

PUBLIC HEALTH 180 SA: CURRENT TOPICS IN CALIFORNIA HEALTH POLICY

University of California Center Sacramento (UCCS)

**Syllabus: Sumer 2008
June 23-August 29, 2008**

FACULTY:

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CLASS SESSIONS:

Mondays 9:30-11:30 AM, and Fridays 11:30 AM-1:30 PM
University of California Center Sacramento Conference Room
1130 K Street, Suite LL22
Sacramento, CA 95814

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course develops a systematic understanding of policy analysis, helps students develop their own advanced policy analysis of a current California-related health policy issue, and analyzes key policy challenges facing the health and health care of California's diverse population.

Class sessions on Mondays will focus on policy analysis, developing an understanding of California's politics and policy history, and Sacramento "insider" background on the policy/politics nexus in the Golden State. Class sessions on Friday will focus on the health policy challenges facing California, how these challenges interact with federal health policy, and the role of key stakeholders in the state in influencing and shaping health policy.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

The course has five goals for student educational development:

1. building skills in designing and writing research-based policy analyses;
2. building knowledge about California health policy issues;
3. providing opportunities to interact with high-level policy makers and advocates;

4. providing opportunities to make professional oral presentations;
5. thinking systematically about complex health policy problems.

HEALTH POLICY COMPONENT: This component of the class is intended to give students a foundation in the key elements of California’s health care financing and delivery system, an understanding of the role of key stakeholders in providing services and in shaping health care policy, and the political and financial challenges encountered in reforming the delivery of health care services to all Californians, including those without health insurance.

PUBLIC POLICY COMPONENT: In addition to its health policy component, this course also features public policy analysis sessions that help students acquire a systematic understanding of policy analysis, and also assist them in developing their own policy analyses of California-related policy issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all class sessions and seminars, to schedule and attend tutorial sessions, to complete several worksheet assignments, and to complete step-by-step assignments linked to their policy analyses. Points in this course will be awarded as follows:

Attendance and participation:	7.5%	First outline of research topic	4%
Meetings with instructors:	6%	Preliminary oral presentation	2.5%
Worksheets:	12%	First complete draft	15%
Formal oral presentation(s)	13%	Final draft	40%

DETAILS: Grading of the **first complete draft** is based on three component scores: completeness (5%), analytical depth (5%), responsiveness to instructions (5%). The score for the **formal oral presentation(s)** includes component scores as follows: preparation, 4%; presentation, 3%; content, 4%; discussant role for another classmate, 2%.

The **final policy research paper** should contain 5-8,000 words (16-26 pages double-spaced). The draft is graded based on these elements: executive summary, 5%; strength of argument, 5%, use of appropriate and compelling evidence, 7.5%, legislative history, 5%, policy recommendations, 5%, research resources, 7.5%, analytical depth, 5%.

COURSE TEXTS

Public Policy Component:

Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis. 2nd Edition*. CQ Press, 2005. Pb. (ISBN 1568 0292 33)

Peter Schrag, *California: America’s High-Stakes Experiment*. Univ. of California Press, 2006. (ISBN: 0520244362)

Health Policy Component:

Readings to be assigned from various sources regarding current topics in national and state health care policy, including *Health Affairs*, California Health Care Foundation (www.chcf.org), Kaiser Family Foundation (www.kff.org), UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu), Center for the Study of Health System Change

(www.hschange.org), based on the topics to be addressed by speakers in the Friday Health Policy Sessions

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Public Policy Sessions (Mondays: 9:30 - 11:30 AM)

Session 1, JUN 23 – Principles of Policy Analysis I (Amos, Dymski, Abramsky (ADA))

Assigned reading: Schrag book (entire)

Worksheet 1 (on Schrag's book) distributed June 23; due Monday, June 30, 9:30 AM

[Mandatory get-acquainted meeting with Professors Abramsky or Amos by June 27]

Session 2, JUN 30 – Principles of Policy Analysis II; discussion of Schrag's book (ADA)

Assigned reading: Bardach book (entire)

Worksheet 2 distributed June 30, due Monday, July 7, 9:30 AM

Session 3, JUL 7 – Principles of Policy Analysis III (ADA)

Assignment: Topic summary/preliminary bibliography for each scholar-intern's policy-research paper due, Friday, July 11, 4 PM.

[Mandatory meetings with Professors Abramsky or Amos by July 11]

Session 4, JUL 13 – “Three-minute” policy presentations by scholar interns, part I

Session 5, JUL 20 – “Three-minute” policy presentations by scholar interns, part II

Policy-insider talk: Diane Cummins, Senior Fiscal Advisor, Senate

Democratic Caucus and former Assistant Finance Director, Gov. Wilson

Session 6, JUL 27 – Policy-insider talk: Peter Schaafsma, Senior Fiscal Advisor,

Assembly Republican Caucus

Assignment: First draft of policy-research paper due, Friday, August 1, 5 PM

Session 7, AUG 4 – Peer-to-peer policy feedback sessions; presentation of the Public Policy Institute of California's report, *California 2025: Taking on the Future* (Dymski).

[Report is downloadable at: <http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=489>]

Session 8, AUG 11 – *California 2025: Taking on the Future* -- Scholar-intern debate and discussion about California's policy futures

Final week: Student oral presentations of policy research projects, August 19-21, 9-5 PM

Final draft of policy-research papers due, Thursday, August 21, 5 PM.

Health Policy Sessions (Fridays: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM)

Session 1, JUN 27 – Health Care Financing in California: Medicare, Medi-Cal, Private Insurance, and the Safety Net (Kominski)

Session 2, JUL 4 – No class

Session 3, JUL 11 – Key Stakeholders: Health Advocacy Round-Table Discussion (Speakers TBD)

Session 4, JUL 18 – Key Stakeholders: Insurer Round-Table Discussion (Speakers TBD)

Session 5, JUL 25 – Key Stakeholders: Provider Round-Table Discussion (Speakers TBD)

Session 6, AUG 1 – Current Topics in California Health Policy: Update on California Health Financing Reform (Speaker TBD)

Session 7, AUG 8 – Current Topics in California Health Policy: Impact of National Proposals on California (Speaker TBD)

Session 8, AUG 15 – Lessons Learned: If Health Care Policy Is Broken, Why Can't We Fix It? (Kominski)