

San José State University
Political Science Department, MPA Program
PADM 213, Public Policy, Spring 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s): Xintong Chen
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Office Hours: M/W 10:00 - noon via Zoom and by appointment
Class Days/Time: Monday, 6:00 - 8:45p
Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall 149A

Course Description

From the SJSU Course Catalog: This is a 3-unit course. An examination of the application of analytical and administrative tools to solving public problems. Study of the processes of policy formulation and the research and political tools necessary to assess program effectiveness.

The course introduces students to what public officials within government, and by extension the citizens they represent, choose to do or not do about public problems. This includes the formulation, analysis, and implementation of public policy. Further, the course introduces students to the forces that influence these practices and the analytic skills needed to perform these important decision-making functions.

The goal of the course is to demonstrate to students the impact that public policy has on their daily lives, imploring an increased political awareness. By emphasizing the pervasiveness of policy, it will allow students to further appreciate the power they wield to effect change and arm them with the tools of policy analysis.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- CLO1: Understand the terminology used in public policy and program evaluation. This outcome is assessed by in-class participation and midterm exam.
- CLO2: Understand the governmental environment and intergovernmental relationships in which public policies and programs are created and implemented. This outcome is assessed by class participation, midterm and final exam.
- CLO3: Build their analytical capabilities and learn how to apply a multi-dimensional lens to the analysis of public policy issues. This outcome is assessed by class participation, policy brief presentation and policy brief.
- CLO4: Evaluate public policy for its legislative intent, background, budgetary impacts, and need for amendment or termination using policy formulation theories. This outcome is assessed by class participation and final exam.
- CLO5: Effectively communicate, in written and spoken formats, policy analysis procedures and their conclusions. This outcome is assessed by policy brief presentation and policy brief.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/firstname.lastname> and/or on [Canvas Learning Management System](#)

[course login website](#). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](#).

Communication and Office Hour

I provided all course materials on Canvas and will frequently make announcements on Canvas. It is essential that you check the class Canvas page routinely. I am available to meet you every Monday and Wednesday morning 10:00 to noon. You will use the link <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/hnllp> to sign up for office hours. One spot is for 15 minutes. You should sign up at least two hours early before the meeting time. You can sign up for at most two spots per week. If you need more time, send me an email. I will set up a special appointment with you. Free feel to contact me through email as well if you have any questions.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

- Weimar, David; Vining, Aidan, Policy Analysis, 6th ed.. (Routledge, 2017) ISBN# 9781138216518
- Eugene Bardach, A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, 6th ed. (Sage CQ Press, 2019)

Please note: older editions of these books are perfectly acceptable to purchase. However, key information, page numbers and chapter numbers may vary from edition to edition. It is the student's responsibility to account for these discrepancies when they exist.

In addition, students are expected to have a copy of Microsoft Excel, Google sheets or equivalent for the purposes of class exercises and discussion.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Policy Brief

Students will prepare a policy brief on a current issue of their choosing. A policy brief is a short, neutral document that provides a summary of what is known about a particular issue, demonstrates the necessity of addressing said issue, and then evaluates the different alternatives or options for addressing it.

For example, students may want to write a brief that addresses the issue of children's literacy: in doing research you find that 30% of students do not read at their assigned levels by the third grade. Your brief will introduce this problem, discuss why it needs to be addressed, and then identify different policy alternatives for improving the literacy rate of children. You may also make a recommendation as to the best way to address this issue and discuss any impending legislation on the topic.

Grades will be based on the quality of content, the integration of theory and practice, and the overall writing quality (e.g., spelling, grammar, format). Students should also ensure that their paper follows the formatting requirements of all assignments designated below. This assignment evaluates CLOs 3 and 5.

Policy Brief Presentation

Students will present a policy issue to the class, linking the issue to the topic of policy analysis. This assignment gives students the opportunity to investigate one policy topic in more depth. This assignment evaluates CLOs 3 and 5.

Exams

Students will complete two exams over the course of the semester (a midterm and a final exam). Exams will include open-ended questions (both short answer and essay) that include both defining content from the semester, as well as applying material to real-world public problems and policies. Exams will be open book/note. More information will be given to students in class. This assignment evaluates CLOs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Class Participation

Regular class attendance is highly encouraged, though per University Policy F-15-12 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>), students will not be graded on daily attendance. Students will be graded on the quality and quantity of their participation in class discussion, group projects and during lectures. This assignment evaluates CLOs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Grading Information

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>980 to 1000</i>	<i>98 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 979</i>	<i>93 to 97.9%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92.9%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89.9 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 859</i>	<i>83 to 85.9%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82.9%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79.9%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75.9%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72.9%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69.9%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65.9%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62.9%</i>

Assignment Points Breakdown and Due Dates:

Grade Item	Points (percentage of grade)	Due Dates
Policy Brief Presentation	20	4/4 or 4/11
Policy Brief	25	4/4
Midterm Exam	20	3/21
Final Exam	20	5/16
Attendance and Participation	15	N/A

Classroom Protocol

Cellphones, laptops, and other technology

Students may not use their cell phone for non-class purposes in class. Laptops, tablets, and other such technology is allowed in class but for notetaking and educational use only.

Make-up/Late Policy

Students are expected to complete assignments on time and turn them in by the beginning of class on the day

they are due. Students are not allowed to make up exams and presentations. If these are not completed; the student will receive a zero for that day. For papers such as the policy brief, 10 points will be deducted on top of the students' grade for each day it is late. Students only have up to a week to turn in a late paper: after that, it will be a zero.

The late policy may be waived in the following two situations. First, it may be waived at the instructor's discretion in case of an emergency. If an emergency arises that prevents you from completing your work on time, please email the instructor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for you to keep up in the class. Emergencies are defined as anything which is serious and unexpected. Emergencies cannot be written on the calendar in advance. Examples of emergencies are heart attacks, car accidents, a serious health crisis of the student or in the student's immediate family. Examples of non-emergencies are family weddings, vacations, conferences or any other event which can be planned around. Second, university-related absences (e.g., university athletics, conferences, and other university-related absences) are considered as excused absences. If students cannot complete assignments on time due to university-related absences, students should inform the instructor before the due time of an assignment.

Recording of Lectures

Please obtain my permission before taking an audio or video recording of lectures or other class activities. I will almost certainly grant such permission, but it is common courtesy to let people know you will be recording them before you do so. Thus, out of respect to your colleagues and to me, please do not record this class without my explicit permission.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Workload and Credit Hour Requirements

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Additional Information

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops

every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

Spartan Food Pantry

The Spartan Food Pantry is a walk-in, full-service, staffed, food assistance program offering non-perishable goods, fresh produce, and refrigerated items to eligible students. No student should have to face food insecurity. We define those in need as students who have limited or uncertain access to nutritious and safe foods because of a lack of money and other resources. For more information, visit Spartan Food Pantry website at <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/get-assistance/spartan-food-pantry.php>

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Please note, the schedule below is subject to change with fair notice. It is the student's responsibility to stay apprised of changes to the course schedule.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
1	1/31	Introduction of Public Policy	Weimar & Vining, Ch.2
2	2/7	Policy Analysis	Bardach Part I
3	2/14	Market Failure Theory and Government Failure Theory	Weimar & Vining, Ch.4 &5&8
4	2/21	Goals	Weimar & Vining, Ch.7
5	2/28	Problems (Forming Groups)	Canvas Readings
6	3/7	Solutions	Weimar & Vining, Ch.10
7	3/14	Organizing Your Own Policy Analysis (group discussion)	Weimar & Vining, Ch.14 &15
8	3/21	Midterm Online Exam	NA
9	3/28	Spring Break	NA
10	4/4	Policy Brief Presentation (Policy Brief Due)	NA
11	4/11	Policy Brief Presentation	NA
12	4/18	Political Context and Policy Processes	Canvas Readings
13	4/25	Theories of Policy Processes I	Canvas Readings
14	5/2	Theories of Policy Processes II	Canvas Readings
15	5/9	Theories of Policy Processes III	Canvas Readings
Final Online Exam – Monday, May 16th 6:00 pm -8:00 pm			