

**Policy Papers (4 @ 30 points each)**

You must complete a Policy Paper on each topic. You are to pretend you are working for a legislative lobbying organization. In each Policy Paper you will attempt to persuade a Congress person to vote for or fund your assigned side of the topic. One goal of this assignment is to have you summarize information in a concise manner. Students sometimes assume that more information is better. Concise summary is an important skill, especially when attempting to convince someone of a particular point-of-view.

You will be ASSIGNED to write from either a Pro or Con side of the topic. You CANNOT pick which side you prefer or personally support. The purpose of this assignment is to force you to advocate for a perspective regardless of your own personal opinion.

What are public health policies? They are policies that protect the health of the public and guide the practice of public health. Public health policies can take many forms:

- Legislative action at the local, state, and federal levels. These can include codes, regulations, and laws.
  - Example: You are asked to develop a policy opposing reducing the drinking age to 18. Your policy recommendation could be as follows:
    - *In affiliation with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), we recommend keeping the minimum legal drinking age at 21 with a focus on curtailing underage drinking. We would like to see an increase in the alcohol tax by two percent in each state. The funding will assist local law enforcement in enforcing stricter penalties to providers of alcohol towards minors. In addition, a part of the funding will be aimed in establishing an alcohol education mandated class in all public high schools; a class that each student must pass in order to graduate. By combining better enforcement and greater knowledge of alcohol, this policy will ensure less underage drinking, lower mortality and morbidity due to drunk driving, and healthier outcomes for our youth.*
    - Notice that this example gives a policy and the reasoning behind it. **When developing a policy think about the level of institution (local, state, or federal level), who will pass the law, what does the law entail, and what is the rationale behind this law.**
- Strategic planning for actions that improve health. This is an outline or series of objectives that yield results. This can include educational campaigns or monitoring strategies.
  - Example: You are asked to develop a policy to decrease teenage tobacco use.
    - *I advocate for federal funding of a teen anti-smoking campaign to reduce youth smoking initiation. This campaign will be funded through federal tax dollars. Each state will be allocated funds to develop a tailored program targeting teenage tobacco use. This program will help decrease the initiation of tobacco use through social media campaigns with teenager support and buy-in.*
    - Notice that this example describes an educational campaign. **It describes the problem, how the program will be funded, and who will provide the information.**

**Technical Requirements for Policy Papers:**

- 400-600 words, essay format
- Double-spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins
- Submit to the correct link in Assignments. This uploads your paper to Safe Assignment, a plagiarism detection device. See plagiarism information under Institutional Policies.

- Correct grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.
- Use peer-reviewed journal references. All peer-reviewed articles are reviewed by experts in the article topic. These reviewers ensure accuracy and quality of information provided. Peer-reviewed journals are considered the gold standard of academic research. Some examples of peer-reviewed journals are: American Journal of Public Health and New England Journal of Medicine. Magazines, news websites, and newspapers are **not** examples of peer-reviewed content.

Format for Policy Papers:

Paragraph 1: Organization, Goal/Purpose/Mission, Pro or Con stance

- Organization - You must research an existing organization that advocates for your assigned side of the topic. Pretend you are representing this organization.
- Goal/Purpose/Mission – Explain the goal, purpose or mission of this organization
- Pro or Con - state whether your argument is Pro or Con (as stated above you CANNOT pick, see blackboard for assignment to Pro or Con side)

Paragraph 2: Opposite side of the argument

- Briefly summarize the opposite side of the argument. This needs to be in your own words. You CANNOT quote points from Procon.org or any other source. See Plagiarism Warning within syllabus.
- Your summary should include between 3 and 4 main ideas.
- Include at least 2 references from an academic, peer-reviewed journal. Provide an in text citation for each reference (see APA Style Citation Guide).
  - You may use sources of information other than academic journals in ADDITION to academic journals, but not in place of them.

Paragraph 3 and 4: Your assigned side of the argument

- Briefly, but persuasively, summarize your assigned side of the argument. This needs to be in your own words. You CANNOT quote points from Procon.org or any other source. See Plagiarism Warning within syllabus.
- Your summary should include between 4 and 5 main ideas.
- Include at least 3 references from academic, peer-reviewed journals. These must be different from your sources in paragraph 2. Provide an in text citation for each reference (see APA Style Citation Guide).
  - You may use sources of information other than academic journals in ADDITION to academic journals, but not in place of them.

Paragraph 5: Policy recommendations

- Based on your argument and the organization of your choice, make a recommendation for public health policy. You can be creative and develop your own policy recommendation. The policy should be in alignment, though, with the mission and values of your selected organization (from the first paragraph).
  - Example: Planned Parenthood may be in favor of a policy requiring young girls to be vaccinated against HPV in an effort to protect women and men against developing cervical cancer.
  - Example: Planned Parenthood would not be in favor of abortion restrictions.
- Please refer to the description of a policy (above) for a complete reflection of what your policy should entail.

Reference Page containing APA Style Citations

- Provide a full citation for each source of information you cited in your paper.
- Adhere to APA style STRICTLY! See APA Style Citation Guide in blackboard. You are given an entire assignment to practice citing sources in correct APA style, so your citations are expected to be flawless

after reading the comments on your APA practice paper.

- The reference page should begin on a new page and have the heading titled: References, centered on the page.

#### Policy Paper Grading Point Structure (30 pts.)

Students are expected to learn from their mistakes and improve their work throughout the semester. Read grade explanations in Blackboard carefully to prevent future mistakes. **AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES, MORE POINTS WILL BE REMOVED FOR FAILURE TO CORRECT PREVIOUS MISTAKES AND MEET STATED REQUIREMENTS. AFTER THE SAME MISTAKE IS MADE EACH TIME, THE NUMBER OF POINTS OFF ON ANY SECTION WILL DOUBLE.** For example, if on the first policy paper you lost 2 points for incorrect use of APA style and your APA style does not improve for the second policy paper, you will lose 4 points the second time around.

5 points – Technical requirements (excluding grammar and APA)

- 0 points – Included 2 or more technical requirement errors
- 3 points – Included 1 technical requirement error
- 5 points – Adhered to all technical requirements

5 points – Correct grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.

- 0 points – 5 or more grammar mistakes
- 3 points – 3-4 grammar mistakes
- 5 points – 2 or fewer grammar mistakes

5 points - APA style

- 0 points – No use of APA referencing style
- 3 points – APA used incorrectly **OR** did not use references from academic, peer-reviewed journals
- 5 points - APA style used correctly **AND** sources are from peer-reviewed journals

5 points –Organization: Paragraph 1

- 0 points – Incomplete description of organization
- 5 points – Chose an organization; included goal, purpose, or mission **AND** stated whether argument is pro or con

5 points – Arguments: Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4

- 0 points – Missing either the opposite side **OR** your assigned side of the argument **OR** incorrect number of main ideas used to summarize **OR** incorrect number of references used **OR** included direct quotes
- 5 points – Both the opposite side (paragraph 2) and your assigned side of the argument summarized (paragraphs 3 & 4), correct number of main ideas used to summarize, correct number of references used, and no direct quotes

5 points – Policy: Paragraph 5

- 0 points – Missing policy or simply reiterated assigned stance
- 3 points – Incomplete policy **OR** policy is not in alignment with assigned stance/chosen organization
- 5 points – Created a complete policy that is in alignment with **BOTH** assigned stance and chosen organization. Policy is substantial (explains what it is, how it will be implemented and achieved, and contains sufficient detail)