

Pol 195: Policy Analysis in California
University of California Center Sacramento
Winter 2021
Friday 1:10-3:00

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Office Hours: Mondays 12:00-2:00, and by Appointment

Zoom: <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/3506846628>

TA: Paige Pellaton

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Office Hours: TBD

Zoom: TBD

Course Description

California is a special place. It is the most populous, most prosperous state in the Union. But, of course, with those superlatives come other, less positive ones, including economic inequality, water shortages, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, among many others. This course will cover how policies that address these issues get made. We will study everything from identifying issues to prescribing solutions to evaluating outcomes. Along the way, we will learn the ins and outs of a variety of tools that policy researchers use to analyze policy and policymaking.

Required Textbooks

There is one assigned textbook for this course. We may also have additional assigned readings during various weeks of the course. These readings will be made available on Canvas. All assigned readings, for each week, should be completed before coming to class.

- *Introduction to Public Policy*, Charles Wheelan

Course Policies

Attendance, Participation, and Weekly Readings

Class attendance is required. On Zoom, students should turn both their audio and video on and come class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Students that constructively contribute to class discussion most regularly and fully participate in other in-class activities will receive a boost to their attendance and participation grade. Students that do not contribute to in-class discussion or fully participate in other in-class activities will receive a lower grade. **Any student that has three or more absences will not be able to receive a passing grade for the class.** Arriving 10

minutes late to class will count as an absence.

Grade Appeals

You have the right to request a re-grade of your quizzes, exam, and assignments. All appeals should be submitted within one week of receiving a score and must be accompanied by a one-page memo explaining why you are requesting a regrade with evidence. Appealing your grade entails re-grading the entire assignment, and your grade can go up or down.

Academic Honesty

It goes without saying that all of your graded work must be done by you without assistance from others. You are encouraged to discuss the class and materials with others, but your answers to exam questions and your written essays must be yours and yours alone, with proper attribution for sources you wish to cite. If you are unfamiliar with the University's policy on academic dishonesty and associated penalties, see <https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/code-academic-conduct>.

Reporting Duties

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>.

Students with Disabilities

Any student who, because of a disability, may require some special arrangements in order to meet any of the 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. UC Davis will make every attempt to accommodate all qualified students with disabilities. For more information on accommodations, see <https://sdc.ucdavis.edu/students>.

Student Resources

See <https://resources.ucdavis.edu/> for a list of UC Davis resources available to students, including health and wellness, academic, and counseling services.

Course Requirements

Grade Breakdown

Attendance and Participation	10%
Reading Quizzes	10%
Podcast Summaries	10%
Policy Research Paper Proposal	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Policy Research Paper Background & Outline	10%
Final Policy Research Paper	30%

Reading Quizzes

To encourage reading and foster productive discussions, there will be weekly quizzes due before the start of class on Fridays on that week's assigned reading. Quizzes will be posted on Canvas (~5 multiple choice questions, ~15 minutes) at the end of the week and will be due any time before class on Friday.

Podcast Summaries

There are many important policy issues affecting California that we will not have time to cover in lecture. In order to become more familiar with the wide array of policies that impact California, students will listen to five different policy-related programs. A list of podcasts will be posted on Canvas, but students can also choose their own podcasts. After listening, students will complete a one-page double-spaced critical synopsis of the program that addresses the following: 1) title of the podcast and names of hosts and guests; 2) short summary that identifies questions or controversies addressed in the program; 3) why the policy issue is important to California, and 4) one policy argument you found compelling and why and one policy argument you found less-than-compelling and why. Summaries will be due every other week.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will take place during the fifth week of the quarter and will cover lecture and reading material covered up to that point. A study guide for the exam will be provided at least a week before the scheduled exam time. The exam will be turned in on Canvas.

Policy Research Paper

Students will complete a **Policy Research Paper** (15-20 pages). This policy research paper will examine an important public policy issue in California politics. Students will be required to submit a **Policy Research Proposal** in the third week of the course and a **Policy Research Paper Background and Outline** in the seventh week of the course. Details on the Policy Research Paper, Proposal, and Background and Outline will be provided. The Policy Research Paper will be due during the last week of the course. Late papers will be penalized 5% for each day they are late, including weekends. Papers that are more than three days late will not be accepted. All written

work must reflect your own scholarship, in line with the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct. For guidelines on avoiding plagiarism see the SJA at <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/>. You are expected to be aware of these guidelines; ignorance of guidelines does not excuse a violation.

Extra Credit

As an added bonus for attending the Wednesday speaker series, students who only miss one speaker series event will receive a 1 percentage point boost to their final grade. And students who attend every single speaker series event will receive a 2 percentage point boost to their final grade.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic/ Class Content	Readings Due at Beginning of Class	Assignments Due at Beginning of Class
Week 1, 01/08	What is Public Policy?	Chapter 1, Wheelan	None
Week 2, 01/15	Understanding Individual Behavior Case Study: SB 277	Chapter 3, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Podcast Summary 1 (by 11:59 p.m.)
Week 3, 01/22	Understanding Group Behavior Case Study: California's Housing Crisis	Chapter 4, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Policy Research Paper Proposal (by 11:59 p.m.)
Week 4, 01/28	Evaluating Social Welfare Case Study: California's Three Strikes Sentencing Law	Chapter 5, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Podcast Summary 2 (by 11:59 p.m.)
Week 5, 02/05	Midterm Exam	No readings	None
Week 6, 02/12	The Political Process I Case Study: Prop 187	Chapter 6, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Podcast Summary 3 (by 11:59 p.m.)

Week 7, 02/19	The Political Process II Case Study: AB540	McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (Canvas)	Reading Quiz Policy Research Paper Background and Outline (by 11:59 p.m.)
Week 8, 02/26	The Role of Government Case Study: California's Water Crisis	Chapter 8, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Podcast Summary 4 (by 11:59 p.m.)
Week 9, 03/05	The Role of Institutions	Chapter 14, Wheelan	Reading Quiz
Week 10, 03/12	Program Evaluation Case Study: Innovations in Healthcare Policy	Chapter 13, Wheelan	Reading Quiz Podcast Summary 5 (by 11:59 p.m.)
Finals Week, 03/19	Policy Research Paper		Final Policy Research Paper (by 11:59 p.m.)