary structure 3) teacher shortage especially in STEM	Kamala Harris teacher salary proposal in Canvas	Be prepared to discuss how her proposal generally, and specifically how it would affect each of the three areas: teacher prep, tenure and salary, teacher shortage.
8	Friday , 5/24	Timar	Access to higher education: The Master Plan for Higher Education; the Master Plan and K-12 academic preparedness, disparities in access, finance;	Kirst & Venezia: Discontent by Design	Class debate: Should higher education be free for all students.
9	Friday , 5/31	Timar	In-class final exam		

Grading

All assignments should be turned in via Canvas as Adobe.pdf files.

The course grade will be based on the following components.

Attendance and participation (20%)

Weekly paper assignment (weekly reading assignments 20%)

Research paper (30%)

Final Exam (30%)

Research Paper

By the third week of classes, each student will select a topic for a research project in coordination with the policy research project required for POL 196E.

Attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend all class sessions (Fridays, 10 am-12 noon), Students should come to class having read the assigned readings and with all assignments completed. Written work should be turned in via Canvas by 8am the morning of class, with students retaining a photocopy (or readily accessible electronic copy) for their own in-class notes and reflections. If you need to miss a class session, please email the instructor (tbtimar@ucdavis.edu) at least 24 hours in advance (except in exceptional circumstances).

Brief question sets: Most class sessions will require some reading in advance. Because these readings are essential to understanding the course material, you will be asked to complete a brief question set in advance of several class sessions. Students will be required to upload the assignments before the beginning of class (i.e. by 8am) and to retain a photocopy to use for class discussion. Questions sets are designed to consolidate your understanding of the readings and prepare you for the class discussion. Answers should be succinct and to the point; long essays are neither required nor desired.

All work must be in line with the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct.

Academic Integrity

As a student enrolled at the University of California, Davis, you have agreed to abide by the University's Code of Academic Conduct (see <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>) A version of this code of conduct applies at every UC campus. Cheating and other violations of academic honesty are serious offenses. Students are expected to work independently on all graded assignments except the group debate scheduled for Session 5.

Plagiarism deserves special attention in the age of the internet and the ease with which content

can be “cut and pasted.” Specifically, passing off another’s words or ideas as one’s own, or using those words or ideas without proper acknowledgement or citation, is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct. Students interested in learning more should consult references such as this:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02602930301677>

Students who engage in cheating will receive a grade of “F” for the course and may be subject to proceedings of the UC Davis Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs.

Students with Disabilities

Any student who, because of a disability, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to request accommodation for individual learning needs. UCCS (under the auspices of UC Davis) will make every attempt to accommodate all qualifying disabilities.

TITLE IX MANDATORY REPORTERS

Please be advised that UC Center Sacramento professors, instructors, teaching assistants, and administrators are mandatory reporters under Title IX. This means that we are required to pass on reports from students, whether communicated verbally during class discussion or office hours or as part of a written assignment or exercise, to the UC Davis Title IX officer and other relevant UC Davis officials. If you wish to seek out help or resources with a non-mandated reporter, please see <https://sexualviolence.ucdavis.edu/get-support>.

DATA SOURCES

The primary source for California public schools data is <http://ed-data.org>. Data is available at the state, county, district, and school levels. We will have opportunity to explore the data site in class, and in preparation of that, you should go to the home page of the web site and go to the Help tab, which can be found at the top right of the window, and read the relevant sections about the data and how to access it.

For national education data, the primary source is the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This includes data on international comparisons of educational achievement.

The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris has international comparative data on all areas of education.

Policy Paper Generic Outline

The following is a general guide for the policy papers.

What I would like from you for the policy paper is to select a particular education policy area. This might be the shortage of “qualified” math and science teachers, teacher salary structure including significant variation across districts, increasingly high rates of child obesity (and why has this become a problem for schools to address), high drop-out rates, the academic achievement gap, low performing schools, access/cost of higher education. There are lots of problems beyond these. I only list these for sake of illustration. Once you have decided on a policy problem, the paper should look like the following: (You don’t need to use my headings either)

I. Background of the Problem

- a. What is the problem and how does state or federal policy address it?
- b. Explain the problem fully, give numbers, provide charts, give as much information as you can to make your reader fully understand what the problem is, who is affected by it and how.
- c. Why is it important to address this problem through policy? What makes this a collective problem—a problem that requires government intervention?
- d. What are the possible consequences of doing nothing? (i.e. forecast possible and normative futures)

II. Existing State Policies

- a. What is the state doing about the problem? Here, you should provide a full discussion of what existing policies are, their logic, how long have they been in existence, how have they been modified, etc.?
- b. What do we know about how effective they are in solving the problem? Or, if we have policies to address this problem, why does the problem still exist?

III. Alternatives Solutions

- a. What do we know about this problem from the policy research literature or what other states may be doing to address this problem?
- b. What are alternative policy strategies to existing strategies? Is there another way to formulate the problem? Does state policy address the “real” problem?
- c. Why would these alternative solutions be more effective?
- d. What are the trade-offs among the alternative solutions?
 - i. Are there differences in costs?
 - ii. Differences in organizational demands?
 - iii. What has to change to implement the particular solution?
 - iv. What has to change in order for the policy to be effectively implemented?

IV. Your Recommendations

- a. What do you recommend and why?
- b. What are the likely outcomes?
- c. What unanticipated consequences might occur?

