

PADM 297: Advanced Seminar in Public Management (MPA Capstone Preparation) Dr. Laureen Hom Fall 2024 | Online Asynchronous

Instructor Information

Email: laureen.hom@sjsu.edu

Office Location: Washington Square Hall, Room 218B

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 serves as preparation for the completion of the capstone for the MPA program (PADM/UBRP 298). 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 that will be used towards the official MPA capstone course, PADM/UBRP 298.

By the end of the semester, we will:

- Identify and critically analyze a major public policy issue/problem facing public or non-profit non-governmental organizations
- Integrate skills learned throughout your time during the MPA program to analyze, assess, and make recommendations to address the issue/problem
- Create a prospectus for a detailed applied research project in the public or non-profit sphere that will serve as a basis of their MPA Capstone and completed in PADM/URBP 298
- Be prepared to initiate data collection, analysis, and writing for their MPA capstone while taking PADM/URBP 298

Through their capstone experience, students will demonstrate the NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration) core competencies:

- 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

- Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

Required Materials

- **Readings:** While you will not be tested on readings, **I highly recommend you go through the readings** (at the suggested pace - but also at your own!) that is associated with each module/topic to help you complete assignments, as well as write the drafts and final prospectus. The readings should hopefully be a review from your past courses, particularly any research methods courses you may have taken. Feel free to explore other chapters in the open access textbooks that I do not assign!
 - Open Source Textbooks (will be referred by last name and chapter in course schedule). I will be providing a direct link to the chapter, if applicable, in the Canvas modules; however you are encouraged to download a copy and/or bookmark these textbooks for your reference.
 - Bhattacharjee, Anol. Social Science Research Methods: Principles, Methods, and Practices. University of Minnesota. [Link](#)
 - DeCarlo, Matthew. Scientific Inquiry in Social Work. [Link](#)
 - Lowry, Cheryl. Choosing & Using Sources: A Guide to Academic Research. The Ohio State University. [Link](#)
 - National Science Foundation. The 2010 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation. [Link](#)
 - In addition to the textbooks, there may be additional materials for you to reference each week. These will be posted as links or PDFs on Canvas in the Modules section.
- **Technology and software:** Access to laptops or hotspots are available at 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)
 - Zoom account or access to Zoom for check-ins with Dr. Hom

Assignments and Grading

Your performance in the class will be evaluated according to the following assignments. Instructions for each of these assignments are posted on Canvas.

- **Check-Ins (5%):** Please meet with Dr. Hom at least 3 times this semester (at least one meeting per module). During these meetings, you should provide an update on your progress and come prepared with any questions about the readings and/or your project. These will be graded as credit/no credit.

- **Small Assignments (15%):** These assignments are meant to help you identify a topic for your capstone and completion of the other major writing assignments. Each of these assignments are worth 4% of your final grade.
 - **Brainstorming Exercise:** This activity will help you identify a topic for your capstone and create an initial research question.
 - **Annotated Bibliography:** Students are expected to submit an annotated bibliography of at least 8 scholarly articles (e.g. peer reviewed research articles) to prepare for their Literature Review
 - **IRB:** All students must complete the human subjects research training and check if you need IRB approval for your capstone project. Students must submit their CITI training certificate (it is ok if you already did this - as long as it shows that it is not expired) AND proof of an IRB submission or proof from the IRB that their research does not need IRB approval.
- **Peer Review/Accountability (10%):** All students are required to either partner or triple up with another classmate to conduct 2 peer reviews of each others' drafts (see assignment below). For each draft, be prepared to share that draft for peer review to your classmate along with submitting it for review by Dr. Hom. The best way to share will be via Google Docs where they can directly comment or add suggestions to the document. Everyone will be asked to complete a Peer Review worksheet assignment that they should share to their classmate and submit to Dr. Hom for credit. This will be graded as credit/no credit.
- **Drafts (30%):** Students are expected to submit drafts of the different major sections of their prospectus (final paper).
 - **Introduction, Research Question, and Literature Review (15%)**
 - **Research Plan (15%)**
- **Final Prospectus (40%):** The Final Prospectus will include your finalized Research Question, Literature Review, and Research Plan. The paper should be approximately 15-18 pages and will be used towards your final Capstone paper in the Spring.

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-	

Percentage	Letter Grade	Description of Class Performance
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. Anyone 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.

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 Cal Poly Pomona-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:** Each assignment has a specific late submission policy. Please check the assignment instructions on Canvas.
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! Additional online resources

- **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	Suggested Topic/Steps to Cover Per Week (Readings are Posted on Canvas Modules)	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)
Module 1 (Weeks 1-3): Identifying a Topic and Question		
Week 1 Aug 26-Sept 1	Introductions & Familiarizing Yourself with the MPA Capstone Structure	Optional Zoom Group Meeting: Monday Aug 26 12-1 PM
Week 2 Sept 2-Sept 8	Research 101 (Review) and Applying Research to Practice	
Week 3 Sept 9-15	Identifying an Interesting Topic and Research Question	Brainstorming Worksheet Due Sept 15
Module 2 (Weeks 4-7): Reviewing the Literature and Strengthening Your Question		
Week 4 Sep 16-22	Literature Review Steps 1 & 2: Library Research & Creating an Annotated Bibliography	
Week 5 Sept 23-29	Literature Review Step 3: Making Connections Between the Literature and Creating a Narrative	Annotated Bibliography Due Sept 29
Week 6-7 Sept 30-Oct 13	Write Your Introduction, Research Question & Literature Review!	Introduction, Research Question, and Literature Review Draft Due Sun Oct 13
Module 3 (Weeks 8 -15): Planning Out Your Research		
Week 8 Oct 14-20	Choosing a Research Design	
Week 9 Oct 21-27	Choosing a Data Collection	Peer Review 1 Due Oct Oct 20

Date	Suggested Topic/Steps to Cover Per Week (Readings are Posted on Canvas Modules)	Assignments (all due by end of day 11:59 PM)
Week 10 Oct 28-Nov 3	What are You Measuring? Operationalizing Concepts and Defining Variables	
Week 11 Nov 4-10	Choosing an Analysis Plan	
Week 12-13 Nov 11-24	Research Ethics and Familiarizing Yourself with the SJSU IRB	Research Plan Draft Due Nov 17
Week 14-15 Nov 25-Dec 6	Revise Your Drafts, Start the IRB Process, and meet with Dr. Hom one last time!	Peer Review 2 Due Dec 1 SJSU IRB Materials Due Dec 6
Prospectus Due Wednesday Dec 11 11:59 PM		