

**PPA 240B: PUBLIC MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION II**  
**SPRING 2025**

*This is a living document, subject to change and revision as we progress through the semester.*

**This version updated 1-16-2025**

**Schedule**

Mondays: 6:00pm-8:50pm, DTN 110 (Section 1)

Tuesdays: 6:00pm-8:50pm, DTN 110 (Section 2)

**Teaching Team**

Instructor: Dr. Amal Kumar, Ph.D. ([kumar@csus.edu](mailto:kumar@csus.edu))

Office hours: Mondays & Tuesdays 4:00-5:30pm, DTN 225

Or by appointment

General assistance: Sovannra Yos, PPA Department Coordinator ([yos@csus.edu](mailto:yos@csus.edu))

**Course Description**

PPA 240B is the second course in the two-semester Public Administration and Management sequence in the MPPA program. In 240A, you learned about the major concepts and foundational theories relating to human resource management and organizational behavior in the public sector. In PPA 240B, you will continue to strengthen your understanding of public organizations as social systems, with a particular focus on organizational change.

Organizational change has been studied for nearly as long as there have been formal organizations: by psychologists, sociologists, economists, leadership and management theorists, and others. We have all experienced organizational change at one point or another in our careers: leadership transitions, restructurings, starting new projects, and ending old ones. Yet, we may have a sense that the organizations in which we work aren't changing fast enough to keep up. Or perhaps, that they're changing too fast and the pace of change is unsustainable.

In this course, we will ask: what are organizations, anyway? What does it mean to think of public organizations as *social systems*? How does our understanding of the social systems within organizations help us understand why they do (or don't) change? What are different kinds of authority within an organization, and how do those different authorities shape the nature of work?

We will use this knowledge base to explore the challenge of driving aspirational change within political, interest-driven, and culturally-resisting public bureaucracies. We will highlight the complex factors and forces in facilitating and resisting change and lean into the "messiness" of these examples—there is as much to learn from failure as there is from success.

## Learning Goals

<b>MPPA Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Application in PPA 240B</b>
<b><i>1. Critical and Integrative Thinking</i></b>	
a) Diagnose, map, and analyze decision making processes, actors, and context.	Examine different conceptual frameworks to understand the complexity of work and change in public sector organizations.
b) Apply context-appropriate criteria to analyze and evaluate alternatives and offer solutions with attention to implementation strategies.	Develop a theory of change to analyze an organizational problem in your own organizational context. Explain claims and conclusions effectively based on appropriate evidence.
f) Identify, critically examine, and use relevant data to inform policy and administrative decisions.	Develop a sophisticated sense of the form(s) and functioning of organizations based on organizational research from various disciplines; draw on this research to analyze organizational problems and identify promising pathways.
<b><i>2. Practical Applications</i></b>	
a) Critically use different analytical skills, processes, and tools to address policy and administration problems.	Apply a variety of tools and frameworks to better understand organizational and programmatic goals, culture, identities, and their implications for organizational change in the public sector
b) Work effectively in groups	Support colleagues in their argumentation by working collaboratively and offering constructive peer feedback; deepen understanding of content in small- and large-group classroom settings.
c) Identify and apply effective and inclusive leadership techniques for public policy and administration.	Use a variety of conceptual perspectives to understand how social power is consolidated within organizations and rendered invisible; examine how change initiatives can reinforce inequities or create more inclusive organizations.
f) Use effective modes of verbal presentation with an awareness of audience and purpose	Practice using effective oral communication in group discussions and in-class presentations.
<b><i>3. Professional Role</i></b>	
b) Understand obligations to advance public value consistent with rule of law and an enduring search for reasonable and just action	Acknowledge and articulate personal and social values that flow through organizations as workplaces; identify how public organizations, and the professionals working within them are sources of social power.

## Required Texts/Readings

This course does not require you to purchase any textbooks. Videos and other electronic media are hyperlinked and accessible from the syllabus and all readings will be posted as PDFs on the course Canvas website.

## **Course Expectations:**

1. "Letter to your professor"	5%
2. Course engagement	25%
2.1. Initial goals	5%
2.2. Mid-semester progress reflection	5%
2.3. End-of-semester reflection	5%
2.4. Overall assessment	10%
3. Weekly reading responses	25%
4. Organizational change presentation	25%
5. Revision memo	20%
6. Total	100%

## **Grades**

A	94-100%	A-	90-93%		
B+	87-89%	B	84-86%	B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%	C	74-76%	C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%	D	64-66%	D-	60-63%
F:	<60%				

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** All assignments have two deadlines listed (e.g., January 20/21). If you are enrolled in Section 1 (Monday), your deadline is the first of those two dates (i.e., January 20). If you are enrolled in Section 2 (Tuesday), your deadline is the second of those two dates (i.e., January 21). Please check the Canvas website for your specific assignment deadline.

**IMPORTANT NOTE 2:** All assignments must be submitted double-spaced, with one-inch margins, using a standard 12-point font.

### **1. "Letter to your professor" (5%)**

*Due by: 11:59pm, January 24, emailed to me at [kumar@csus.edu](mailto:kumar@csus.edu).*

*Subject line: PPA 240B [First Name] [Last Name] Letter*

Let's get (re)acquainted! This "assignment" is designed to help me get to know you better and plan our course meetings to facilitate your learning.

Please write me a short email (1-2 paragraphs) telling me anything you think I should know about you to support and challenge you as a learner in 240B. How have your interests changed since we last met in PPA 200? Where do you work now, or where do you hope to work after you complete the program? Is this your last semester in the program or do you have another year to go? What are you looking to get out of this class? You don't have to answer these questions specifically—just tell me what you think will help me support you as an individual and a learner.

## 2. Course engagement (20%):

<i>Initial goals:</i>	<i>5%, due by 11:59pm on February 1/2, via Canvas</i>
<i>Mid-semester reflection:</i>	<i>5%, due by 11:59pm on March 8/9, via Canvas</i>
<i>Final reflection:</i>	<i>5%, due by 5pm on May 5/6, via Canvas</i>
<i>Overall assessment:</i>	<i>10% [my evaluation, no submission required]</i>

My goal as an instructor is to create a community of learners, and I count myself in that community. We each bring our own expertise and experiences to bear on the course material, and it is imperative that you share your expertise with your colleagues and learn from theirs. This course is accordingly structured as a seminar, which means that I will never lecture for the full class period. Rather, I will facilitate discussions and group exercises designed to further your learning.

The readings provide the foundation. We will draw on several texts including academic research, case studies, newspaper and other media articles, and policy and practice briefs. We will also draw on the rich and diverse experiences of our learning community in the classroom, spending most of our time together applying what we have read and putting the various readings in dialogue with each other. All of this requires active class participation in both small and large groups. It also requires you to be *really* prepared for our weekly meetings.

Because this class will be run as a professional learning community, you are expected to attend all classes. *If you need to miss a class, please email me as soon as possible.*

Our in-class activities will provide several opportunities to demonstrate your participation and engagement: we will have large and small group discussions, individual reflective writing exercises, and some role-plays to help us see administrative concepts in action. How you contribute to the classroom learning community will look different for each of you. To this end, I will be assessing engagement a little differently than you may be used to.

During our first in-class meeting, you will set goals for yourself for how you wish to engage/participate. You will share these goals with me as your commitment to course engagement in a brief (~500 words) document (5%). As you develop your goals, think about: What is your strategy for ensuring that you enter every class prepared and in the zone? How will you balance active participation and active listening? What aspects of in-class engagement are in your 'comfort zone'—and where would you like to push those boundaries to get uncomfortable?

Midway through the semester, you will reflect on your progress and propose changes to your plan for the second half of the semester. This will take the form of a brief (~500 words) written document. I will grade this reflection on the depth and thoughtfulness of your reflections (5%). At the end of the semester, you will submit a final reflection (~500 words) in which you assess your engagement against the commitments you made at the beginning and middle of the semester. I will grade this reflection on the depth and thoughtfulness of your reflection (5%) and assign you a grade for course engagement based on my assessment of your engagement in class (10%).

### 3. Weekly reading reflections (25%):

*Grading basis: 0-1-2*

*Due by: 11:59pm the night before class*

Every week, except as indicated in the syllabus, you will submit a reading reflection to help you prepare for our class discussion. By midnight the day before class, please submit a short (~500 words) reflection into Canvas. I will not be grading these on “correctness”—we haven’t discussed the concepts in class yet! Rather, I will be evaluating these responses in terms of how thoughtfully you engage with the week’s readings. As you read, think about:

1. What are the big ideas of the week?
2. Why does it matter? To whom does it matter? What’s at stake here?
3. Why do you think I assigned these readings together? How do the ideas speak to (i.e., complement, contradict, complicate) each other?
4. What are implications of these complications and contradictions for our work as public administrators?

Note that the purpose of the reading responses is not to have you answer these questions in a plug-and-chug manner. This is a graduate course, and I leave these questions here as illustrative of the kind of critical reading I want you to do as you prepare for class. Ultimately, write about whatever is most useful to you in your preparation, as long as it is thoughtful and integrative.

**Important: These reading reflections are not reading summaries.** It will not be sufficient to merely summarize each of the readings. The key to a good reading reflection is to tell me how you *make sense of* what you have read, or how that *applies* in your workplace or other organizations you are a part of. Although there are many ways to write your reading response, a helpful structure (and one you may remember from PPA 200!) can be the “3-2-1” format:

- 3 key ideas that emerged as most salient/important for you (and why);
- 2 lingering questions that weren’t addressed in the week’s readings (and why); and
- 1 “so what?” applying these ideas in your own work.

You do not have to structure your responses using the 3-2-1 format: your reading responses may be paragraphs or bullet points, whatever helps you summarize, synthesize, and communicate your understanding. I will not be checking for an exact word count. What is most important is that you engage deeply with the ideas in the texts to help you prepare for the class discussion, rather than worry about whether your response is at 480 or 520 words.

**There are 11 total reading responses; I will count your highest 10 in computing this grade (i.e., you get one week ‘off’).** Because the purpose of this assignment is to help you prepare for class, I will not accept any late submissions.

#### **4. Organizational change presentation (25%) + revision memo (20%)**

*Presentation: due in-class during presentation week; graded per rubric to be distributed by me*

*Memo: Due by 5pm on May 5/6; graded per rubric to be distributed by me*

The overall goal of this assignment is for you to synthesize across the course material, continue to complicate your understanding of the organizations in which you work, and develop your own roadmap for leadership in the public sector. You will work through this assignment iteratively, with support from me and your colleagues in the classroom. In my experience, papers (and presentations!) benefit from iteration and feedback, as other people ask us questions and point out gaps in our understanding.

For this assignment, you will choose one organizational practice in your own organizational context that you would like to change. For your presentation, you will situate this practice within your organization's institutionalized norms and cultures, describe its relationship to your organization's identity/identities, and offer and defend a theory of change. You will then present and "defend" your theory of change to me and your colleagues in class, who will offer you feedback. For your memo, which will be due *after* your presentation, you will revise your argument based on the feedback you received on your presentation, defend your theory of change grounded in course materials and/or outside research, and explain how and why your thinking has shifted.

Your memo should be ~1300-1500 words. Again, I will not be checking for an exact word count. What is most important is that you engage deeply with the course material and reflect on your own thinking, rather than worry about whether your response is at 1280 or 1520 words.

I will share more details about this assignment, including rubrics, as we progress through the semester.

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#### **Academic Integrity:**

Integrity is an essential quality in public service, including academic integrity. A former professor told me to care for my academic integrity as I would for all dimensions of my integrity, and I encourage you to do the same. Please read the [academic honesty policy](#) and consult the Sacramento State library's [tutorials](#) if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism. Many times, plagiarism is unintentional, but it is plagiarism regardless.

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- Given a zero for that assignment.
- Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- Failed in the course.

## **Important Notes about Inclusion**

In this course, we join with our colleagues across Sacramento State to help students develop the cultural competencies necessary to be effective public sector leaders. I look forward to building a learning community together in which we can bring our whole complex selves and talk about how our own multiple identities intersect with systems and with other people, and what that means for public policy and administration. We will explore and encourage different points of view, learn, make mistakes, fail forward, and celebrate our successes, because that's what it means to be a community of leaders and learners.

Sacramento State provides a host of services to support your whole complex selves both inside and outside the classroom. Please reach out to these offices should you need their assistance! They are here to help.

### [Accessibility and Accommodations](#)

I want all learners to have the supports they need to thrive. I encourage students needing accommodations in instruction or evaluation to notify the Disability Access Center early in the semester. Getting in touch with DAC is important because no accommodations can be made without authorization from that office. If you already have an accommodation for this course, please provide me with that information privately so that I can make those adjustments in a timely manner. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

### [Student Health and Counseling Services](#)

*"Your physical and mental health are important to your success as a college student. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy at Sac State. SHCS offers: Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education, and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost."*

### [Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support \(CARES\)](#)

*"If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial, or other unique circumstances impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student."*

### [Drop and Withdrawal Policy](#)

### [University Grading Policy](#)

[University Academic Advising](#)

[Information Resources and Technology](#)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

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## **PART I: BUREAUCRACY AND ITS DISCONTENTS**

### **Week 1. January 20/21: NO CLASS: MLK, Jr. Day (Campus Closed)**

### **Week 2. January 27/28: What are organizations? Why do they matter?**

- Perrow, C. (1991). A society of organizations. *Theory and Society*, 20(6), 725–762.
- Bromley, P., & Meyer, J. W. (2017). “They Are All Organizations”: The Cultural Roots of Blurring Between the Nonprofit, Business, and Government Sectors. *Administration & Society*, 49(7), 939–966. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399714548268>
- **[PDF on Canvas]** Chapter 1, “The Subject is Organizations; The Verb is Organizing,” pp. 1-34. In Scott, W. R., & Davis, G. F. (2017). *Organizations and organizing: Rational, natural, and open system perspectives*. Routledge.
  - Skip pp. 8-10 “Organizations as an area of study” and pp. 15-19 “Diverse research interests and settings” and “Diverse levels of analysis”

### **Week 3: February 3/4: Bureaucracy and rationality**

- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology* (G. Roth & C. Wittich, Trans.). University of California Press. (Original work published 1921)
  - <https://archive.org/details/MaxWeberEconomyAndSociety>
  - Chapter III, Section ii, “Legal Authority with a Bureaucratic Administrative Staff,” pp. 217-226
  - Chapter XI, “Bureaucracy,” pp. 956-963 (until “Monetary & Financial Presuppositions...); and pp. 973-975 “Technical Superiority...”
- Gobble, M. M. (2019). In Defense of Bureaucracy. *Research-Technology Management*, 62(1), 50–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2019.1541731>.
  - Read only pp. 50-52 (until “Reviews”).
- Gajduschek, G. (2003). Bureaucracy: Is It Efficient? Is It Not? Is That The Question?: Uncertainty Reduction: An Ignored Element of Bureaucratic Rationality. *Administration & Society*, 34(6), 700–723. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399702239171>
- Kettl, D. F. (2022). Weberian Bureaucracy and Contemporary Governance. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 5(2), 111–120. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppmgov/gvab026>

### **Week 4. February 10/11: Street-level bureaucracy**

- Hupe, P., Hill, M., & Buffat, A. (2015). Introduction: Defining and understanding street-level bureaucracy. In P. Hupe, M. Hill, & A. Buffat (Eds.), *Understanding street-level bureaucracy* (1st ed., pp. 3–24). Bristol University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1t89bw0.5>

- Gofen, A. (2014). Mind the Gap: Dimensions and Influence of Street-Level Divergence. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 24(2), 473–493.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mut037>
- Nisar, M. A., & Masood, A. (2020). Dealing with disgust: Street-level bureaucrats as agents of Kafkaesque bureaucracy. *Organization*, 27(6), 882–899.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508419883382>

## **PART II: INSTITUTIONAL THEORY**

### **Week 5, February 17/18: Institutional theory**

- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. Penguin Books.
  - Part II, Chapter I, “Institutionalization”, pp. 65-85
- Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340–363.
- Scott, W. R. (2008). Lords of the Dance: Professionals as Institutional Agents. *Organization Studies*, 29(2), 219–238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840607088151>
- Budd, R. (2018, December 17). Protected by their shields? Why are UK universities increasingly adopting coats of arms as their logos? *ECHER*. <https://echer.org/protected-by-their-shields/>

### **Week 6, February 24/25: Organizational identity**

- Albert, S., & Whetten, D. A. (1985). Organizational Identity. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 7, 263–296.
  - Read **only** pp. 263-273 (until “time-dependent hypotheses”); pp. 292-293 (“Summary & Conclusions”)
- Gioia, D. A., Schultz, M., & Corley, K. G. (2000). Organizational Identity, Image, and Adaptive Instability. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 63–81.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/259263>
  - Read **only** pp. 63-72 (until “The Postmodern Lens”), and pp. 74-79 (“Adaptive Instability” until the end)
- Corley, K. G. (2004). Defined by our strategy or our culture? Hierarchical differences in perceptions of organizational identity and change. *Human Relations*, 57(9), 1145–1177.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726704047141>
  - Read **only** pp. 1145-1150 (until “Methodology”), and pp. 1154-1170 (until “Implications”)

## **PART III: ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

### **Week 7, March 3/4: Managing organizational change**

*Mid-semester course engagement reflections due this week*

- EPM (Director). (2022, February 8). *10 Change Management Models Explained in 10 Minutes*. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1JiPdor\\_rU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1JiPdor_rU)
- More detail: Review at least two
  - [Kotter's 8-Step](#)
  - [Lewin's Unfreeze/Change/Refreeze](#)
  - [PDCA](#)
  - [McKinsey 7S](#)
  - [ADKAR](#)
  - [Nudge Theory](#)
  - [Bridges Transition](#)
  - [Change Curve](#)
- TEDx Talks (Director). (2017, June 14). *The inner side of Organizational Change: | Thijs Homan | TEDxAmsterdamED*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3n-c6iAKFgg>
- Kellogg, K. C. (2013). *Create relational spaces for transformational change* (Gender & Work: Challenging Conventional Wisdom). Harvard Business School. <https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Shared%20Documents/conferences/2013-w50-research-symposium/kellogg.pdf>

### **Week 8, March 10/11: Insider/outsider perspectives**

- Lerma, V. (2020, March 17). Racialized equity labor, university appropriation and student resistance. *The Authors' Attic*. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qvuN\\_o8DNk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qvuN_o8DNk)
- Lange, A. C., Quaye, S. J., Linder, C., & Evans, M. E. (2022). Relationships Between Institutional Agents and Student Activists. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 97(5), 616–630. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2022.2125761>
- Arthur, M. M. L. (2008). Social Movements in Organizations. *Sociology Compass*, 2(3), 1014–1030. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2008.00106.x>

### **Week 9, March 17/18: Theories of change**

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2022, June 29). *How to Develop a Theory of Change*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. <https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change>
  - Read parts 1, 2, and 4. Part 3 is a collection of templates that you may find useful.
- Sweeney, L. B. (2001). "Systems thinking: A means to understand our complex world." Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communications. [Stable link](#).
- Reinholz, D. L., & Andrews, T. C. (2020). Change theory and theory of change: What's the difference anyway? *International Journal of STEM Education*, 7(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-020-0202-3>

### **Week 10, March 24/25: Resistance to change**

- *Why Detroit Residents Pushed Back Against Tree-Planting*. Retrieved January 13, 2023, from <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/why-detroit-residents-pushed-back-against-tree-planting>
- Vann, J. L. (2004). Resistance to Change and the Language of Public Organizations: A Look at "Clashing Grammars" in Large-Scale Information Technology Projects. *Public Organization Review*, 4(1), 47–73. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:PORJ.0000015651.06417.e1>
- Hallett, T. (2010). The Myth Incarnate: Recoupling Processes, Turmoil, and Inhabited Institutions in an Urban Elementary School. *American Sociological Review*, 75(1), 52–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122409357044>
- Perren, L. (1996). Resistance to change as a positive force: Its dynamics and issues for management development. *Career Development International*, 1(4), 24–28. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620439610124693>

### **Week 11, March 31/April 1 [NO CLASS, SPRING RECESS]**

### **Week 12, April 7/8: Influence without authority**

- DiBenigno, J. (2020). Rapid Relationality: How Peripheral Experts Build a Foundation for Influence with Line Managers. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 65(1), 20–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839219827006>
- Huising, R. (2015). To Hive or to Hold? Producing Professional Authority through Scut Work. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 60(2), 263–299. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839214560743>

## **PART IV: PRESENTATIONS & SPECIAL TOPICS**

### **Week 13, April 14/15: Presentations, week 1**

**No reading response**

**Week 14, April 21/22: Presentations, week 2**

**No reading response**

**Week 15, April 28/29: Buzzwords & bullshit + revision workshop**

- Ahmed, S. (2006). The Nonperformativity of Antiracism. *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*, 7(1), 104–126. <https://doi.org/10.2979/MER.2006.7.1.104>
- Spicer, A. (2020). Playing the Bullshit Game: How Empty and Misleading Communication Takes Over Organizations. *Organization Theory*, 1(2), 263178772092970. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2631787720929704>
- Cluley, R. (2013). What Makes a Management Buzzword Buzz? *Organization Studies*, 34(1), 33–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612464750>

**Week 16, May 5/6: Wrap up, debrief**

**No reading response**