

ECONOMICS 175: PUBLIC POLICY AND THE CALIFORNIA POLITICAL ECONOMY
University of California Center Sacramento (UCCS)
SYLLABUS: SUMMER 2009

Faculty: Gary Dymski Phone: 916-445-5900 Email: Gary.dymski@ucop.edu
Instructors: Art Amos Phone 916-445-7300 Email: akamos@comcast.net
Sasha Abramsky Phone: 916-445-5100 Email: sabramsky@sbcglobal.net

Meeting times and place:

Class sessions: Friday 9:00 AM-11:30 AM, UCCS Conference Room (mandatory for policy track students)

Public seminars: some Thurs. & Fri., 12-1:30 PM (schedule TBA)

UCCS Scholar-Intern seminars: some Thursdays, 4-5 PM or 3:30-4:45 PM (schedule TBD)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course develops a systematic understanding of policy analysis, helps students develop their own advanced policy analysis on a California-related policy issue, and analyzes several key policy challenges that globalization poses for California's political economy. The challenges we will study include the following: first, the chronic-growth, boom-bust structure of California's economy, and its link to the ongoing California budget crisis; second, California's health-care policy crisis and policy options; third, the subprime-lending and foreclosure crisis; fourth, California's hunger and jobs crisis.

The course has four learning goals: first, building skills in designing and writing research-based policy analyses; second, gaining experience in making professional oral presentations; third, building knowledge about key California policy issues; fourth, learning how to think systematically about complex public-policy problems.

Two kinds of class sessions will be held. First, there will be mandatory classes for all policy-track students; these will be held primarily on Friday mornings, 9:00-11:30 AM. Second, a number of public seminars will be held in the summer, usually on Thursday late-afternoons and Fridays at noon. These are on topics of central interest to California policy-makers, who are invited. The tentative schedule appears on the class schedule.

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:

Class attendance/participation:	6%	First outline of research topic	4%
Seminar attendance	4%	"Four minute" oral presentation	3%
Meetings with instructors:	6%	First complete draft	15%
Worksheets:	12%	Formal oral presentation(s)	10%
Final draft	40%		

DETAILS: Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to meet instructors per the schedule below (at a minimum). **Worksheets** will be assigned during the course of the summer session. 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:

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 CA Press, 2006. (ISBN: 0520244362)
Sasha Abramsky, *Breadline USA: The Hidden Scandal of American Hunger and How to Fix It*. Polipoint Press, 2009 (ISBN-13: 978-0981709116)

COURSE & MEETING SCHEDULE (some public-seminar sessions are tentative)

Week 1: Wednesday, June 17, 4:00 PM – Gary welcomes class, explains the syllabus
Friday, July 19, 9:00 – 11:30 Class 1, policy track, Capitol meeting room (Gary, Art, Sasha present)
Friday, July 19, noon-1:30 PM, Public Seminar, “Smart Water Systems: A New Approach to Water Policy,”
Speaker: Yoram Cohen, Director, Water Technology Research (WaTeR) Center, and Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, UCLA

Week 2: Monday, June 22-Wednesday, June 24: Mandatory meetings with Gary, Art, Sasha, to be scheduled
Friday, July 26, 9-11:30 Class 2, policy track (Gary, Art)
Friday, July 26, noon-1:30 PM, Public Seminar, “CA Water Policy: Environmental Justice Urban Wastewater Recycling,” David Feldman, Professor and Chair of Planning, Policy, and Design, UCI

Week 3: Monday, June 29-Wednesday, July 1: Mandatory meetings with Gary, Art, to be scheduled
Thursday, July 2, 3-5:30 PM, Class 3 (Art)
[Friday, July 3, holiday]

Week 4: Monday, July 6-Thursday, July 9: meetings of students with Gary, Art, to be scheduled
Friday, July 10, Class 4 (Art-Gary) 9-11:45 session, “4-minute” topic presentations by students
Friday, July 10, noon-1:30 PM, Public Seminar, “The California Constitutional Revision Commission of 1996: Lessons Learned,” Fred Silva, Senior Fiscal Policy Advisor, California Forward, formerly Executive Secretary, California Constitutional Revision Commission (tentative)

Week 5: Thursday, July 16, UCCS Scholar-Intern Seminar, “The Past, Present, and Future of the California Economy,” Brad Williams, Chief Economist, California Assembly, 4-5:00 PM.
Friday, July 17, Class 5 (Gary, Art), 9-11:30 AM, Framing and reframing policy problems and solutions

Week 6: Friday, July 24, Class 6 Part 1 (Gary Dymski), 9-10:00 AM, “The Crisis of California’s Chronic-Growth, Boom/Bust Economy”
Friday, July 24, Class 6 Part 2 (Gary Dymski), 10:15-11:45 AM, “Deciding California’s Budget – the Next10 Budget Game” (http://www.next10.org/next10/programs/budget_challenge.html#)

Week 7: Thursday, July 30, UCCS Scholar-Intern Seminar, “The Foreclosure Crisis in California: Causes, Status, Solutions,” Rani Isaac, Senior Research Analyst, California Research Bureau, 3:30-5:00 PM (tentative)
Friday, July 31, Class 7 (Sasha Abramsky), 9-11:30 AM, “Poverty and Hunger in California, Part I”

Week 8: Monday, August 3, 5 PM, First draft of policy-research papers is due.
Thursday, August 6, 3:30-5 PM, Public Seminar, “Environmental Policy in California: Lessons Learned, Future Imperatives,” Speaker: V. John White, Executive Director, Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies (tentative)
Friday, August 7, Class 8 (Art, Gary, Sasha), 9-11:30 AM Students’ topic-group dialogues about paper drafts

Week 9: Thursday, August 13, 3:30-5 PM, Public Seminar, “The California Commission on the 21st Century Economy: Process, Final Report, Next Steps,” Mark Ibele, Executive Director, California Commission on the 21st Century Economy (tentative)
Friday, August 14, Class 9 (Sasha Abramsky), 9-11:30 AM, “Poverty and Hunger in California, Part II”

Week 10: Friday, August 21, Class 10 (Sasha, Art, Gary), 9-11:30 AM, Brainstorming/finetuning class

Week 11: Monday, August 24-Wednesday, August 26: 9 AM-5 PM Final policy-paper presentations
Friday, August 28th, 5 PM, final drafts of policy papers due