

California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus

California State University, Sacramento
Center for California Studies
304 S Street, Sacramento 95811

Professor Laura Speed
Email Address: ender-ton-speed@csus.edu
Phone: (916) 832-0460
Office Hours: As scheduled

Welcome: The purpose of this course is to provide academic perspective and to complement what the fellows are learning from their placement in one of ten trial courts or judicial council offices. This seminar blends academic theory with practice. The academic component will focus on judicial branch administrative history, structures, governance, and judicial process supported by experiential learning. The overall goal is to acquire the knowledge needed to understand, evaluate, and analyze the policies, practices, procedures, and institutional role of the California judicial system. This will enhance the fellows' contribution to the judicial branch and their court placement. Academic seminar will be held once a month in person at locations communicated to you by the Program, except for the January Seminar which will be held remotely. PPA 298 requires written and oral projects and papers. The spring semester culminates with a spring term paper and presentation due in May.

Catalog Description:

Building upon PPA298A, PPA 298B requires further critical examination and analysis of the administrative operation of the judicial system and its structures, policies, and practices and analyzes procedural issues and policy questions within the California judicial system with emphasis on the interdependence of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches. This course is only open to students admitted to the Judicial Fellowship Program.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic features of judicial branch institutional history, structure, governance, management, and administration.
2. Describe and explain distinctive aspects of the California judicial system with particular focus on trial courts, trial court culture, court unification, state trial court funding, and judicial independence.
3. Understand and apply key institutional performance measures.
4. Employ research, writing and oral presentation skills.

Academic Seminar Format:

The seminar itself encompasses one full day each month, augmented by periodic online assignments/activities, and mandatory office hours. Seminar begins at 9:00 a.m. and concludes by 5:00 p.m. with a lunch break, and two 10 to 15-minute breaks. Seminar is not a lecture class, although there is typically a short introduction to the material and a review of the class agenda. The seminar is discussion-based guided by study questions, presentations, group exercises, and role-playing scenarios utilizing the assigned readings, case studies, and forum discussion issues. Fellows must be agents of their own learning and come prepared to share their ideas and engage intellectually with each other. And, most critically, they must demonstrate their ability to synthesize course content and link it to their placement and the larger environment.

Academic Seminar Participation:

Active participation is vital to the learning environment, and it is required. Effective student engagement is predicated on completing and digesting all reading assignments and it is heavily weighted towards the final grade. Oral presentation and group facilitation also provide opportunities to personally develop a key professional skill and to build self-confidence. Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the seminar subject or topic by asking relevant questions, answering questions, and providing reasonable explanations and elaboration. Discussion and presentation should reflect a student's increased mastery over their newly acquired vocabulary (legal and technical terms) often unique to court administration. Seminar discussions, group exercises, team interactions and online forum discussions will be respectful and collegial.

The forum is intended to promote student interaction, deepen student learning, build class community, and increase

**California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus**

student engagement. The role of courts in our society is evolving rapidly, and on a daily basis some aspect of the judiciary appears in the news. Seminars will provide a structured opportunity to identify and explore current issues involving courts, society, politics, and by inference the administration of the judiciary.

Course Final Grades: Letter grades (A – F) are based on the following assignments:

Letter grades (A-F) are based on the below assignments. Students are required to research and produce a minimum of 25 pages of written material for the semester.

(1) A series of papers or outlines on various seminar topics and issues	40%
(2) A spring term paper and presentation	30%
(3) Seminar participation, preparedness, discussion forum engagement	30%
	100%

Grading scale:

A:	≥ 94%
A-:	90 – 93.9%
B+:	87 – 89.9%
B:	84 – 86.9%
B-:	80 – 83.9%
C+:	77 – 79.9%
C:	74 – 76.9%
C-:	70 – 73.9%
D+:	67 – 69.9%
D:	64 – 66.9%
D-:	60 – 63.9%
F:	≤ 59.9%

Attendance and Participation Policy:

Attendance and participation in seminar, office hour attendance and completion of all academic assignments are mandatory. Acceptance of admission into the Judicial Fellowship Program is a commitment to attend each class session and a commitment to be prepared for active discussion. Failure to fulfill the terms of the academic program, failure to perform in a professional manner, plagiarism, unauthorized absences, and chronic tardiness at seminar or office placement will be cause for prompt administrative review and may result in termination from the program or other sanctions. In addition to attendance, the quality of preparation for and participation in class discussions will be reflected in grading.

**California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus**

Required Texts - Fall and Spring Semesters:

Plain English for Lawyers, 6th Edition - Wydick & Sloan
Judicial Council Style Guide – June 2021
Understanding and Managing Public Organizations, 6th Edition - Rainey
Trial Courts as Organizations - Ostrom, et al.
The Art and Practice of Court Administration – Aikman
American Court Management – Saari (located online in Canvas)
Overview of Court Administration in the United States – Tobin (located online in Canvas)
These Estimable Courts: Understanding Public Perceptions of State Judicial Institutions and Legal Policy-Making
– Cann and Yates
A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis - Bardach
Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services – Lipsky
Online Courts and the Future of Justice - Susskind
Good Courts: The Case for Problem Solving Justice – Berman and Feinblatt
California's Budget Dance: Issues and Process - Krolak (located online in Canvas)

Required Selected Readings: See monthly seminar readings posted to the course in Canvas. There will be extensive non-textbook readings located there.

Communication & Office Hours: Assignments, readings, grades, course announcements, and any other communication about this course will be communicated exclusively via email and through the course in Canvas. Office hours will be held as scheduled through communication and held via video meeting (zoom).

Paper Requirements and Deadlines: At least one paper or outline or both will be due for spring seminar – the length will vary from 3 to 5 or more pages depending upon the material to be covered. The term paper instructions are treated separately below. **Seminar papers and all other writings are due in accordance with the following schedule (and subject to change).** Papers are to be submitted on the corresponding assignment page in Canvas by the due date. Late papers will not be accepted but for extenuating circumstances.

Seminar Assignment Due Dates:

Seminar Dates	Assignments Due Date
January 10/17 (half-day/remote)	January 8
February 7	February 5
March TBD	TBD
April 18	April 16
May 16	Term paper due May 14 Presentations in Seminar on May 16

Drafting and Format Requirements (details matter): Writing is a craft and requires practiced. As you learned in PPA 298A, stick to the topic that has been assigned, answer the question, draw from relevant course material, marshal your evidence, and draft, redraft, and redraft again. Below are the drafting and format requirements.

1. **Double-space the paper with 1.25” margins.**
2. **12-point Times New Roman font.**
3. **Upper left corner of the first page single-spaced: Your Name, Title of Course: PPA 298 - CSUS, My Name, Title of Paper: _, Date Submitted: February XX, 2024.**
4. **Paginate.**
5. **If a title page or citation page is used, do not count it towards the length of your paper.**
6. **Judicial Council Style Guide for all seminar papers: See Section 9.3 for citations to books, journals,**

California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus

social media, and so forth. Term paper requires APA citation style.

7. All papers submitted must be in Microsoft Word, no other formats will be accepted.
8. File-naming Conventions - this is strictly enforced: Last name - Month - Title (e.g., Outlines; e.g., Pound Paper, etc.)
9. Outlines are to be in a single document. The format, structure, and content are your choice. Outlines should demonstrate that you have read the material.
10. Citations: Use the formats noted in the following examples Citations are required using the simplified forms below.

Seminar and Term Papers Documentation (Citations): You are obligated to document the source or sources you use when writing your papers. This includes all sources consulted but not referenced in your writings. Follow these simplified citation guidelines and examples:

- For seminar papers and the term paper, use Endnotes with full citations following the numerous examples below for citation format and style. NB: This requires you to keep careful and complete notes of the sources you consult.
- For the term paper also include a Bibliography.

Bibliography Examples:

¹ Judicial Council Public Affairs. "Court Users Flock to Self-Help Centers." *California Courts Newsroom*, 19 April 2017, <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/court-users-flock-to-self-help-centers>. Accessed 22 November 2017.

¹ Rainey, Hal G. *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations*. Jossey-Bass, 2021, p 140.

¹ Saari, David J. *American Court Management*. Quorum Books, 1982, p. 13.

¹ Aikman, Alexander B. *The Art and Practice of Court Administration*. Taylor & Francis Group LLC, 2007, p. 200.

¹ Susskind, Richard E. *Online Courts and the Future of Justice*. Oxford University Press, 2019, Accessed 22 November 2017

¹ Lipsky, Michael. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation, 1980, p.120.

¹ Berman, Greg, John Feinblatt, and Sarah Glazer. *Good Courts: The Case for Problem-solving Justice*. E-book ed., New Press, 2015. Kindle.

¹ Park, Kyung H. "Judicial Elections and Discrimination in Criminal Sentencing." Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago, 3 April 2014, p.1, http://home.uchicago.edu/~kpark1/docs/Dissertation_Chapter2.pdf. Accessed 11 Dec. 2017

¹ Ostrom, Brian J. and Roger A. Hanson. "Understanding Court Culture is Key to Successful Court Reform." *Future Trends in State Courts*, 2010, p.55.

¹ Ostrom, Brian J. et al. *Trial Courts as Organizations*. Temple University Press, 2007, p. 141.

California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus

¹ Ostrom, Brian J. et al. *Trial Courts as Organizations*. (2007): p. 142.

¹ Cann, Damon M. and Jeff Yates. *These Estimable Courts*. Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 6.

¹ Cann, Damon M. and Jeff Yates. *These Estimable Courts*. (2016): p. 6.

¹ Cann, Damon M. and Jeff Yates. *These Estimable Courts*. (2016): p. 19

Critical Writing Guidelines for All Assignments and Papers:

Bearing in mind the importance of the written word in the court setting (and academia), the following evaluative criteria are used when marking seminar papers. Note that content, clarity, and conciseness are heavily weighted, and plagiarism is grounds for dismissal. The best papers demonstrate that the writer has thought hard and seriously about the readings, has come to conclusions that reflect relevant information, evidence, and ideas, making a logical connection between these and the writer's own carefully considered experiential learning. Before submitting each paper use the following as a finalization checklist.

Organization (25 points)

1. Introduction clear (i.e., Early on you explain what this paper will tell me.);
2. Clearly worded thesis statement early in paper (e.g., first or second paragraph);
3. One main point per sentence;
4. Topic sentences in paragraphs (one main point per paragraph) that together will support your thesis;
5. Support (body) paragraphs fully developed and unified;
6. Smooth, logical transition between paragraphs;
7. Conclusion summarizes main points and restates thesis.

Content (50 points)

1. Appropriate title;
2. Supporting paragraphs strongly support the thesis with evidence such as facts, statistics, experiential examples, and, importantly, connections and reference to assigned readings;
3. Paper content is the assigned length;
4. Appropriate word choice and technical vocabulary are used.

Format, Grammar, Mechanics, Citations (25 or more points)

1. Sentence completeness (no run-ons, comma splices, split infinitives, or sentence fragments, etc.);
2. Paragraph completeness (no run-ons or incoherent thoughts strung together);
3. Comma usage as necessary in compound sentences;
4. Apostrophe usage correct;
5. Usage of semi-colon vs. colon;
6. Verb usage;
7. Spelling;
8. Language usage;
9. Numbers and calculations used correctly in text and accurately depicted graphically.

Use *Plain English for Lawyers* for punctuation, clarity, conciseness, word choice, sentence structure and so forth. Use the *Judicial Council Style Guide* for general guidance and general reference—most likely in your workplace setting, e.g. correspondence, titles of judicial officers and other officials and for areas not covered by Wydick.

The Spring Term Paper (Due May14. Presentations May 16 Academic Seminar)

Like the fall term paper, the spring term paper will provide you with an opportunity to independently study an area of interest related to the courts. At the January seminar, be prepared to discuss topics of interest to you and have some connection to judicial administration. You must determine your final topic at the February Seminar. After

California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus

February, a change in topic will not be allowed unless there is a substantial change in circumstances.

What is Expected of the Spring Term Paper: Be advised, primary research (surveys, interviews, facilitated expert meetings, etc.) can be quite time consuming and an early start is advised. You will decide which research question or questions you wish to explore, and which elements best meet your interests and the needs of your paper - a review of literature is a good starting point. The term paper should be a minimum of 20 pages but can be longer. The paper should attempt to reflect your interests, what you have or are learning from your placement experience and the knowledge you are gaining through seminar readings and discussions.

The topic of your spring term paper cannot be an extension of your fall term paper or of your fellowship project.

Term Paper Section Headings and Content: Follow the list of seven headings and **general content descriptions** for each section of your term paper. The specific content and headings will vary from paper to paper according to your topic and the direction you have taken.

I. Title

II. Abstract (short summary of your topic, what question or questions you were seeking answers to - less than 50 words)

III. List of Contents: The list (or table of contents) should follow the section headings below or otherwise contained in your paper. Include sub-headings or sub-sections if you are using them.

IV. Introduction: This is an expansion of the abstract. It should also include whether you have changed the original direction or focus of your paper and what caused that to occur. (Time, lack of information, lack of support, change in interest, and so forth.) If the fall capstone topic is likely to be linked in some way to the spring capstone, note that here as well.

V. Literature Review, Discussion and Analysis: One or multiple sections depending on the number and complexity of topics covered - probably only one section for most papers. You are encouraged to use textbooks and seminar material as part of the literature review and analysis.

- Describe what is already known about the subject or topic of your paper.
- Evaluate the literature (is it superannuated (old), irrelevant, non-existent, differentiated in some way, is it from an out of state court, not a trial court, a different discipline, etc.).
- Describe the relationship of your paper to this earlier material: studies, reports, texts, articles, etc. For example, if the material is out of date, your work is likely to bring some aspect of it up to date, or create new information, or correct old information, or bring new insights.

VI. Methodology and Data:

- If you collected data, what kind of data (secondary sources, interviews, records, surveys, etc. did you collect)? If you did not collect data, then do not have a methodology and data chapter!
- Why was this data selected (it addressed the question by _____, it was available, I had access and consent, I was limited in time, it appeared to be representative, it had been used by others, etc.).
- What additional data would you have preferred but did not have access to or time to collect?
- If you collected data, how was it analyzed, and what conclusions, if any, did you form regarding the data?

VII. Final Chapter (Conclusions and Summary of Analysis)

- What questions did you answer or analyze and what are the answers? Both the questions and answers may be very different from the ones you began with. Describe any phenomenon or

**California Judicial Fellowship Program Seminar PPA 298B
Spring 2025
Course Syllabus**

information that surprised you or caused you to reconsider preconceptions or early hypothesizes (pretty much these would be your initial questions or focus).

- What have you learned from your experience preparing the term paper? And if you were pursuing a policy issue or practice - are there implications or recommendations? You are expected to have learned lessons from the term paper experience. Some of those lessons are likely to include the degree of difficulty you encountered in obtaining information, in scaling the scope of your paper, the paucity of literature on the subject, the reliability of and access to certain categories of information, e.g., juvenile justice, mental health, drug treatment, data external to the court, and private or confidential or protected information.

PPA 298B Spring Term Paper Schedule	
Dates	
January 17	Discuss potential topics and tentatively select topic
February 5	Confirm topic. Submit a short summary of your selected topic
March Office Hours	Progress check-in
April 18	Outline of Paper (annotated table of contents). Breakout discussions and peer review.
April Office Hours	Progress Check-in (e.g. literature review, data plan, and draft progress, etc.)
Prior to Submission	Draft Paper Peer Review (include with final paper)
May 14	Paper Due
May 16	Paper Presentations

Disclaimer: Professor reserves the right to alter syllabus content.