

**THE SACRAMENTO SEMINAR: MEDIA AND PUBLIC POLICY**  
**University of California Center Sacramento (UCCS)**  
**SYLLABUS: WINTER 2008 QUARTER**

Lead instructor: Gary Dymski Director, UCCS, and Professor of Economics, UCR  
Phone: 916-445-5900 Email: [Gary.dymski@ucop.edu](mailto:Gary.dymski@ucop.edu)

Course co-instructors: Martin Johnson Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, UCR  
Phone: 951-827-4612 Email: [martin.johnson@ucr.edu](mailto:martin.johnson@ucr.edu)

A.G. Block Director, UCCS Public-Affairs Journalism Program  
Phone: 916-445-7300 Email: [ag.block@ucop.edu](mailto:ag.block@ucop.edu)

Art Amos Instructor, UCCS  
Phone: 916-445-3929 Email: [akamos@comcast.com](mailto:akamos@comcast.com)

**Class meeting time and place:** Friday, 9:15 AM-12:30 PM, UCCS Conference Room, Sacramento

---

### COURSE OVERVIEW

This course provides training in California politics and policy analysis, and examines the intersection of media, and policy in the Golden State. The course encompasses both an ongoing practicum, as well as substantive themes. The practicum exposes students to readings, writing assignments, and classroom exercises that provide a systematic understanding of what a policy analysis is and is not, and how to write one. Students in the class develop their own analysis on a topic of their choosing; that analysis is critiqued, edited, discussed, extended, and presented. This training emphasizes the use of legal research materials in political / policy analyses, and vice versa.

This course then explores how media activity affects the creation of public policy through examination of the relationships between media organizations and government and political structures.

### COURSE LOGISTICS

**Class sessions:** The class will meet Friday mornings, 9:15 AM - 12:30 PM. The first half of each class (9:15-10:45 AM) will focus on the class practicum in policy analysis. After a break, the second half of these sessions, 11 AM-12:30 PM, will feature substantive thematic sessions. Guest speakers will be specialists in various topics related to media and politics – the ‘theme’ of the Winter 2008 Sacramento Seminar.

**Grading:** 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%. Worksheet assignments will be announced during the quarter as they are formulated.

**COURSE GOALS AND COMPONENTS:** This course is mandatory for UCCS scholar interns enrolled as undergraduates. It is designed to provide training for the next generation of California leadership. As such, it aims at achieving three goals, and has three core components.

- First goal: To immerse scholar interns on the historical and institutional background of the Golden State, to prepare them both for internship assignments and for the future. Readings and classroom presentations will cover the political and budget-making process in California, the current policy challenges facing the state, and the interaction between the media and policy-making.
  - Second goal: To provide scholar interns with a systematic understanding of policy analysis, and how to write it. Scholar interns are provided with materials about constructing and writing policy analyses, and are challenged to develop their own analysis.
  - Third goal: To expose scholar interns to professional and academic experts on California media, policy issues and politics, and to provide opportunities for discussion and debate of these issues.
- This course will prepare students for successful experiences as UCCS scholar interns, and will develop and enhance scholar interns' professional skills.

**COURSE TEXTS:** All texts are required except for the last in this list. One text is downloadable.

- Peter Schrag, *California: America's High-Stakes Experiment*. UC Press, 2006. (ISBN: 0520244362)
- Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, 2nd Edition*. CQ Press, 2005. Paperback (ISBN 1568 0292 33)
- Neil Henry, *American Carnival: Journalism Under Siege in an Age of New Media*. UC Press, 2007. (ISBN: 978 0 520 24342 2)
- [Recommended] Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 5th edition. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999).

**WEEK-BY-WEEK TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:** The schedule that is set out below contains the topics and assignments based on course content. This schedule will be augmented by a number of formal and informal presentations by guest speakers; these presentations may be held during the assigned class time or during other times. Note that mandatory meetings with Prof. Dymski and Prof. Amos are listed below, to provide the basis of one-on-one working sessions on each scholar-intern's policy analysis. Additional meetings are encouraged.

### **Class 1: January 11**

Session A: Introduction to Policy Analysis  
Faculty: Gary Dymski, Art Amos,

Session B: Media in California: From Insider to Outsider to No-sider  
Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Peter Schrag, *California: America's High-Stakes Experiment*. UC Press, 2006.

Geneva Overholser, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *The Press*, Oxford U. Press, 2005: "The Nature and Sources of News," by Robert Entman, pp 48-65.

Worksheet 1: Handed out January 11, due January 18 (Based on: Schrag (entire book))

Mandatory meetings with Professor Dymski, weeks 1/2

### **Class 2: January 18**

Session A: Policy Analysis II  
Faculty: Gary Dymski, Art Amos

Readings: Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, 2nd Edition*. CQ Press, 2005.

Session B: Journalism Under Siege\*

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block,

Panel Discussion (invited but not confirmed):

Neil Henry, Dean, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism

Howard Weaver, VP for News, McClatchy Newspapers

Barbara O'Connor, Director, Center for the Study of Media and Politics, CSUS

Reading: Neil Henry, *American Carnival: Journalism Under Siege in an Age of New Media*.  
UC Press, 2007.

Mandatory meetings with Professor Amos, weeks 2/3

**Class 3: January 25**

Session A: Policy Analysis III

Faculty: Gary Dymski, Art Amos

Reading: Bardach

Session B: Media Coverage of Policy Issues: Good, Bad and Ugly

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Panel: Mental Health and the Media

A discussion with Dr. Neal Adams, former director of the state Department of Mental Health and member of the Advisory Committee/Faculty of the Petris Center, UC Berkeley School of Public Health

Reading:

Overholser, "Informing the Public" by Thomas Patterson and Phillip Seib, pp 189-202

Overholser, "The Marketplace of Ideas" by Robert Schmuhl and Robert Picard, pp 141-155

Policy Analysis Topic due, January 27

**Class 4: January 30 (note: 4 pm, Wednesday, UCCS)\***

The Media and Legislative Leadership

Faculty: A.G. Block

Guest Speaker: Bill Boyarsky, former city editor, *Los Angeles Times*

Readings:

Bill Boyarsky, *Big Daddy: Jesse Unruh and the Art of Power Politics*, University of California Press, 2007. Excerpt to be assigned.

Timothy E. Cook, "House Members as Newsmakers: The Effects of Televising Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 11(2): 203-226.

(Class to be followed by a panel discussion – Unruh's Vision for the Legislature – and a book signing. Secretary of State Building, 11<sup>th</sup> and O Streets, Sacramento.)

Panel (5:30 pm – 6:30 pm)

William Hauck, former chief of staff, Speaker Bob Moretti, Speaker Willie L. Brown Jr.  
Bob Connelly, former chief consultant, Assembly Rules Committee  
Tony Quinn, former staff director, Speaker Robert Monagan  
Ralph Ochoa, former chief assistant, Speaker Leo McCarthy  
Mayor Curt Pringle of Anaheim, former speaker of the Assembly  
Greg Lucas, moderator, former Capitol reporter, *San Francisco Chronicle*

**Class 5: February 1**

Policy Analysis IV

“Five-minute” classroom presentation of policy-analysis topics by scholar-interns

**Class 6: February 8**

Does the Media Understand Policy?

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Overholser, “The Watchdog Role” by Lance Bennett and William Serrin, pp 169-188

Charles Layton and Jennifer Dorroh, “Sad State,” *American Journalism Review* 24, 5 (June):  
pp 18-27

Panel:

A discussion with Dr. Brad DeLong, professor of economics, UC Berkeley, and former deputy  
Secretary of the Treasury, Clinton administration

Worksheet 2: Handed out February 1, due February 8 (Based on: Henry [entire book])

Mandatory meetings with Professor Amos, week 5

**Class 7: February 15**

Engagement: Connecting Substantive Issues with Modern Voters

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Jan E. Leighley, 2004. *Mass Media and Politics: A Social Science Perspective*. Houghton Mifflin.  
Chapter 6, The Media, Political Knowledge and Political Attitudes, pp 142-174

Diana C. Mutz and Byron Reeves. 2005. “The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility  
on Political Trust,” *American Political Science Review* 99(1): 1-16.

Panel: Story telling for a new era

Lowell Bergman, producer, “Frontline.”

Marc Lifsher, reporter, *Los Angeles Times*

Robert Gunnison, director, school affairs, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism

Hugo Morales, “Radio Bilingue”\*

**Class 8: February 22**

How well are voters informed about substantive issues?

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Markus Prior, 2005. "News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 577-592.  
Michael X. Delli Carpini and Scott Keefer. 1994. "Effects of the News Environment on Citizen Knowledge of State Politics and Government." *Journalism Quarterly* 71(2): 443-456.

Panel: Covering the Environment

Chris Bowman, environmental reporter, *The Sacramento Bee*; president, Society of Environmental Journalists  
Margaret Taylor, professor, Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley

First draft of policy-research paper due, Tuesday, February 26, 9 AM.

Mandatory meetings with Professor Amos, week 7

**Class 9: February 29**

Framing an agenda: How do the media influence public policy?

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Overholser, "Government and the Press: Issues and Trends" by Martha J. Kumar and Alex Jones, Pp 221-225.

Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw. 1972. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36: 176-187.

Panel: The Media and the State Budget

Steve Peace, former legislator, former chairman, Senate Budget Committee  
Diane Cummins, chief budget consultant, Senate President pro Tem Don Perata  
Mike Genest, director, California Department of Finance\*  
Elizabeth Hill, California Legislative Analyst\*  
John Myers, moderator, reporter KQED Radio, president, Sacramento Press Club

**Class 10: March 7**

Advocating an agenda: How is media used to promote or oppose policy?

Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Christopher Cooper, Anthony Nownes and Martin Johnson. 2007. "Negotiating Newsworthiness: Interest Groups and Journalists in the States." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 7(1): 39-53.

Trevor Thrall. 2006. "The Myth of the Outside Strategy: Mass media news Coverage of Interest Groups." *Political Communication* 23(4): 407-420.

Institute for Health Policy Studies. 2006. "Evaluation Issue Briefs #1: Media Advocacy Evaluation Findings." Clinical Consortia Policy and Advocacy Program Evaluation. University of California, San Francisco.

Panel: Spin and Public Policy

Anthony York, moderator, editor, *Capitol Weekly*  
Donna Lucas, president, Lucas Communications  
Karen Skelton, partner, Dewey Square Group  
H.D. Palmer, communications director, California Department of Finance  
Dan Schnur, communications director, former Governor Pete Wilson.

Final draft of policy-research papers due, Monday, March 10, 5 PM.

**Class 11: March 14**

The role of media in policy-making  
Faculty: Martin Johnson, A.G. Block

Readings:

Christopher Cooper, 2002. "Media Tactics in State Legislatures." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2: 353-371.

Harvey Molotch, David L. Protesse and Margaret Gordon. 1987. "The Media-Policy Connection: Ecologies of News." *Political Communication Research: Approaches, Studies, Assessments*. David L. Paletz, editor. Ablex Publishing, Norwood, New Jersey.

David L. Protesse, Fay L. Cook, Thomas R. Curtin, Margaret T. Gordon, Donna R. Leff, Maxwell E. McCombs and Peter Miller. 1987. "The Impact of Investigative Reporting on Public Opinion And Policy Making." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 51(2): 166-185.

Special presentation: Does Media Shape Policy?

Bruce Cain, director, University of California Center, Washington, DC\*

Pete Wilson, former governor of California\*

Gray Davis, former governor of California\*

Assignments of discussants for scholar-intern policy analyses

**Class 12: March 19 & 20**

Final scholar-intern presentations

Faculty: Gary Dymski, Art Amos, A.G. Block

Please reserve 9AM – 5 PM on both days.