

*Public Affairs 30:*  
*Comparative Analysis of Wealth, Policy, and Power*  
*Version: March 10, 2019*

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## 1 *Course Information*

- **Location:** ROYCE 190
- **Schedule:** MW, 2-3:15 pm
- **Office Hours:** W, 9-11 am
- **Course Website:** <https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/19S-PUBAFF30-1>
- **Teaching Staff:**

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## 2 *Course Overview*

Around the World, communities confront common social problems, such as how to provide public goods, coordinate investments, or limit corruption. In this course, we explore the strategic interactions that give rise to these problems, what can be done to address them, and how different polities have tried (and sometimes failed) to mount an effective response. Applications will include climate change, the anti-vaccination movement, protest and repression, war and the formation of states, corruption, and human and drug trafficking.

## 3 *Learning Goals*

By the end of the quarter, you should be able to:

1. Use the tools of social science to explain social problems;
2. Enumerate approaches for addressing each class of problems;
3. Apply this knowledge to specific policy challenges confronting countries and communities around the World; and
4. Demonstrate a familiarity with core concepts from political science and micro-economics.

## 4 *Assignments and Evaluation*

### 4.1 *Extensions*

Extensions on assignments will not be granted barring exceptional circumstances. Late work will not be accepted without prior permission. Makeup exams will not be given, and students who miss exams will receive a score of zero absent extraordinary circumstances.

### 4.2 *Lectures*

Attendance in lecture is not graded but is essential for success in the class. Any material covered during lecture is fair game for the exams even if it is not covered/emphasized by the readings.

### 4.3 *Midterm Exam (20%)*

A midterm exam will take place in-class on May 13.

### 4.4 *Final Exam (30%)*

A cumulative final exam will take place on June 11 from 8-11 am.

### 4.5 *Papers (40%)*

You will write 2 short (4 page maximum) papers. These papers provide an opportunity to practice different types of writing:

1. Policy Memo: a concise, clearly organized explanation of a policy/programmatic challenge and proposed solutions. **(Due 5/3)**
2. Op-Ed: a polished, evocative piece that relates course concepts to a contemporary policy issue of your choosing. **(Due 5/31)**

More detailed instructions for both assignments will be circulated.

**Formatting:** Format your paper as a Microsoft Word Document with 1" margins, 12 point Times New Roman, and double spacing. Submit via turnitin, which automatically screens for plagiarism.

### 4.6 *Section Participation (10%)*

You must actively participate in section *every week*. A successful section depends on your willingness to engage with readings, raise probing questions, and offer insightful comments.

You may miss one section meeting without loss of credit. If you miss an additional section, your grade will be docked *unless* you submit a 1-page commentary (see formatting instructions above)

synthesizing and/or critically engaging the readings for that week. This must be submitted to your TA by the next Monday after the section you missed.

## 5 Course Policies

### 5.1 Note-taking

**Computers, tablets, and phones may not be used during class.** If you require an exception to this policy, please contact your TA.

### 5.2 Re-grades

If you feel that your grade on an assignment does not reflect the quality of your work, you may appeal through the following procedure:

- Write a memo that explains, in as much detail as possible, why you should receive a different grade.
- Deliver that memo and your graded assignment to your TA within 1 week of the assignment being returned and schedule a meeting to discuss.
- If you and your TA cannot reach an agreement, your TA will pass the memo and assignment to another member of the teaching staff, selected at random.
- That member of the teaching staff will evaluate your work and assign a new final grade.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Note: that final grade may be lower than your original grade.

### 5.3 Academic Accommodations

Academic Accommodations. Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the [Center for Accessible Education](#) (CAE) at (310)825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. Students should contact the CAE within the **first two weeks** of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit <http://www.cae.ucla.edu>.

### 5.4 Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. I encourage you to review the [University's policies regarding academic honesty](#). Senate Regulation A-306 requires that all suspected cases of academic dishonesty be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Specific rules for this course:

- All exams will be “closed book.” You may only consult the TA or Professor during exams.
- Written work must be properly cited. Please review [UCLA’s definition of plagiarism](#).

### 5.5 Religious Observances

If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with your TA *before the end of the second week* of the quarter to discuss accommodations.

## 6 Student Resources

Please review [this more comprehensive listing of student resources](#)

compiled by Professor Hartman (Political Science and Statistics).

This includes information related to immigration; homeless and food shelters; the office for equity, diversity, and inclusion; healthy living; and the UCLA recreation department.

### 6.1 Mental Health

There are resources on campus for students to help with study habits, anxiety, stress, and depression. Please check out the [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) center at UCLA](#).<sup>3</sup> In addition to counseling and other psychological and mental health services, they provide additional resources such as readings on dealing with stress and anxiety, group counseling sessions, mindfulness trainings, and other behavioral services. Walk-in hours are Monday-Thursday 8am-4:30pm and Friday 9am-4:30pm in John Wooden Center West. CAPS services are often covered by UC SHIP.

<sup>3</sup> Crisis counseling is also available 24 hours/day at (310) 825-0768.

### 6.2 Gender Discrimination

#### Title IX Resources

UCLA prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, there are a variety of resources to assist you.<sup>4</sup>

**CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:** You can receive confidential support and advocacy at the CARE Advocacy Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, 1st Floor Wooden Center West, [CAREadvocate@careprogram.ucla.edu](mailto:CAREadvocate@careprogram.ucla.edu), (310) 206-2465. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) also provides confidential counseling to all students and can be reached 24/7 at (310) 825-0768.

<sup>4</sup> Faculty and TAs are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Coordinator — A NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCE — should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

**NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:** You can also report sexual violence or sexual harassment directly to the University's Title IX Coordinator, 2241 Murphy Hall, [titleix@conet.ucla.edu](mailto:titleix@conet.ucla.edu), (310) 206-3417. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD at (310) 825-1491. These offices may be required to pursue an official investigation.

## 7 Course Schedule

**Links to all readings and videos are provided on the course website.** There will typically be one additional source (e.g., a newspaper article) that students will be expected to read prior to section. This will be disseminated via CCLE during the quarter.

### C.1 Social Science and Public Policy (4/1)

- Putnam, Robert D. "APSA Presidential Address: The Public Role of Political Science." *Perspectives on Politics*, 2003.
- Duflo, Esther. "The Economist as Plumber."
- Davenport, Coral. "In the Trump Administration, Science is Unwelcome. So Is Advice." *New York Times*, June 2018.

### C.2 Social Science Methods: Correlation vs. Causation (4/3)

- Henne, Paul. "Correlation and Causation."
- Johnson, Steven. "The Investigator" (pp. 68-79) and "Building the Case" (read whole chapter, skim 144-53) chapters from *The Ghost Map*. Penguin, 2006.
- Gertler et al. "Causal Inference and Counterfactuals." Chapter 3 from *Impact Evaluation in Practice*. World Bank Group, September 2016.

### C.3 Social Science Methods: Strategic Thinking (4/8)

- Dixit, Avinash and Nalebuff, Barry. "Introduction" and "Ten Tales of Strategy." Chapters from *Thinking Strategically: The Competitive Edge in Business, Politics, and Everyday Life*. W.W. Norton, 1993.
- Krugman, Paul. "The Fall and Rise of Development Economics." Section titled "Metaphors and Models."
- Complexity Labs. "Game Theory Overview."
- More Advanced Introduction to Game Theory: Humphreys, Macartan. "Introduction." Chapter from *Political Games*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

### C.4 Social Dilemmas (4/10)

- "Social Interactions and Economic Outcomes." Chapter from *Economy, Society and Public Policy*, through Section 2.5.
- Complexity Labs. "Pareto Optimality."

### C.5 Externalities: Theory (4/15)

- Complexity Labs. "Social Dilemma."
- Bueno de Mesquita. "Externalities." Chapter 4 from *Political Economy for Public Policy*, Sections 4.1-4.4 (stop before 4.5 "The Theory of the Second Best").

### C.6 Externalities: Application — Pollution, Tragedy of the Commons (4/17)

- Hardin, Garret. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*, 1968.
- **Over-fishing:** Jacobs, Andrew. "China's Appetite Pushes Fisheries to the Brink." *New York Times*, April 2017.
- **Climate Change:** Roberts, David. "Life after climate change, with David Wallace-Wells" *The Ezra Klein Show*, March 2019.
- Anomaly, Jonny, "Tragedy of the Commons."

### C.7 Externalities: Application — Collective Action (4/22)

- "Social Interactions and Economic Outcomes." Chapter from *Economy, Society and Public Policy*, Sections 2.6 - 2.8.
- **Herd Immunity:** Belluz, Julia. "I was skeptical that the anti-vaccine movement was gaining traction. Not anymore." *Vox*, October 2017.
- **(Labor) Organizing:** Matthews, Dylan. "Europe could have the secret to saving America's unions." *Vox*, April 2017.
- Anomaly, Jonny, "Collective Action Problems."

### C.8 Coordination Problems: Theory (4/24)

- Bueno de Mesquita. "Coordination Problems." Chapter 5 from *Political Economy for Public Policy*.

### C.9 Coordination Problems: Application — Protest (4/29)

- **Protest:** Heller, Nathan. "Out of Action." *The New Yorker*, August 2017.
- **Repression:** Latif, Abdi. "Cameroon has restricted internet access for more than 150 days in 2017." *Quartz Africa*, November 2017.
- **Repression:** King et al. "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Disruption, Not Engaged Argument." *American Political Science Review*, 2018.

### C.10 Commitment Problems: Theory (5/1)

- Bueno de Mesquita. "Commitment Problems." Chapter 6 from *Political Economy for Public Policy*.
- Farrell, Henry. "Why the hidden internet can't be a libertarian paradise." *Aeon*, February 2015.

## POLICY MEMO DUE 5/3

### C.11 Commitment Problems: Application — States (5/6)

- **Establishing Order:** Olson, Mancur. "Dictatorship, democracy, and development." *American Political Science Review*, 1993.

- **Promise and Peril of Centralized Authority:** Callimachi, Rukmini. “The ISIS Files.” *The New York Times*, April 2018.

### C.12 *Commitment Problems: Application — War and Political Reform (5/8)*

- **War:** Lake, David. “Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War.” *International Security*, 2010.
- **Political Reform:** Acemoglu, Daron and Robinson, James. “The Vicious Circle.” Chapter 12 from *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. Penguin Random House, 2013.

### C.13 **MIDTERM (5/13)**

#### C.14 *Agency Problems: Theory (5/15)*

- Marginal Revolution University. “Moral Hazard.” September 2015.
- Marginal Revolution University. “Asymmetric Information and Used Cars.” January 2015.
- Gailmard, Sean. “Accountability and Principal-Agent Theory.” Chapter from *The Oxford Handbook of Public Accountability*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

#### C.15 *Agency Problems: Application — Corruption (5/20)*

- Choosing Public Officials: Besley, Timothy. “Political Selection.” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2005.
- Corruption: Svensson, Jakob. “Eight Questions about Corruption.” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, September 2005.

*Related Question — does corruption even matter for development?*

- (Blog Post) Blattman, Christopher. “Corruption and Development: Not what you think?” November 2012.
- (Blog Post) Stephenson, Matthew. “Yes, Corruption Is Bad for Development. No, Corruption Is Not a Western Obsession.” April 2014.

#### C.16 *Strategic Adjustment: Theory (5/22)*

- Bueno de Mesquita. “Strategic Adjustment.” Chapter 7 from *Political Economy for Public Policy*.

#### C.17 *Memorial Day — No class (5/27)*

**OP-ED DUE 5/31**



### C.18 *Strategic Adjustment: Applications — Smuggling, Performance Pay (5/29)*

- **Irregular Migration and Smuggling:** Davitti, Daria and Ursu, Anca-Elena. “Why Securitising the Sahel Will Not Stop Migration.” *FMU Policy Brief*, January 2018.
- **Drug War:** Garson, Philippa. “Balloons and sausages — understanding the global drugs trade.” *IRIN*, May 2014.
- **Drug War:** Lopez, German. “The biggest problem with the war on drugs, explained in one video — with dragons.” *Vox*, March 2015.
- **Performance Pay:** Cable, Dan and Vermeulen, Freek. “Stop Paying Executives for Performance.” *Harvard Business Review*, February 2016.

### C.19 *Dangers of Social Engineering (6/3)*

- Scott, James C. “Introduction,” and “Chapter 3.” *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, February 1999.
- Cole, Teju. “The White-Savior Industrial Complex.” *The Atlantic*, March 2012.
- Martin, Courtney. “The Reductive Seduction of Other People’s Problems.” January 2016.

### C.20 *Review (6/5)*

### C.21 **FINAL EXAM (6/11)**