

**San José State University**  
**Political Science**  
**PADM 297 Fall 2022**

**Course and Contact Information**

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Instructor:      | Dr. Kristina Mitchell  |
| Email:           | <a href="mailto:Kristina.mitchell@sjsu.edu">Kristina.mitchell@sjsu.edu</a> |
| Class Days/Time: | Tuesdays 6-8:45pm  |
| Classroom:       | Online   |
| Office Hours     | Tuesdays 11-1pm  |

**Course Description (Required)**

This course serves as the "capstone" of the MPA program. It uses an analysis of real world cases to relate principles and theories of public administration to concrete, real world problems. The culminating project for this class is the approved prospectus for the PADM 298 project. Prerequisite: Classified standing.

**Course and GE Learning Objectives (CLOs and GELOs):**

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

- LO1. Identify and evaluate the major factors in resolving a real world government or non-profit challenge;
- LO2. Integrate skills learned throughout the MPA program to resolve a government or non-profit challenge;
- LO3. Demonstrate an understanding of intergovernmental relationships as they impact solutions to government or non-profit challenges, including constitutional, legal and regulatory limitations;
- LO4. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions a. Understand and apply the legal context of public affairs, administration and policy, as demonstrated in the final project prospectus (Assessment element)
- LO5. Write an appropriate public policy/non-profit policy analysis and recommended solutions in appropriate and effective business English;
- LO6. Conduct research at the graduate level (Assessment element)
- LO7. Orally present the key points of a government or non-profit challenge
- LO8. Visually present the key points of a government challenge through a PowerPoint presentation;
- LO9. Work in teams to develop solutions for government or non-profit challenges; and
- LO10. Create a prospectus for a detailed research project in the public or non-profit sphere as the culminating experience of the MPA program, as the basis for the PADM 298.

**Textbook**

Social Science Research Methods: Principles, Methods, and Practices. Anol Bhattacharjee. OPEN SOURCE from the University of Minnesota. Link: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/79>

Readings from the SJSU library and other online sources

**Course Requirements and Assignments (Required)**

General weekly class plan/schedule:

First hour: lecture led by professor

Second hour: class discussion (either led by two students, or as a group)

Final 45 minutes: independent and group work opportunity for course assignments

### **Seminar paper**

Once during the semester, you will be expected to lead a class discussion along with another student (up to 3 students, depending on enrollment numbers). You and your partner will read the assigned article readings in depth and write a seminar paper with both summary and analysis of the articles. Then, in the second hour of class, you will lead class discussion that will critically analyze the articles, searching for their strengths and flaws, and help guide your own understanding of the scope of a public policy/public administration research project.

### **Reflections**

After the 2 hours of class, you'll be expected to compose a reflection on the concepts discussed in class. Reflections should be approximately 300 words and are due at 11:59pm on the day of class. Your reflection should focus on a mix of academic and scholarly concepts and your own thoughts and analysis. You simply need to connect the concepts to your own thoughts and demonstrate that you've learned and made some connections from class.

### **Prospectus Components**

Over the course of the semester, you'll compose parts of the prospectus that is the culminating project for this course. In several classes, the lecture and class discussion component will focus on these pieces of your prospectus. You will always have the final 45 minutes of class to work on the component (but don't forget that you also have to complete reflections). The components are as follows:

**Research question:** What is your research question for your prospectus? Is it testable? It is practically possible in scope? Is it interesting to you? Is it important? Submit the question and a 200-300 word answer to the questions I have presented here.

**Lit Review:** What existing research is there on your topic? Review at least 4 scholarly articles. Provide a very brief summary of each, but more importantly, provide information on how the existing literature relates to YOUR research. Tie the articles together thematically (aka, do not write 2 paragraphs on the first article, then 2 paragraphs on the second article, etc.). Instead, write about 2-4 pages that weaves together the articles throughout. Note: there will also be an additional 10-15 references in your final work, but you do not need to discuss all of these in depth, and they do not all need to be scholarly articles (government websites, for example, will also count)

**Methodology:** How will you go about answering your research question? Provide a discussion of your variables (dependent, explanatory, controls) and how each will be measured. Explain how each variable relates to your research question and why it is important. How will you collect your data? What methods (quantitative? Qualitative?) will you use? This should be a 6-8 page section.

### **Final Prospectus**

The final prospectus should also include an introduction, implications, and conclusion section. The total paper length will be about 12-20 pages, not including tables, figures, and references. You will submit your prospectus to me for review, and also meet with the professor you'd like to be your adviser for their feedback. You will present your prospectus and get the professor's agreement to be your adviser, so be sure to select someone whose topic specialty matches your interest and research. You will need to get that professor's agreement to be your adviser, or move on to another professor until you find an adviser. Your adviser may also have feedback for you to incorporate into your prospectus. The adviser should email me to let me know the prospectus is satisfactory. The prospectus is due to me by 11/8, and I must have the version approved by your adviser (confirmed by email from adviser) by December 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Presentation**

The last few weeks of class are for presenting your prospectus. You should plan to give about a 15-20 minute presentation followed by about 10 minutes of Q&A from me and your classmates. This is the culminating final project in this course.

## **Grade Distribution**

The grading breakdown for the course assignments is as follows:

- Reflections – 10%
- Seminar paper – 10%
- Research Question – 10%
- Lit Review – 10%
- Methodology – 10%
- Presentation – 20%
- Prospectus – 30%

You can use this grade distribution to calculate what is possible for you based on your grades on assignments. Please note the weighting of each assignment and keep it in mind as you complete your work.

## **Final Grade Determination**

97 & above: A plus

92-96: A

90-91: A minus

87-89: B plus

82-86: B

80-81: B minus

77-79: C plus

72-76: C

70-71: C minus

67-69: D plus

62-66: D

60-61: D minus

59.99 & below: F

I do not have a policy of rounding grades. Rounding and curving decisions are made by the professor after all final grades are calculated. Even an 89.999 can be considered a B plus. Grades are not assigned based on individual need.

- Do not contact me with a question or request for your final grade to be rounded, curved, or increased.
- Do not contact me asking for extra credit that has not been specifically offered to the whole class via email announcement.

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 practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

## **Classroom Protocol**

### **Course Rules**

1. Always maintain professional and respectful language, in class, in emails and in your coursework.
2. Any disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in a loss of credit for the assignment and possibly a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. Racism, sexism, homophobia, or any other forms of bigotry are not acceptable in this class.
3. You are responsible for all information and announcements made in the course. Prepare to log onto Canvas every day to check for updates, changes, or new information. Read the course home page thoroughly and check announcements daily. Course rules, schedule, and day-to-day are subject to change, please pay close attention to course announcements.
4. Late work will not be accepted for any reason. To be clear, late work will not be accepted for any reason whatsoever.
5. Students may not print, save, photograph, or make any record of graded content in this course.

### **Professionalism**

Here is a quick-start on professionalism in your communication with your professors:

- Don't ask a question that you could have answered yourself. Read all information and instructions in Canvas before you send an email.
  - Use an appropriate Subject Line that identifies yourself and your concern (don't just say, "HELP")
  - Address the recipient by his or her professional title, such as Professor, Dr., Mr., or Ms. (NOT Mrs. or Miss unless instructed otherwise)
  - Your first sentence should introduce yourself and include your course and section number. • Be specific about what your request is. Demonstrate that you have read and understood course information and instructions.
  - Use proper grammar and spelling. Punctuate and capitalize. Proofread.
  - Allow 24 hours for a response to your email during the week. Do not expect email responses on weekends. Do not send multiple emails on the same topic within a 24 hour period without waiting for a response.
- If you send an email that does not follow these guidelines, don't be surprised if you get a response that states, "Please revisit the Professionalism section of your course home page and email again."

### **University Policies (Required)**

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is

available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> Please be sure to go over these policies..

## Course Schedule

Week 1 – August 23rd  
Class introduction  
-Syllabus, course policies  
-Research methods in action activity  
Topic review  
Student discussion numbers

Week 2 – August 30<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook chapter 1, 2, & 3  
Student 1 & 2 Class discussion

Week 3 – Sept 6<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook chapter 4 & 5  
Student 3 & 4 Class discussion

Week 4 – Sept 13<sup>th</sup>  
Research question work  
Come to class with a proposed research question  
Research question due at 11:59

Week 5 – Sept 20<sup>th</sup>  
Literature review work  
Literature review due at 11:59

Week 6 – Sept 27<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook chapter 6 & 7  
Student 5 & 6 Class discussion

Week 7 – Oct 4<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook chapter 8 & 9  
Student 7 & 8 Class discussion

Week 8 – Oct 11<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook chapter 10-12  
Student 9-10 Class discussion

Week 9 – Oct 18<sup>th</sup>  
Methodology work  
Bring your proposed methodology to class  
Methodology due at 11:59

Week 10 – Oct 25<sup>th</sup>  
Textbook 14 & 15  
Student 11-12 Class discussion

Week 11 – Nov 1<sup>st</sup>  
Prospectus & research design discussion  
Bring rough draft of prospectus to class

Week 12 – Nov 8<sup>th</sup>  
Research methods in action  
*Depending on enrollment numbers*, final student class discussion  
Prospectus due

Week 13 – Nov 15<sup>th</sup>  
Class presentations

Week 14 – Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Independent study day

Week 15 – Nov 29<sup>th</sup>  
Class presentations

Week 16 – Dec 6<sup>th</sup>  
Class presentations (if any remaining)  
FINAL version of prospectus due 11:59 (approved by your adviser)  
Preparation for independent research