PADM 210: Introduction to Public Administration
Dr. Laureen Hom
Spring 2025 | Wed 6-8:45 PM | Hugh Gillis Hall Room 223

Instructor Information
Email: laureen.hom@sjsu.edu
Office Location: Washington Square Hall, Room 218A
Zoom Meeting ID: https://sjsu.zoom.us/my/laureenhom
Office Hours:
- Drop-in times or schedule an appointment here (but no appointment is necessary!):
    - Wed 2-4 PM (Hybrid: In-Person and Zoom)
    - Thurs 12-2 PM (Zoom Only)
- Feel free to also email me to schedule an appointment outside of the designated office hour times

Course Description and Learning Objectives
This course is an introduction to the academic field and practice of public administration and its role in governance and policymaking, with a specific emphasis on the United States. We traditionally define the United States political system within the three branches of government – the legislative, executive, and judicial – and how these political actors and institutions formulate and implement public policies, programs, and services. Yet, there are many other actors and organizations, public and private, that are tasked to ensure that public policies, programs, and services are delivered, managed, and evaluated to better serve society. They also must do so in a way that is effective, efficient, economical, and equitable, which we have traditionally defined as "good governance." Although, how we define good governance is being challenged as we respond to changing demographics and public needs. Throughout this course, we will learn about these actors and organizations that have come to define contemporary public administration. We will analyze their

practices and actions to gain a better understanding of the major social problems we are facing today and the potential policy solutions to these problems.

Additionally, this class is designed to serve as an introduction to the MPA program and to prepare students for their graduate studies at SJSU. Students will will receive a basic introduction to developing the core competencies of NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration) that they will further develop in additional MPA courses:
- Lead and manage in public governance;
- Participate in and contribute to the public policy process;
- Analyze, synthesize, think creatively, solve problems, and make decisions;
- Articulate and apply public service perspectives; and
- Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

By the end of the semester, we will:
- Know how public administration is integral to the functioning of political systems
- Identify the different actors, occupations, and organizations within the field of public administration and analyze how their relationships to one another contribute and complicate democratic governance in the United States
- Understand the ethical concerns specific to the practice of public administration, with a specific emphasis in achieving social equity
- Explain how the everyday work of public administrators impacts the policymaking process and the well-being of the publics they serve
- Apply class concepts and theories to further their professional development for a career in public service
- Develop the basic writing, research, and oral communication skills to succeed in the MPA program through independent learning and the community they build with their peers and faculty at SJSU

Required Materials
- **Readings:**
  o Textbook: Shafritz et al. (2023). Introducing Public Administration, 10th Edition. Routledge. (Link to Publisher's Website)
    - I will be using the 10th Edition (2023) to anchor my lectures and discussions with you all, but the 9th Edition (2016) is perfectly fine to purchase! I will note the chapter differences in the Course Schedule below and on Canvas.
    - I strongly encourage you all to purchase used or rent copies to save costs - this textbook is unfortunately a bit expensive!
  o In addition to the textbook, there will be additional required materials each week, which will include academic articles, media, and case studies. These will be posted as links or PDFs on Canvas in the Modules section for each week.

- **Technology and software:** If you need access to laptops or hotspots, the [Student Computing Services](#) at the Library provides equipment rentals.
  - Computer or equivalent device that will support quizzes, streaming videos, PDF viewers, and assignment uploads to Canvas
  - Word processing software for exams and assignments (should be free via your SJSU account)

Assignments and Grading

Your performance in the class will be evaluated according to the following:

1. **Participation & Engagement (10%):** All students are required to attend each class session and actively participate in class discussions and activities. In addition, all students are required to pair up with a classmate and lead a 45 minute presentation and discussion activity based on one of the case studies assigned for that week. The facilitators will be required to not only be prepared to discuss the assigned readings, but are encouraged to also gather additional resources about the case to help structure their presentations and discussion activities. This will be worth 5% of your final grade (or half of the Participation & Engagement grade).

2. **Weekly Reflections (20%):** You will be required to complete at least 8 weekly reflections throughout the semester. There are a total of 10 possible weekly reflections. Your lowest two grades will be dropped if you complete all 10 reflections. If you receive perfect scores for all 10, for each additional reflection you complete, you will receive an extra point in your participation score. Instructions for these assignments are in Canvas.

3. **Final Project (70%):** For your final, you will write and present a 12-15 page policy report where you identify and discuss a public policy or organizational issue/problem for a public or non-governmental non-profit organization to address. (This is a version of a staff report or white paper.) The report can focus on addressing any organization of you choosing; one that you currently work for or an organization that you are interested in working for/learning more about. You can also choose any issue or problem, but the final paper must demonstrate an application and understanding of at least 3 class concepts across the different weekly topics. Throughout the semester, you will be required to submit assignments that will help you build towards your final paper. The final project assignments consist of the following:
   - **Proposal - Problem Identification (10%)**
   - **Annotated Bibliography (5%)**
   - **Identifying Empirical Data and Sources (5%)**
   - **Rough Draft/Outline (10%)**
   - **Final Presentation (10%)**
   - **Final Paper (30%)**

   Instructions for each of these assignments are posted on Canvas.

Final Grade Breakdown

Percentage	Letter Grade	Description of Class Performance
94-100%	A	Superior understanding of material that meets and exceeds all class expectations
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	Good understanding of material that meets the minimum class expectations
84-86%	B	
80-83%	B-	
77-79%	C+	Fair understanding of material that meets the minimum class expectations
74-76%	C	
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	Poor understanding that meets the minimum class expectations
64-66%	D	
60-63%	D-	
<60%	F	Poor understanding that does not meet the minimum class expectations

Course Policies

1. **Creating an Inclusive Classroom Community:**

    We are all responsible for ensuring that this class is a supportive environment for everyone. We all have different backgrounds, knowledge, and opinions that we should all respectfully share in the classroom to learn from one another. However, we also must be sensitive to how this may shape our classroom environment throughout the semester. I expect that all students will contribute to creating a safe space so that we can have discussions that engage in critical thinking of the material. As the instructor, I will facilitate all class sessions to support respectful discussions and an exchange of ideas. I will NOT support discussions that I deem as disrespectful to the classroom community and purposefully tangential to the material. Any students who engages in any disruptive or harmful behavior that jeopardizes, harms, provokes, dominates, or marginalizes their classmates or the instructor will be immediately asked to leave the class and face disciplinary action that may be reported to the department, Dean's Office, and Division of Student Affairs.

    Preferred Pronouns and Names: If you would like to be referred to by a name and/or pronoun that is different than how you are identified in the official roster, please let me know. I also will be committed to ensuring that your fellow classmates will address you by your preferred name and/or pronoun.

    Special Accommodations: If you need any accommodations on the basis of physical or psychological abilities, please contact the Accessible Education Center about appropriate arrangements. You may also speak to me about making

arrangements, but I also will follow any official recommendations made by the AEC for accommodations.

Caregiving Responsibilities: Given that this class is scheduled during the evening and many of you may have caregiving responsibilities, please feel free to inform me of your situation so that I can make any special arrangements. I also recognize that there may be last-minute caregiving changes or emergencies, and if need be, I do allow for you to bring anyone you may be caregiving for to sit in the class as long as it is not disruptive to your classmates and the learning environment. Please notify me as soon as you can if this may happen (even if it is a half hour before class!).

2. **Health & Safety Policies:** The class will follow the university policies regarding any public health policies. As of August 2022, it is not required for anyone to wear a mask indoors; however, anyone is welcome to wear a mask without any questions or explanations. It is important for all of us to respect each other's decisions to protect ourselves in the classroom as needed. We must recognize that people's personal and living circumstances may require them to be more cautious than what may be the norm for ourselves.

3. **Late & Make-up Policies:** Active in-class engagement and timely submission of assignments are critical to have a better understanding of the course material and will help you prepare for your final project. I also understand that some issues arise throughout the semester that are beyond control. In addition to the policies below and as stated in individual assignments, I strongly encourage you to be in regular communication with me about your circumstances as this helps me to find appropriate accommodations and solutions to ensure your successful completion of the class.

   - **Defining an Exceptional Circumstance:** If there is a serious situation that is impacting your engagement in the class, please let me know as soon as possible. Situations that count as an exceptional circumstance that I will consider in accommodating include things like pre-arranged, official SJSU-related activities, pre-arranged professional activities, caregiving obligations, religious obligations, medical and family emergencies, or severe illness. However, I will work with you based on your personal circumstances. I will need official third-party documentation in order to consider make-up accommodations, and these will be decided on a case-by-case basis. For any pre-arranged situations, including work and family commitments, and religious obligations, please notify me by the end of Week 3 in order for me to make reasonable accommodations. For emergencies and severe illness, please notify me ASAP by email and submit any appropriate documentation.
     - **Assignments and Exams:** Each assignment and exam has a specific late submission policy. Please check the assignment instructions on Canvas.
     - **Course Participation:** You are allowed 1 unexcused absence without it impacting your grade. Any additional unexcused absences will result in point

deductions as I deem appropriate for the amount of absences, tardiness, and/or level of engagement I observe during class sessions.

4. **Grading Policy & Appeals:** Please allow for at least one week before asking about the status of your grade for any assignments. Grading takes time and I will get to it as quickly as possible! If I miscalculate your grade or points, please notify me ASAP – yes, it happens once in awhile! As a general policy, I do not re-grade exams or papers unless it is an exceptional circumstance. If you feel that an assignment was misgraded and would like to contest your grade, you must submit the request by email to me. In your email, you must provide a justification for why the grade does not reflect your knowledge and/or effort. I will then decide how to proceed with your grade appeal.

5. **Academic Dishonesty and Offenses:** All work submitted for the class must be your original work that demonstrates YOUR understanding and engagement with the course material during the semester. It is critical for the learning process for you to submit your original work - it is the only way that I can let you know about your progress and help you improve. I am here to help you, not judge you! While I encourage students to work together and discuss the course material outside of class, all assignments should reflect the independent work of each student – i.e. the course requirements are not group assignments except for the in-class activities.

   - **Plagiarism is strictly prohibited.** I define plagiarism as (1) other published text, whether scholarly or media, as well as your classmates' work presented as your own work; (2) self-plagiarism of work that you have done for a prior course without prior approval from the instructor; and (3) submission of writing assignments that demonstrate the overuse and/or inappropriate use of AI technology but are presented as original work (e.g. strong evidence of using Chat GPT). Papers will be processed for plagiarism on Canvas, which includes AI detection software, as well as closely reviewed by the instructor. If any academic dishonesty is found, this may result in a failing grade and will be reported to the department and Dean's Office.

     To avoid "accidental plagiarism," you must properly cite and attribute ideas and other materials to the appropriate authors. You may want to visit the [SJSU Writing Center](#) and the [SJSU Library's Citation and Writing Guide](#) for resources to help improve your writing and to ensure that you do not plagiarize in this class and for others!

   - **AI Ethics and Transparency.** While I do not ban the use of AI to help with your learning, you should be using AI software and tools in an ethical manner that helps facilitate your learning (e.g. find resources and brainstorm initial ideas). As noted above, all writing assignments must demonstrate your original writing, and your assignments will also be checked to assure that you are not submitting any writing that is AI-generated. The AI detection software is mostly accurate, but it is also sensitive and can also produce false positives. In cases where you may receive a high AI detection score, you will need to meet with the instructor (me) to discuss your assignment (and possibly the department chair and college dean depending on

the severity of the score). It is highly recommended that you use word processing software that autosaves the progress of your writing (e.g. Google Docs) as documentation of your original work. In addition, if you use any type of generative AI software for writing, including Grammarly, you are strongly recommended to both save the document with your original writing AND declare that you used Grammarly as a comment in your paper submission.

- **Recordings and sharing of course materials beyond private use to successfully complete the course are strictly prohibited.** Unless you have contacted the instructor or the [Accessible Education Center](#) for accommodations, you do not have automatic permission to record and download the lectures nor distribute any materials that are posted on Canvas. If you are caught violating this, you are in violation of course and university policies, as well as possible state policies. If any academic dishonesty is found, this may result in a failing grade and will be reported to the Office of the Dean. If you need specific accommodations that require recording of materials, please contact me as soon as possible and we will work on developing appropriate accommodations.

6. **E-mail Communication Policy:** In addition to office hours, e-mail is my preferred form of communication. Try to include the course ID/name in the subject line to ensure that it does not get lost in my inbox. I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours. If you email with me on a weekend or holiday, please anticipate that I may not answer emails within the 24 hour period. Please be courteous and professional in your in-person and email communications (e.g. refer to all your instructors as Professor unless they instruct you otherwise!).

    Pro Tip: If you do have a question, I strongly recommend for you to review the syllabus, Canvas, and any course materials to see if your question has already been answered before emailing me. A lot of times, the answer is there! However, please do not hesitate to contact me if something is unclear or missing from the Canvas or syllabus!

Tentative Course Schedule
** Subject to change at instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of any official changes through email and Canvas announcements.**

Date	Topic and Required Readings	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)
Part 1: **What is Public Administration?** **Foundations, Institutions, and Structures**		
Week 1 **Jan 29**	**Introductions & Overview of Course**	

Date	Topic and Required Readings	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)
Week 2 Feb 5	**Public Administration & Public Policy** ● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapters 1 (skim) & 2 ● Case Study: Addressing Housing & Homelessness in California (Calmatters Articles) ○ 6 Myths about Homeless in California (Link) ○ Gavin Newsom orders state agencies to move homeless people out of camps - but to where? (Link) ○ Homeless Californians react to Newsom's crackdown (Link)	
Week 3 Feb 12	**Public Administration as a System: Intergovernmental & Cross-Sector Relationships** ● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapters 4 & 5 and Chapter 10 Section: Government Regulation for Health Safety, and Economic Equity (last section of the chapter) ○ 9th Edition: Chapter 3 & 4 and Chapter 9 Section: Government Regulation for Health Safety, and Economic Equity (last section of the chapter) ● Case Study: U.S. Government Response to COVID-19 ○ Nicole Huberfield: Federalism, Leadership, and COVID-19 (Link)	
Week 4 Feb 19	**Ethics and Accountability** ● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapter 6 ○ 9th Edition: Chapter 4 ● Case Study: Flint Michigan Water Crisis ○ American Scientist Article: The Hand-In-Hand Spread of Mistrust and Misinformation in Flint (Link) ○ Boufides et al.: Learning from the Flint Water Crisis (Link)	

Date	Topic and Required Readings	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)

Week 5 Feb 26	**Library Research Info Session**
	● Meet at MLK Library Room 213 from 6-7 PM
	Centering Social Equity and Justice
	● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapter 3 (Skip/skim section on Advancing Social Equity: Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policies - we'll return to this in Week 12)
	    ○ 9th Edition: Chapter 5 & 12 (Skip/skim sections on Equal Employment Opportunity and Nonracial Discrimination - we'll return to this in Week 12)
	● Strivers et al. Beyond Social Equity: Talking Social Justice in Public Administration (Link)
	● Case Study: Sanctuary Jurisdictions
	    ○ Fight Over Sanctuary Cities is also a Fight Over Federalism (Link)
	    ○ Ayers: Sanctuary Policies: What are the Decisions Facing Local and State Government? (Link)	

Week 6 Mar 5	No Class - Independent Work	Proposal - Problem Identification Due Sunday Mar 9
	Part 2: **The Practice of Public Administration:** **Leadership and Management in Organizations and for the Public**	

Week 7 Mar 12	**Unpacking Bureaucracy: Organizational Theory & Behavior**
	● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapters 7 & 8
	    ○ 9th Edition: Chapters 6 & 7
	● Case Study: Disaster Response and Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina
	    ○ Takeda and Helms: Bureaucracy, meet Catastrophe (PDF) (Link)	

Date	Topic and Required Readings	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)
	○ PBS Newshour Clip: How has FEMA changed in the ten years since Hurricane Katrina? (Link)	

Week 8 Mar 19	**Leadership & Management: Traditions and Innovations**
	● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapters 14 & 9
	  ○ 9th Edition: Chapters 10 & 8
	● Case Study: Creating AI Policies in Public Administration
	  ○ Brookings Institute: Six Steps to Responsible AI in the Federal Government (Link)
	  ○ Council of State Governments: What Does AI Policy Look Like? (Link)
		Annotated Bibliography Due Sunday Mar 23

Week 9 Mar 26	**Strategic Planning & Program Evaluation**
	● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapters 10 & 13
	  ○ 9th Edition: Chapters 9 & 14
	● Case Study: Plastic Bag Bans
	  ○ Wagner. Reducing Single Use Plastic Bags in the United States (Link)
	  ○ NPR: California's Plastic Bag Ban Made Things Worse. Now It's Trying Again (Link)
		Analyzing Sources Worksheet Due Sunday Mar 30

	SPRING BREAK MARCH 29-APRIL 4 NO CLASS SESSION	
Week 10 Apr 9	**Citizen Participation and Public Engagement** ● Arnstein. Ladder of Citizen Participation ● Irvin and Stansbury. Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is it Worth the Effort? ● Case Study: Building Healthy Communities ○ Lowerson and Feldman: Building Healthy Communities	
Week 11 Apr 16	No Class Session – Catch Up/Independent Work	Outline/Rough Draft Due Sunday Apr 20

Last Updated 2025.01.15

Date	Topic and Required Readings	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)

Week 12 Apr 23	**Human Resources & Labor Relations**
	● Textbook (9th & 10th Editions): Chapter 11
	  o 10th Edition: Also read Chapter 3 Advancing Social Equity: Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policies
	  o 9th Edition: Also read Chapter 12, the Equal Employment Opportunity and Nonracial Discrimination sections
	● Case Study: Improving Anti-Discrimination and Retaliatory Policies
	  o Yu: Intersectionality and Non-Reporting Behavior: Perceptions from Women of Color in Federal Law Enforcement (Link)	

Week 13 Apr 30	**Fiscal Management & Budgeting**
	● Textbook (10th Edition): Chapter 12
	  o 9th Edition: Chapter 13
	● Case Study: Participatory Budgeting
	  o Zhang and Liao: Participatory Budgeting in Local Government: Evidence from New Jersey Municipalities (Link)
	  o Examples:
	    ▪ New York City Council (Link)
	    ▪ Seattle Office for Civil Rights (Link)	

Week 14 May 7	No Class Session: Independent Work/Prepare for Presentations and Final Paper	
Week 15 May 14	Final Presentations	
Final Paper Due Wednesday May 21 11:59 PM		