

3College of Social Sciences/ Political Science
PADM 298, Sec. 02
Special Problems
Spring 2023

Contact Information

Instructor:	Kristina Mitchell
Office Location:	Clark Hall 404B
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Office Hours:	Tuesday 9am-10am
Class Days/Time:	Monday, 6:00 – 8:45 pm
Prerequisites:	PADM 210, 212, 213, 214 and 218; and instructor consent. Completion of PADM 297 is strongly recommended.

Course Description

Advanced individual research and projects.

Prerequisites are classified standing, completion of all core courses [PADM 210, PADM 212, PADM 213, PADM 214 and PADM 218]; and consent of instructor. Completion of PADM 297 is strongly recommended.

If the final project is not completed in one semester, the students will register in PADM 1290R for the second and following semesters. The project must be completed within seven years of starting the MPA courses. See the following URL for details.

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/completing_masters/#11

Course Goals and Learning Objectives**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

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

CLO 1 Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients, and are research worthy. Assessed in final project.

CLO 2 Demonstrate ability to collect, analyze, and synthesize information from multiple sources. Assessed in final project.

CLO3 Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively in writing. Assessed in final project.

Required Readings

Research books

Student and instructor will select appropriate supportive materials based on the topic selected and the research method employed.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on Syllabus Information web page (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>).

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)



SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

This course meets on most Mondays, with a variety of activities, including group class meetings, peer support group meetings, and one-on-one consultations with the professor. The student and adviser will develop a work plan designed to enable the student to successfully complete a graduate-level, thesis quality project that meets the goals of the Course Learning Objectives listed above, based on the approved prospectus and any feedback from the Institutional Review Board, when appropriate. Iterations of the final draft will be delivered by email at a time agreed on by the student and adviser. Deadlines for all student submissions are displayed in the course schedule below. Course completion requires submission of the final draft in .pdf form to the MPA Program Director by the designated date. The bound copy is due immediately afterward, and may be delivered in person or by mail.

Project components

The final project will consist of the following segments:

Format:

The title page should contain the title and author on separate lines, centered, followed by the phrase, “A Thesis Quality Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Masters of Public Administration,” followed by the adviser’s name, and “The Graduate School, San Jose State University”. The prospectus must be word processed, double spaced using Times New Roman 12 point type. Pages should be numbered beginning with the page after the title page. A sample page is available. Final perfect projects may be viewed at SJSU ScholarWorks at https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/pols_grad/ These may be used as a guide to final paper formatting.

Segments of the Final Project:

1. **Background/ Research Question.** In the first paragraph you should state clearly the research question that the project will address. In the next pages you need to give whatever general information is required for your reader to fully understand the context of your research question. This may involve the basic facts of the situation, and the historical, cultural, social, and political context. This was part of your prospectus. However, in the final paper the information will be **stated in the past tense**, as the research will have been completed. The length of the background will depend on the topic.

2. **Literature Review:** The PADM 298 project should contain a comprehensive review of the relevant literature and published reports on the subject of your research question. The purpose of the review is to sharpen your thinking on your topic, and may point you in directions you had not previously considered. The literature review will vary in length. If, for example, you are analyzing a particular public policy question, your entire paper may consist of a review and analysis of public documents. For those engaging in survey research or organizational analysis, the literature review may be as short as six to ten pages.

The literature review covered in the prospectus will be the core of your paper's literature research. You may discover additional sources and so it should probably expand, but the bulk of your sources should already be in the prospectus.

The format of the literature review is an essay describing the available literature related to your topic. You should present the literature in logical order and grouped by relevance to topics in your outline. In the essay you will cite the author's last name and date of the article in APA intext citation style. See the Hart book from PADM 297 for additional guidance.

3. **Methodology.** This will have been created for your prospectus. It should not change without permission of your adviser. Describe the specific methods that you have used to obtain the data for your project. You may use data analysis, survey research, or any other professional or academic method. The Sylvia and Sylvia book used in PADM 297 provides a number of examples of evaluation methodologies. Bardach and other PADM 213 textbooks are also good guides. The methodology must be appropriate to the subject and your purpose in researching it, and complete, as it guides your research work. Note that while this was part of your prospectus, in the final project **it will be in past tense** because the research will have been completed,

Additional Segments of the Completed Paper

The finished paper will include enhanced versions of the background, literature review and methodology that were part of the prospectus, and 2 additional sections.

4. Findings: This section constitutes the focus of your paper. You report on what you found. Interviews, data tables or descriptions of public policy inquiries may be appropriate. This section could vary between 10 and 50 pages, depending on the topic and methodology.

5. **Analysis and Conclusion:** In this section you interpret your findings and make recommendations (when appropriate) and /or draw conclusions that are grounded in the Findings section. This section may range from 5 to 20 pages or more, depending on the topic.

The program does not have a fixed standard for length. Generally, successfully completed projects are between 40 and 60 pages in length. If you expect to write a longer paper, the acceptable length should be discussed with and approved by the adviser. Raw data may be presented as an appendix, and is not counted in the paper's page length.

6. **Resources:** This section is the complete list of every source that you cited in your paper. That means that it will be every source that you used to develop every element of your paper. Both paraphrases and direct quotes must be cited using the in-text citation format in APA style. Every in-text citation must have a complete citation in this section of the paper. ***Failure to cite all of your sources is plagiarism and will result in a grade of F for this course.***

Once the final draft is approved by the faculty adviser, students must submit a spiral bound copy to the program director for the department's permanent file. This has a clear plastic cover sheet, a hard plastic back and a spiral binding. It must also be submitted to the professor as a .pdf for the department's permanent electronic file. Both of these steps must be completed in order to have the Validation memo signed and submitted for your graduation. The hard copy must be delivered to the POLS office, 471 Clark Hall, whenever the POLS office is open. Call ahead to ensure that someone will be there if you plan to go in person— 408-924-5550. Hard copies may be delivered by mail or in person.

Grading Policy

This course is a Credit/ No Credit course. A student must get a grading outcome of 38 or better, with no score below 3, on the final review of the final project, to receive Credit.

The adviser will accept no more than three drafts of the final project. A fourth draft may be read by an alternate MPA faculty member, and, if necessary, referred to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for final disposition.

First draft criteria:

1. More than ten English mechanics mistakes in the first five pages or twenty in the entire document= returned for correction with no additional evaluation

2. A score of less than 3 on any of the Outcome 1 criteria= returned for correction with no additional evaluation
3. A score of less than 3 on any Outcome 2 or 3 criteria = returned for correction with evaluation of deficiencies.

Second draft criteria:

1. Any English mechanics mistakes = returned for correction with no additional evaluation
2. A score of less than 3 on any Outcome 1, 2, or 3 criteria = returned for correction with evaluation of the deficiencies
3. An overall score of less than 38 or any Outcome criteria less than 3= returned for correction with evaluation of the deficiencies.

Third draft criteria:

1. Any English mechanics mistakes = returned for correction with no additional evaluation
2. A score of less than 38 or any Outcome criteria below 3 = returned for correction with evaluation of deficiencies; **last reading by the adviser.**
3. **Submitted with all corrections for fourth reading by a different fulltime MPA faculty member who will be obtained by the MPA Director.**

Fourth draft criteria:

1. **A score of less than 38 or any Outcome criteria below 3 by the second MPA faculty member= submitted to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for review**
2. **If the dean's review is less than 38 or less than 3 on any Outcome criteria, the student fails the 298 and is out of the program. The degree will not be conferred.**

The grading rubric follows.

CRITERIA	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable	Rating	Weight	Score
Outcome 1. Demonstrates ability to conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients, and are research worthy (maximum score: 12)							
1. Are the research questions and/or goals well defined and clearly stated?	4	3	2	1		1	0
2. Does the author demonstrate in-depth familiarity with relevant literature on the subject?	4	3	2	1		1	0
3. Is the methodology appropriate to answer the research question(s)?	4	3	2	1		1	0

TOTAL SCORE FOR OUTCOME 1= 12							
Outcome 2. Demonstrates ability to collect, analyze, and synthesize information from multiple sources (maximum score: 16)							
4. Is the data collected sufficient in quality and depth to answer the research question?	4	3	2	1		1.5	0
5. Is the analysis direct, competent, and appropriate?	4	3	2	1		1.5	0
6. Are the conclusions sophisticated and based on the results of the analysis, as a logical extension of the findings?	4	3	2	1		0.5	0
7. Does the author show how his/her analysis and findings fit into the larger context of the literature and current professional practice?	4	3	2	1		0.5	0
TOTAL SCORE FOR OUTCOME 2= 16							
Outcome 3. Demonstrates ability to communicate effectively in writing (maximum score: 16)							
8. Is the material logically organized , so that a reader can easily follow the writer's train of thought?	4	3	2	1		1	0
9. Is the writing grammatically correct and free of typos?	4	3	2	1		2	0
10. Do tables and figures add useful/important information for the reader?	4	3	2	1		0.5	0
11. Are citations included where appropriate, and are in-text citations, footnotes and reference list properly formatted in APA style?	4	3	2	1		0.5	0
TOTAL SCORE FOR OUTCOME 3= 16							
TOTAL SCORE Assessment:							
Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable				
44	40	36	32				
Excellent: As a supervisor, you would consider this work ready for public distribution without any modification.							
Good: As a supervisor, you would consider this work essentially sound, but in need of some refinement before public distribution.							
Marginal: As a supervisor, you would conclude that the work contained some worthwhile elements, but required major revisions before public distribution.							
Unacceptable: The work needs to be entirely redone.							

1. Review all edits and correct errors
2. Ensure that all tables are presented on one page each
3. Ensure that all headings are on the same page with the first few lines of the text they identify

4. **Print the report- one copy. REMOVE THE GRADE RUBRIC BEFORE YOU PRINT! You may use double sided, but ensure that all new sections start on their own page, and on the right/odd page**
5. **Bind with a clear plastic front, hard plastic back and spiral binding. Deliver the hard copy to the POLS office, 471 Clark Hall.**
6. **Send a .pdf of the perfect final version of the report to Prof Edwards at the class e-mail for the program's permanent file for NASPAA assessment.**

[Your grade cannot be filed until the hard copy has been delivered.].

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class	Date	Activity
1	Jan 30	Class meeting: syllabus review, schedule review, form spring peer groups, professor appointments selected
2	Feb 6	Individual appointments as scheduled, others confer with peers
3	Feb 13	Group meeting over Zoon
4	Feb 20	QUALITATIVE DAY. If you're doing a qualitative method you must attend class in person this day.
5	Feb 27	REGRESSION DAY. If you're doing a regression you must attend class in person this day.
6	Mar 6	OTHER QUANT DAY – if you're doing a different quantitative method you must attend class in person this day.
7	Mar 13	Take a break. Work individually. Confer with your small group.
8	Mar 20	Individual appointments as scheduled, others confer with peers
	Mar 27	NO SCHOOL – SPRING BREAK
9	Apr 3	FIRST DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE.
10	Apr 10	Individual appointments as scheduled, others confer with peers
11	Apr 17	Individual appointments as scheduled, others confer with peers
12	Apr 24	Group meeting over Zoom.
13	May 1	Individual appointments as scheduled, others confer with peers
14	May 8	LAST DAY TO SUBMIT PERFECT REVISED DRAFT FOR SPRING 2023 GRADUATION – all projects with errors will be

		returned for correction for August 2023 graduation. No office hours.
15	May 15	No class – professor grading day for projects – all projects with errors will be returned for correction for August 2021 graduation.
16	May 22	ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING .PDF FILE FOR SPRING 2023 GRADUATION; bound copy is due by May 25.