

POL 108: Public Sector Policy  
University of California, Davis, Fall 2018  
Lecture M/W, 12:10 - 1:30 pm  
Discussion M/W, 1:40 - 2:00 pm  
1227 Haring Hall

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This course is about the policy-making process, from inception to implementation and evaluation. We use insights from political science, economics, and other social sciences to understand the theoretical rationale for governmental activity, political strategy for policy-making, and policy development, planning and analysis, and leadership.

The focus of the class will be on “practice” rather than “theory”. I will illustrate concepts discussed in the textbook through examples in the real world. We will be reading case studies from the Harvard Kennedy School of Public Policy on selected policy topics in transportation, health, education, and policing. All of the case studies have some connection to California or involve issues that have a direct impact on the state.

Ultimately, the purpose of public policy is to improve society and this normative concern is one of the biggest differences between public policy and other fields in social science. In judging policy, you will be asked to decide which of the possible policy alternatives is “best” in the sense of which policy is most effective, efficient, equitable, and not least important, politically feasible. The specifics of the policy problem and environment determine how to evaluate each of these criteria and balance them against each other. There are no universal rules in policy – every policy must be judged within the context of time, place, and people.

## Class Mechanics

There are a few basic rules for lecture, which are designed to improve everyone's experience by facilitating discussion and preventing distractions:

- Bring readings. Each week, I have assigned a set of readings. It is your responsibility to bring them to class in order to refer to them during discussion.
- Computers off (or iPad or smartphone or any other electronic reading devices). It's tempting to use computers for purposes other than note-taking. The reality is that most of us cannot resist the urge to check email and surf the internet. To conquer this temptation, I ask that you resort to old-school pen-and-paper note-taking. If you have a particular learning requirement that requires accommodation, please feel free to talk with me and I will be happy to consider an exception.
- Cell phones off and put away.
- No eating (unless there is a medical reason).

**Canvas** All information for the course, including syllabus, the paper assignment, and contact information can be accessed on the UC Davis Canvas web page for this course. Go to [Canvas](#), log in, and then select the tab for POL 108 002 FQ 2018. Please do not email questions until you have double-checked these resources for the answer.

**Email** The TAs and I welcome email questions and comments. Email is appropriate for quick questions about the material, class assignments or simple requests. For more substantive issues that cannot be answered with a few sentences, come see me or one of the TAs during office hours. If you are unsure, please email us your question and we will either respond directly or suggest that you come in.

When you email us be sure to include POL108 below your name and/or in the subject line of the email. We will respond to your emails as soon as possible, within 24 hours.

**Lecture Slides** PDF slides will be available on Canvas, typically the morning of lecture though on occasion later in the day. Be warned that the material on the slides does not include all the information we cover in class. The slides are designed to help structure your note taking and studying—not to replace it.

### Readings

You are assigned readings every week (see schedule below). All the readings are available for free on Canvas. You may also access them online through the UC Davis library or Google Scholar, but you will need to use the VPN Client to access them off campus in many cases. Instructions for how to download and use the VPN Client can be found [here](#). The readings for each week should be completed by Monday's class, so that you are prepared to discuss them.

## Class participation

To ensure that you stay on top of the readings, there will be a short quiz during Monday's discussion on that week's assigned readings (starting week 2). There are a total of six quizzes, the lowest score will be dropped and the rest are each worth 20 points. Students who wish to have additional

exemptions, must first get approval from me. I will only grant additional exemptions under unusual circumstances (i.e. prolonged illness).

You can raise your quiz grade by participating regularly in discussion. Most classes will include lectures and slide-based presentations, but the course is also designed to allow for student questioning and discussion. Students who talk regularly in class will receive additional points on their quiz grade...the more you talk, the better your participation grade.

In general, come to class ready to discuss the readings. Bring the readings. Be prepared to be called on in class. I encourage you to bring a name card to every class. It is the best way to ensure that I learn your name and get credit for participation. You can prepare a name card by folding any piece of paper in half and writing your name in **BOLD** and **BIG** letters.

## Grading

In addition to class discussion, this course will have an in-class midterm, final exam, and a short essay (5 double-spaced pages; assignments to be provided via Canvas and in class). Each component is worth 100 points and contributes equally to your grade as follows:

25% Class Participation

25% Midterm Exam, November 7

25% Response Paper, Monday, December 3 before midnight

25% Final Exam, Thursday, December 13, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

It is important that you attend all lectures, as some material for exams will be discussed in lecture but not covered in the readings. To facilitate discussion, bring your readings to class. You are responsible for all material in assigned readings and discussed in class.

The response paper is due Monday, December 3 before 11:59 pm as an uploaded electronic document to Canvas. There will be no class that day due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Late papers will be automatically graded down by the following formula:

Paper due 12/3

| date | penalty |
|------|---------|
|------|---------|

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| 12/4 | 3 points |
|------|----------|

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| 12/5 | 6 points |
|------|----------|

|      |          |
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| 12/6 | 9 points |
|------|----------|

|      |           |
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| 12/7 | 12 points |
|------|-----------|

|      |           |
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| 12/8 | 15 points |
|------|-----------|

|      |           |
|------|-----------|
| 12/9 | 18 points |
|------|-----------|

|       |           |
|-------|-----------|
| 12/10 | 21 points |
|-------|-----------|

The final exam is NOT cumulative. Missing the midterm or final exam will result in a zero score. I will only give exemptions for a serious, personal health issue, a family emergency, jury duty, or military service. In the case of illness, a doctor's note dated to no later than the date of the exam will be required. Accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities and for religious observances in accordance with UC Davis policy.

You may appeal a grade by submitting a written request to the TA by email (you should also CC me on the email). Appeals are due within **one week** of receiving the grade in question. Your written

appeal should explain clearly and succinctly the issue with the given grade. I will then regrade the entire assignment. This reevaluation may result in a higher, lower or unchanged grade.

Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Academic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or extension on a test or assignment, or submission of essentially the same written assignment for two different courses without prior permission of faculty members.

## Code of conduct

Students are required to acknowledge the Code of Academic Conduct at the start of the quarter for each registered class. You should receive an email from the university with instructions for how to submit your acknowledgment. More information is available at <https://participate.ucdavis.edu/>. The code governs conduct related to exams and coursework, collaboration with other students, misuse of course materials, lying and fraud, intimidation of other students, and classroom disruption. Any student caught violating the code will be reported to the Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs.

## Course Outline

**Week 1: September 26:** Introduction

**Week 2: October 1, 3:** Market failures

- Kleiman, Mark AR, and Steven M. Teles. “Market and NonMarket Failures.” In *The oxford handbook of public policy*. 2006.

**Week 3: October 8, 10:** Parking

- Pierce, Gregory, and Donald Shoup. “Sfpark: Pricing parking by demand.” *Access Magazine* (43), Fall 2013.
- Manville, Michael. “Parking Requirements and Housing Development: Regulation and Reform in Los Angeles.” *Access Magazine* (44), Spring 2014.
- Watch “The high cost of free parking,” Vox on YouTube, Published 7/19/17. Link to video [here](#).

**Week 4: October 15, 17:** Housing

- *California’s Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities: Final Statewide Housing Assessment*. California Department of Housing and Community Development. February 2018.
- Roberts, David. “The future of housing policy is being decided in California”. *Vox*, April 4, 2018. Link to article [here](#).

**Week 5: October 22, 24:** Political process

- Galston, William A. “Political feasibility: interests and power.” In *The Oxford handbook of public policy*. 2006.
- Additional background readings (not required) on House of Representatives procedures and legislative process available on Canvas.

**Week 6: October 29, 31 Health**

- Giaimo, Susan. “The United States: An Ambivalent Journey toward Universal Coverage.” In *Reforming Health Care in the United States, Germany, and South Africa*, pp. 35-94. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2016.

**Week 7: November 5, 7: Midterm**

Monday midterm review lecture and quiz

**WEDNESDAY IN-CLASS MIDTERM**

**Week 8: November 14: Implementation**

**NO CLASS**

**Week 9: November 19:**

**NO CLASS**

**Week 10: November 26, 28: Policing**

- Sparrow, Malcolm K. Chapters 2 & 3 in *Handcuffed: What holds policing back, and the keys to reform*. Brookings Institution Press, 2016.
- Listen to [August 14, 2018 interview of Sacramento Police Chief Daniel Hahn](#) on Insight with Beth Ruyak, Capital Public Radio

**Week 11: December 3, 5: Education (Paper due Monday)**

- Bovins, Mark, and Paul Hart and Sanneke Kuipers. “Politics of Policy Evaluation” *The Oxford handbook of public policy* (2006): 319-335.
- Hanushek, Eric A. “Some findings from an independent investigation of the Tennessee STAR experiment and from other investigations of class size effects.” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 21, no. 2 (1999): 143-163.
- Stecher, Brian, George Bohrnstedt, Michael Kirst, Joan McRobbie, and Trish Williams. “Class-size reduction in California: A story of hope, promise, and unintended consequences.” *Phi Delta Kappan* 82, no. 9 (2001): 670-674