



PPD 373: Public Policy and Planning Analysis
USC Sol Price School of Public Policy
Tuesday/Thursday – 8:00 to 9:50am (51122)

Online
Spring 2021 – 4 units

Professor: Grace Bahng, PhD

Office: online for semester

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See Blackboard for Zoom Meeting link

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Help Desk Phone: (213) 740-5555

Email: consult@usc.edu

Web: <https://kepteaching.usc.edu/start-learning/>

Welcome to PPD 373! As I mentioned, I see many familiar faces on the roster and look forward to another semester together. Although we will be online again this semester, we will do our best to foster engagement, discussion, and active learning during our class sessions. It has been a challenging year for all of us and yet I have been impressed by our students' ability to adapt and persevere. I am sure this semester will have challenges of its own – both in the classroom and in the world at large – but it makes the ability to distinguish helpful and productive policy to address tough public problems all the more critical.

COVID-19 Acknowledgement: *I understand that we are currently living through a pandemic and life is not “business as usual” by most measures. I know there may be unforeseen challenges you experience throughout the semester (ex. sickness, childcare, etc.) and I will do my best to work with you through those challenges so that you can succeed and learn effectively throughout this course. It always helps build trust when you come to me ahead of time with these obstacles and we can discuss solutions together. But where challenges are unexpected, I will do my best to remain flexible with you while also being fair to your peers. As they say, “we’re in it together,” and so we fight on!*

Professor Grace Bahng

Course Website

While we will be using several other technologies throughout the course, our main landing page for all course-related materials will be the Blackboard website (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>). Please login using your USC credentials.

Once on Blackboard's main page, select PPD 373. Through this website, you will have access to an online version of the course syllabus, course assignments and materials, resources that may be useful to you, announcements posted from time to time, and easy email capability to communicate with the class. In addition, students will submit all of their written assignments on Blackboard in the Assignments section unless otherwise indicated. See *Submitting Assignments* section below.

Students should check the course site regularly. I will be sending weekly (often more frequent) announcements on the site concerning course live sessions, assignments, and any changes or updates. You can check the announcements and other posted materials by logging in and going to the Blackboard announcement section. You can also set your communication settings so that all course announcements are emailed to you (I highly recommend this). Please use your USC email address, even if you have other addresses. The Blackboard system will not accept non-USC addresses so you may miss class email communications if you do not use the USC email address.

For technical support on Blackboard, call the Blackboard Help Line (213)740-5555 (Option #2) or email Blackboard Support at blackboard@usc.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course applies economic and statistical methods to develop a toolkit of practical methods for analyzing policy issues. Students will develop skills in applied data analysis using Excel spreadsheets. Areas of coverage will include market failure analysis; indexing, extrapolation and simple forecasting; visual presentation and interpretation of data; risk and decision analysis; and cost-benefit analysis and related tools.

Prerequisites: ECON 203, PPD 225, PPD 303

Course Format

This course will follow pedagogical models that emphasize active-learning for students. In “**flipped**” models of instruction, students will complete preparatory work before class meetings, such as reading course materials, watching recorded lectures on theory, and completing short written exercises. Then, during our live class sessions, students will apply and engage with the material from their preparation while guided and adjusted by the professor. This “flipped” model has been demonstrated to deepen learning and be more efficient and effective in generating positive learning experiences.

Student Preparatory Work and Asynchronous Instruction

Before each live class session, students are to complete the preparatory work listed in the “Course Schedule” section of this syllabus and in your Blackboard Weekly Folders. Preparatory work is differentiated between reading class materials, watching assigned videos, posting on discussion boards, or completing exercises. Preparatory work should be completed before each week’s live session.

Live Sessions (Zoom Class Meetings)

All students are expected to attend and participate in the scheduled weekly live sessions to complete the assignments on time. Live sessions will be recorded and posted on Blackboard (unless noted) by the end of the week in the circumstance that a student is not able to attend a session.

Students should use their USC credentials to log in to the Zoom live session. Zoom meeting information can be found on the course Blackboard site. Please make your video viewable, if possible. I understand sometimes this may not be possible. But if you are able to show yourself on video, it can help the learning environment for us all. For more technical information on how to use Zoom, see the *Appendix*.

Participation Guidelines

Students should prepare for thoughtful and respectful participation in class discussions, in-class exercises, and work in project teams. Observed patterns of behavior that demonstrate a lack of respect for the professor and/or other students in the course will result in a reduction in your participation grade.

Please be aware that we may discuss current events, controversial policies, successful and failed policies, and other topics that some students may find sensitive. All discussions will be conducted with respect and decorum by the professor *and* the students. Any concerns should be discussed with me.

This class welcomes discussion and debate, but it is expected that you will treat each other with respect and kindness. We will engage sensitive topics by:

- 1) Listening respectfully to differing viewpoints and not talking or at the same times as others.
- 2) Prioritizing empirical evidence to back up claims about policy.
- 3) Where appropriate, reviewing our own political, ideological, or personal attitudes, and noting and/or discussing how those may affect our judgments.

Zoom Etiquette for Live Sessions (adapted from Dr. Vertenten)

These are some specific guidelines to help prepare to participate in the online classroom space. Your attention to these guidelines will make the classroom experience more meaningful and successful for you and your peers.

Background: The area around you and in back of you that is in view of your camera should be considered part of the classroom environment. Therefore, plan to participate in a setting that allows your full participation and is free of auditory or visual distractions or please make use of the virtual background feature on Zoom. See the *Appendix* for more on how to set a virtual background.

Attire: Present yourself to others as you would in a physical classroom. Casual, public dress is generally the norm for online classes. Avoid wearing revealing clothing or sports clothing, or attending class in sweats, pajamas, or bathrobes.

Video image: Your thumbnail video image will be all you have to convey yourself to the class and to your instructor when your video is not on. Take time to upload a photo where you are easily visible from the shoulders up (think about the layout of a passport photo).

Interaction: Observe the same standards of courtesy and interpersonal respect that govern face-to-face classroom behavior. This includes using a professional tone and language, speaking audibly, turn-taking (not holding the floor for too long), and supporting the discussion and ideas of others.

Here are some things to avoid in order to help create a positive and engaging climate:

- Engaging in other activities—using a telephone or knitting
- Interacting with persons who are not part of the class
- Moving around or moving away from the camera frequently
- Eating
- Caring for pets or children
- Behaving in an overtly inattentive manner, such as engaging in excessive private chatting or other private communication during class meetings

Communication

If you have questions about the concepts or course materials, or you are having problems or challenges, please contact me via ping, email, phone, or Zoom meeting. If you have a purely *administrative* question, please spend 5 minutes trying to answer it on your own and then contact our teaching assistant. If she/he cannot quickly resolve the issue, then please contact me.

For relatively straightforward queries, a ping/text or email will produce a quicker response than scheduling an appointment for a meeting. More complex communication should be handled in face-to-face conversation over Zoom. To set up a call or schedule a meeting, please email me with a few scheduling options. Emails will typically receive a response within 24-36 hours. If you do not receive a response to your email after 48 hours, please send a follow-up email to float your message to the top of my inbox. When sending an email, please put the course number at the beginning of the subject line followed by a brief description of your request (e.g. PPD373: Meeting request).

REQUIRED READINGS & SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Textbooks (helpful references, but not required to complete the course):

- **Charles Wheelan, *Introduction to Public Policy*, W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.** (*Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7 are available online through Ares*)

- Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, Congressional Quarterly Press, 2019 (6th Edition).
- Gregory Mankiw, *Principles of Microeconomics*, Cengage Learning, 2012 (6th Edition).
(Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 6 are available online through Ares)

A 6th edition of the Bardach book is available, but the 5th and 4th editions include all of the key material for this course and is a less-expensive alternative.

If your economics skills are rusty, you may wish to make use of an introductory microeconomics textbook for review purposes. The Wheelan book touches on the economics material that we will be using, but does not go into great detail – this book will be much more useful in the later portions of the course. Chapters 1-3 and 7 are available electronically on Ares (course reserves).

If you no longer have your textbook from ECON 203 and need to obtain a new one, Gregory Mankiw's *Principles of Microeconomics* is the most popular (and older editions should be inexpensive and completely adequate), but there are many good introductory microeconomics textbooks out there. The optional economics review readings listed in the course schedule correspond to the 6th edition of Mankiw's textbook.

Additional readings (typically short articles from sources such as *The Economist*) may be added throughout the semester and posted on the course Blackboard site (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>). All assignments, lecture notes, etc., will be posted on Blackboard.

Software requirements:

Microsoft Excel and Tableau is required for some in-class data analysis and take-home assignments, but prior experience is not required. Class meetings during which Excel or Tableau will be used are indicated in the course schedule; students must bring a laptop with Excel and/or Tableau installed to class on these dates. Microsoft Office (including Excel) and Tableau are freely available to USC students. Download instructions for Excel can be found at <https://itservices.usc.edu/officestudents/>. More specific instructions on installing Tableau will be provided in class.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

Due to the analytical nature of these assignments, email is not always conducive to providing clear responses to substantive questions, so students seeking help with problem sets and other assignments are encouraged to bring questions to office hours or set up appointments to discuss them with the professor or the TA at another time. Clarifying questions are generally straightforward to address via email, though you are of course also welcome to ask them in person.

1. Problem Sets and Case Assignments (28%)

Students will complete eight graded problem sets and case assignments to reinforce and apply key concepts and skills, and to allow practice of the types of questions to be expected on exams. Unless otherwise specified, students may work in groups of up to three and submit a single assignment per group. Each student's lowest percentage score will be dropped, so only the seven highest scores will count (equally weighted) towards the final grade. This will prevent students from being penalized for missing a single assignment due to circumstances outside their control (illness, bad traffic, etc.), and will more generally protect students' grades from a single poor performance.

2. Discussion Facilitation & Group Discussion Boards (8%)

Students will form groups of 4 or 5 members and help facilitate discussion for a portion of several class Zoom sessions throughout the semester. Students will sign up for their group during the first week of the semester. Each Discussion Facilitation group will be given specific questions by the professor to address in a short 10-minute presentation. Every member of the group must present and is worth 3% of the course grade. Discussion Facilitation groups will work together to prepare, consult with the professor beforehand, compose a Powerpoint slide summarizing their main points, and pose 2 discussion questions for the class to address.

In response to the Discussion Facilitation presentation, the class will break up into small groups to continue the discussion. Each small group will then post their response on a Group Discussion Board to the class on Blackboard. Small groups should aim to complete their post during their group discussion time, but will have until the end of the week to post their response. Only one post per group is necessary. There will be 7 Group Discussion Boards throughout the semester. The best 5 scores will count towards 5% of the course grade.

*More instruction and guidelines will be provided on Blackboard.

3. Policy Analysis Memo (9%)

The final take-home assignment for the course will be a policy analysis memo based on a current policy proposal selected by the professor. Students will conduct cost-benefit analysis based on the data contained in case materials provided by the professor and then write a brief policy memo outlining their analysis and policy recommendations.

4. Examinations (55%)

There will be three examinations (two midterms and a final) consisting of a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions. The two midterms exams are worth 15% each. The first midterm will be on Thursday, 2/18 (**Session 5b**). The second midterm will be on Thursday, 3/25 (**Session 10b**). The final exam is worth 25% and will be cumulative in the sense that much of the new material builds heavily on material from earlier in the semester, but it will emphasize post-midterm material. The final exam will be given on Wednesday, 5/12 from 8-10am.

5. Class Participation (+/-3%)

This course uses an applied approach that integrates lecture material with in-class exercises, labs, and other hands-on analysis and class discussion. Because attending all class meetings and completing all in-class work is the minimum expected of all students, class participation is not included directly in the grading breakdown above; instead, students who fail to meet these expectations will have their overall scores decreased by up to 3 percentage points, while students who are especially outstanding participants in class discussions will have their scores increased by up to 3 percentage points to reflect their contributions.

To allow for the reality that unexpected circumstances may arise that cause students to miss classes through no fault of their own, each student may miss two classes (*not including exams or labs*) without penalty, so there will be no need for students to provide documentation to be excused for isolated absences due to illness, bad traffic, etc.

Assignment Schedule & Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Due	% of Grade
Problem Sets and Case Assignments (best 7 of 8)	Various Dates	28%
Discussion Facilitation & Group Discussion Boards (best 5 of 7)	Various Dates	8%
Policy Analysis Memo	4/29	9%
Midterm Exams (2)	2/18 & 3/25	30%
Final Exam	5/12 at 8am	25%
TOTAL		100%

Grading Scale

Final course grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Academic Honesty and Avoiding Plagiarism

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an professor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students are expected to work at high standards of integrity and avoid plagiarism. The Price School defines plagiarism as: "presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words"; "plagiarism is a serious academic offense with serious consequences" which can include an F on the assignment and in the class.

To avoid plagiarism, place any use of *two* or more words of text within quotes and provide a citation using APA style. In addition, if you use ideas, concepts, statistics or other evidence from a source — *even*

if it's not a verbatim quote — you must provide appropriate credit and cite a source. USC's library website has useful resources on avoiding plagiarism: <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/plagiarism>

Academic dishonesty, such as fraudulently passing off another person's work as your own, is a more serious offense and can result in an F in the class and additional disciplinary action by USC that can include expulsion. Although cases of academic dishonesty are rare, we use Turnitin and other electronic resources to keep students honest — *do not sacrifice your academic career* for the sake of a grade.

Submitting Assignments

The submission, grading, and return of all assignments will be in electronic format. Please follow the procedures below when submitting your assignments electronically:

- *Digital Backup*: It is good practice to *back up* your work to cloud storage so theft or equipment failures do not cause you to miss deadlines.
- *Blackboard/Turnitin & Microsoft Word*: All electronic assignments should be submitted through Blackboard in the Assignments section. All written assignments unless otherwise specified must be uploaded as a Microsoft Word file to the appropriate Turnitin or assignment link on Blackboard. Email or hardcopy are not permitted without prior permission. Please keep a copy of your Turnitin receipt with the date and time of your submission.
- *Draft Originality*: For select written assignments, there may be an “originality check” Turnitin link available on Blackboard. Please upload the document in advance, check for underlined text, and either rewrite in your own words or add quotation marks as appropriate before submitting to the assignment link.
- *Policy on late assignments*: Please inform the TA and professor in advance if you must miss a deadline. Late submissions will be graded down 10% per day.

Guidelines for Writing

To ensure your assignment is eligible for full credit, it is a good practice to make sure that you finish the assignment with enough time to proofread it a final time, upload the assignment, and check that your assignment submission is successful. All written assignments in the course should follow the guidelines below:

- Provide assignments in Microsoft Word format unless otherwise specified
- Compose assignments as single-spaced text, set in 12-point font (Times New Roman or equivalent) with 1-inch margins
- Include page numbers and labels for all tables and figures (if any)
- Cite all sources using APA style
- Write in an analytical style using clear, concise and cogent text
- Carefully edit your writing so the text is free of typos and usage errors.
- Label all files: lastname_assignmentname.doc (i.e., Bahng_positionmemo.docx)
- Backup your assignment to cloud storage (Google Drive is provided for use to all USC students)

Additional resources on APA references and citations can be found on:

- The APA website provides a range of learning resources: <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx>
- Purdue's OWL also provides a helpful guide: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

Additional help with writing can be found in:

- W. Strunk Jr and EB White. The Elements of Style, 4th ed. Longman Pub, 2000.
- Style Manual for Political Science: <http://www.apsanet.org/media/PDFs/Publications/APSASStyleManual2006.pdf>
- Purdue Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/4/16/>
- Grammarly – <https://www.grammarly.com>

Students who need help with writing are strongly encouraged to consult with the course professor, teaching assistant, and/or visit the USC Writing Center. Please visit them online for resources and appointments: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>.

Equity and Diversity

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departement/departement-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on

Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

COURSE OUTLINE

Module		Topic
Part I: Introduction to Policy & Planning Analysis	1a	Course Introduction
	1b	Competitive Markets
Part II: Justification for Policy – Efficiency & Equity	2ab	Efficiency and Government Intervention Market Power
	3ab	Externalities Public Goods
	4ab	Asymmetric Information Equity and Government Redistribution
	5a	Descriptive Statistics
Part III: Data Analysis & Analytical Tools	6ab	In-Class Lab #1 Guest Speaker: Lisa Kim (CA Department of Justice)
	7ab	Inferential Statistics Criterion-Alternative Matrix
	8ab	Probability and Decision Matrix Indexes
	9ab	In-Class Lab #2 Projection and Prediction
	11a	Time Value of Money (Discounting)
	11b	Overview of Cost-Benefit Analysis
Part IV: Cost-Benefit Analysis	12ab	Research Design & Communication Predicting Policy Impact & Data Visualizaiton
	13ab	Valuation of Policy Impacts Cost-Effectiveness Analysis and Distributional Considerations
	14b	Sensitivity Analysis
	15ab	Current Policy Applications Review for Final Exam
	FINAL	

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE		ASSN DUE
Part I: Introduction to Policy & Planning Analysis		
1/19	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1A – Course Introduction</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of course requirements & assignments • Policy example • Opportunity costs, explicit costs, implicit costs <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review course syllabus and post an introduction on Discussion Board A • Review readings for Part I • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Tues, Jan 19 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
Part II: Justification for Policy – Efficiency & Equity		
1/21	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1B – Competitive Markets</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a market? • Perfect Competition • Supply & Demand • Market Equilibrium <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part II • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Thurs, Jan 21 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
1/26	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 2A – Efficiency and Government Intervention</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive Markets • Government Intervention & Tools • Taxes & Subsidies <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part II • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Tues, Jan 26 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	

1/28	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 2B – Market Power</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Failures • Monopolies & Social Costs • Government Regulation • Discussion Facilitation #1 & Group Discussion Board #1 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part II • Review instructional media for session • Work on Problem Set #1 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Jan 28 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #1 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with professor by Tues</p>
2/2	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3A – Externalities</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of Externalities • Inefficiency and Externalities • Public Sector Solutions <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part II • Review instructional media for session • Work on Problem Set #1 <p>Live Session – Tues, Feb 2 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Problem Set #1 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
2/4	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3B – Public Goods</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification of Goods • Public Goods and Common Property • Challenges for Efficiency • Discussion Facilitation #2 & Group Discussion Board #2 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part II • Review instructional media for session • Work on Case Assignment #1 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Feb 4 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #2 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with professor by Tues</p>
2/9	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 4A –Asymmetric Information</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Agent Theory 	<p>Case Assignment #1</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asymmetric Information Adverse Selection and Moral Hazard Introduce Midterm #1 Instructions <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part II Review instructional media for session Work on Case Assignment #1 <p>Live Session – Tues, Feb 9 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p><i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
2/11	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 4B – Equity and Government Redistribution</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity and Government Intervention Measures of Inequality Labor Markets Discussion Facilitation #3 & Group Discussion Board #3 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part II Review instructional media for session Work on Case Assignment #2 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Feb 11 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #3 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with profession by Tues</p>
Part III: Data Analysis & Analytical Tools		
2/16	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5A –Descriptive Statistics</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive Statistics and Central Tendency Population and Sample <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part III Review instructional media for session Work on Case Assignment #2 <p>Live Session – Tues, Feb 16 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Case Assignment #2 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
2/18	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5B – Midterm #1</p> <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part II Review for Midterm #1 (Covers Session 1a to 4a) <p>No Live Session</p>	<p>Midterm #1 DUE at 10am on Blackboard</p>

2/23	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 6A – In-Class Lab #1</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Lab #1 in class <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III • Review instructional media for session • Install Excel on computer to use during class <p>Live Session – Tues, Feb 23 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
2/25	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 6B – Guest Speaker</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speaker: Lisa Kim (Deputy Attorney General at the CA Department of Justice) – <i>*please note there will be no recording for this class session, per request.</i> • Case Study: Consumer Protection and Dark Patterns • Group Discussion Board #4 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Guest Speaker in Blackboard • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Thurs, Feb 25 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
3/2	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 7A – Inferential Statistics</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence Intervals • Sampling • Hypothesis Testing <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Tues, Mar 2 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
3/4	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 7B – Criterion-Alternative Matrix</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and Goals • Guidelines for Construction • Ordinal Rankings <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #2 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Mar 4 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
3/9	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 8A – Probability and Decision Analysis</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected Value and Uncertainty Risk Decision Trees <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part III Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #2 <p>Live Session – Tues, Mar 9 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Problem Set #2 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
3/11	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 8B – Indexes</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Concepts and Uses Examples Introduce Midterm #2 Instructions <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part III Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #3 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Mar 11 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
3/16	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 9A – In-Class Lab #2</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Lab #2 in class <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part III Review instructional media for session Install Excel on computer to use during class Work on Problem Set #3 <p>Live Session – Tues, Mar 16 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Problem Set #3 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>

3/18	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 9B – Projection and Prediction</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linear Projection • Non-Linear Projection • Excel Practices • Discussion Facilitation #5 & Group Discussion Board #5 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Thurs, Mar 18 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #5 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with professor by Tues</p>
3/23	<p>Session 10A – NO CLASS (USC Personal Wellness Day)</p>	
3/25	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 10B – Midterm #2</p> <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III • Review for Midterm #2 (Covers Session 4b to 8b) <p>No Live Session</p>	<p>Midterm #2 DUE at 10am on Blackboard</p>
3/30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 11A – Time Value of Money (Discounting)</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and Future Value • Net Present Value (NPV) • Alternatives to NPV <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part III • Review instructional media for session • Work on Problem Set #4 <p>Live Session – Tues, Mar 30 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
Part IV: Cost-Benefit Analysis		
4/1	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 11B – Overview of Cost-Benefit Analysis</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual Motivation and Evaluation Criteria • Challenges for Effective Analysis • Overview of Basic Process 	<p>Problem Set #4 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>

	<p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part IV Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #4 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Apr 1 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
4/6	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 12A – Research Design and Communication</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence and Policy Evaluation Steps in Research Design Policy Communication Discussion Facilitation #6 & Group Discussion Board #6 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part IV Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #5 <p>Live Session – Tues, Apr 6 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #6 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with professor by Sun</p>
4/8	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 12B – Predicting Policy Impacts and Data Visualization</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past Events as Basis for Prediction Evaluation of Interventions Data Visualization <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part IV Review instructional media for session Work on Problem Set #5 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Apr 8 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Problem Set #5 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
4/13	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 13A – Valuation of Policy Impacts</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuation Using Market Data Valuation in Absence of Market Data <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part IV Review instructional media for session 	

	Live Session – Tues, Apr 13 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)	
4/8	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 13B – Cost-Effectiveness Analysis</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and Comparison of CBA • Uses and Limitations <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part IV • Review instructional media for session • Work on Problem Set #6 <p>Live Session – Thurs, Apr 8 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
4/20	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 14A – Sensitivity Analysis</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition, Motivation, and Concepts • Types of Sensitivity Analysis • Excel Practices <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Part IV • Review instructional media for session • Install Excel on computer to use during class • Work on Problem Set #6 <p>Live Session – Tues, Apr 20 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Problem Set #6 <i>Due before class:</i> One per group, up to 3 students</p>
4/22	Session 14B – NO CLASS (USC Personal Wellness Day)	
4/27	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 15A – Current Policy Applications</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Facilitation & Group Discussion Board #7 (in-class, one post per group, due end of the day Sun) <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings for Current Policy Applications • Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Tues, Apr 27 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	<p>Discussion Facilitation #7 <i>Due in-class:</i> Group should consult with professor by Sun</p>
4/29	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 15B – Review for Final Exam</p> <p><u>TOPICS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition, Motivation, and Concepts 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of Sensitivity Analysis Excel Practices <p><u>PREP WORK:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review readings for Part IV Review instructional media for session <p>Live Session – Tues, Apr 20 at 8am (See Blackboard for Zoom link)</p>	
5/12	<p>Final Exam</p> <p>No Live Session</p>	<p>Final Exam DUE at 10am on Blackboard</p>

Readings by Topic

Chapters are frequently split across classes; Wheelan’s chapter introductions will be most useful if read the first time that the corresponding chapter is mentioned (though you may also find them worth revisiting after the last reading from the chapter, at which point you should also read the Conclusion and For Discussion sections). *Suggested economics review readings from Mankiw are in italics.* **Additional short articles list may be updated over the course of the semester and will be reflected and attached in your Blackboard Weekly Folders.**

Part I: Introduction to Policy and Planning Analysis

Course Introduction

Wheelan: chapters 1-2

Bardach: “Introduction”

Mankiw: chapters 1 (Ten Principles of Economics) and 2 (Thinking Like an Economist; including Appendix – Graphing: A Brief Review)

Uncommon Sense: Economic Insights, From Marriage to Terrorism, Gary S. Becker and Richard A. Posner, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010, pages 4-8.

“The Costs of America’s Post-9/11 Overseas Military Operations,” T.J. McCarthy, in C. Castro & E. Weiss (Eds.), *American Military Life in the 21st Century: Social, Cultural, and Economic Issues and Trends*, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, November 2018.

Part II: Justification for Policy – Efficiency and Equity

Competitive Markets

Wheelan: chapters 3.1-3.2, 7.1-7.3

Mankiw: chapter 4 (The Market Forces of Supply and Demand)

Efficiency and Government Intervention

Wheelan: chapters 5.3.1-5.3.2, 8.1.1-8.1.2, 8.3

Bardach: “Things Governments Do” (in Appendix)

Mankiw: chapters 6 (Supply, Demand, and Government Policies) and 7 (Consumers, Producers, and the Efficiency of Markets)

- “Homes in New York: Gimme Shelter,” *The Economist*, May 10, 2014
- “No, Rent Control Doesn’t Always Reduce the Supply of Housing,” Gary Painter, *Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 2018
- “Corporate Social Responsibility: Friedman’s View,” Thomas S. Coleman, Becker Friedman Institute for Research in Economics, August 16, 2013

Market Power

- Wheelan: chapter 8.1.3
- Bardach: “Step One: Define the Problem” (in Part I)
- Mankiw: chapter 15 (Monopoly)*
- “Monopoly’s New Era,” Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Project Syndicate*, May 13, 2016
- “No More Mylan Monopolies,” Geoffrey F. Joyce and Neeraj Sood, *U.S. News & World Report*, August 30, 2016
- “Netflix Just Opened the Door to Paying ISPs More Access Fees,” Justin Bachman, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, March 21, 2014
- “Profit and the Public Good: Companies That Merely Compete and Prosper Make Society Better Off” (up to beginning of “Social prices” section; remainder assigned to next class), *The Economist*, January 20, 2005

Externalities

- Wheelan: chapters 4.1, 8.1.4
- Mankiw: chapter 10 (Externalities)*
- “Waist Banned: Does a Tax on Junk Food Make Sense?” *The Economist*, July 30, 2009
- “Profit and the Public Good: Companies That Merely Compete and Prosper Make Society Better Off” (from beginning of “Social prices” section), *The Economist*, January 20, 2005

Public Goods

- Wheelan: chapters 4.4-4.5, 8.1.5
- Mankiw: chapter 11 (Public Goods and Common Resources)*
- “Why Government Should Spend More on Public Goods,” Tim Worstall, *Forbes*, May 5, 2013
- “Commons Sense: Why it Still Pays to Study Medieval English Landholding and Sahelian Nomadism,” *The Economist*, July 31, 2008

Asymmetric Information

- Wheelan: chapter 3.3-3.5
- Mankiw: chapter 22 (Frontiers in Microeconomics)*
- “Paying Teachers More,” *The Economist*, August 24, 2000
- “The Lemon Dilemma,” *The Economist*, October 11, 2001

Equity and Government Redistribution

- Wheelan: chapters 5, 8.2.1
- “Defining Poverty: Measure by Measure,” *The Economist*, January 22, 2011
- “More Millionaires than Australians,” *The Economist*, January 22, 2011
- “Inequality: The Rich and the Rest,” *The Economist*, January 22, 2011
- “The Rise and Rise of the Cognitive Elite,” *The Economist*, January 22, 2011
- “Defending the One Percent,” N. Gregory Mankiw, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 27(3), Summer 2013, 21-34
- “Correspondence: The One Percent,” Robert Solow and N. Gregory Mankiw, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(1), Winter 2014, 243-245

“How a New Guard of Economists Wants Us to Think More About Inequality,” Jared Bernstein, *Vox*, September 13, 2019

“The Rich, the Poor, and Bulgaria,” *The Economist*, December 16, 2010

Part III: Data Analysis and Analytical Tools

Descriptive Statistics

Wheelan: chapter 9.1, 9.3

Inferential Statistics

Wheelan: chapter 10 (excluding 10.4)

Criterion-Alternative Matrix

Bardach: “Step Three: Construct the Alternatives” and “Step Four: Select the Criteria” (in Part I)

Probability and Decision Analysis

Wheelan: Chapters 9.2, 10.4

Indexes

Wheelan: chapter 5.1.2

“The Economist Valuables Index,” *The Economist*, August 17, 2013

“Big Mac Index: Bun Fight,” *The Economist*, October 15, 2010

Projection and Prediction

Bardach: “Step Five: Project the Outcomes” (in Part I)

Time Value of Money (Discounting)

Wheelan: chapter 9.4, 12.5

“Is It Worth It? What Economists Have to Say About Mitigating Climate Change,” *The Economist*, December 3, 2009

Part IV: Cost-Benefit Analysis

Overview of Cost-Benefit Analysis

Wheelan: chapter 12.1-12.2

Bardach: “Step Six: Confront the Trade-Offs” and “Step Seven: Decide!” (in Part I)

“Why Doing a Cost-Benefit Analysis Is Harder Than It Looks,” *The Economist*, April 23, 2014

“The Stunning Triumph of Cost-Benefit Analysis,” Cass Sunstein, *Bloomberg*, September 2012

Research Design and Communication

Wheelan: chapter 13 (excluding 13.3.5-13.3.7)

Bardach: “Step Two: Assemble Some Evidence” and “Assembling Evidence” (in Part I)

“Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing Demonstration Program: Final Impacts Evaluation,” Raphael Bostic, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *PD&R Edge*, November 3, 2011

“Unintended Consequences,” Stephen J. Dubner and Steven D. Levitt, *The New York Times*, January 20, 2008

Schwabish, J. (2020). *Elevate The Debate : A Multilayered Approach to Communicating Your Research* (1st edition). Wiley: *chapter 1* “Why Research Needs a Big Audience” and *chapter 3* “An Introduction to Visualizing Your Research” ([Available Online](#))

Predicting Policy Impacts and Data Visualization

Wheelan: chapter 13.3.5-13.3.7

Bardach: “Smart (Best) Practices Research” (Part IV)

Cairo, A. (2019). *How Charts Lie : Getting Smarter About Visual Information* (First edition.). W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. *Introduction* “How Charts Lie”

Akwersa, G. (2010). The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics The Dos and Don'ts of Presenting Data, Facts, and Figures. *Information Design Journal*, 18(2), 178–179. ([Available Online](#))

Valuation of Policy Impacts

Wheelan: chapter 12.3-12.4

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis and Distributional Considerations

Wheelan: chapters 5.4, 8.2.1, 12.7

“The Price of Prudence,” *The Economist*, January 22, 2004

“AIDS in India: The Cost of Living,” *The Economist*, June 15, 2013

“Cost-Effectiveness of Watchful Waiting in Acute Otitis Media,” Di Sun, T.J. McCarthy and Danica B. Liberman, *Pediatrics*, 139(4), April 2017, e20163086. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2016-3086

Sensitivity Analysis

Wheelan: chapter 12.6

Bardach: “Specimen of a Real-World Policy Analysis” (in Appendix in 4th and 5th editions only)

“A Speck in the Sea,” Paul Tough, *The New York Times*, January 2, 2014

Review for final exam

Wheelan: chapter 15

Appendix: Activating and Using Your USC Zoom Account

Question 1: How can I activate my Zoom account? (For New Users - All USC students have Zoom access)

1. Activate your Zoom Account: Visit <https://usc.zoom.us>
2. Login with your USC email and password
3. Download and install “[Zoom Client for Meetings](#)”
4. Launch the Zoom software and choose “Sign In with SSO”
5. Enter your @usc.edu email address and password
6. Click “Launch Zoom”

Question 2: How can I join our Class Zoom Session or meet with you for virtual office hours?

1. Log into Zoom at <https://usc.zoom.us> with your USC credentials.
2. Either click on the URL provided in Blackboard or click “Join Meeting” and enter the Meeting ID and password.

Question 3: How do I enable a virtual background?

Virtual backgrounds can help hide distracting environments or add character to your Zoom meeting. To enable a virtual background, read <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background>

Question 4: How do I share my screen during a Zoom meeting or live session?

During our class live sessions, students will often be asked to share their work by sharing their computer screens on Zoom with the rest of the group or class. To learn how to share your screen, read <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/201740106-Screen-Sharing>

Question 5: How can I participate in the Zoom meeting live session?

- Most of you will be muted by default when you enter the room. See the yellow graphic below on how to un-mute and mute yourself (Unmute Icon).
- Most of you will also have your webcam turned off by default when you enter the meeting. Please make your video viewable, if possible. See yellow graphic below (Start Video Icon).
- At times, I may ask the class a general question and ask that students respond in their Chat box. See yellow graphic below on how to access the Chat box (Chat Icon).
- Other times, you may have a question you would like to ask or you may want to verbally respond to my question. To raise your hand in class, you will need to find the “Raise Hand” button in the Participants window. See red graphic below on how to access the Participants window and Raise Hand feature.

