

One Nation, Under Money: Two goals for us...

- Put the Constitution up against a second evaluation criterion;
 - Is the Constitution sufficiently dynamic?
 - Podcast considers the 1d version of this via the commerce clause;
 - Strategy: compare historical changes in Constitution to pace of change in society;
- Explore one of the three arenas of policymaking – the judiciary;
 - Supreme court decisions make policy in two ways:
 - They change statutory law as it stands on the ground;
 - They reshape the policy for making policies;
 - They use the same machinery we will: problem statements (need to resolve multiple interpretations) and evaluation criteria (consistency with social contract, downstream effects);
- Like amendments, Supreme Court decisions have the effect of changing the Constitution – full exploration of rate of change must count both.

Policy Memo Structure

TO: Political Science 272 Students, Fall Term 2021

FROM: Jeremy Kedziora

DATE: 22 September, 2021

RE: Policy Memo Structure

- Executive Summary;
- Background Summary;
- Issue Analysis;
- Policy Options;
- Recommendation;
- Conclusion.

Executive Summary

- State the problem, preview the organization of your memo, summarize the recommendation;
- Practice brevity, brevity, brevity;
- Can be done in 3–4 sentences.

Background Summary

- Provide a brief history, context, and magnitude of the problem;
- Rubric:
 - Clearly state the problem (2 pts);
 - Provide a brief history, context of problem, and magnitude of problem (1 pts);
 - Establish credibility of research via robust sourcing (1 pt).

Issue Analysis

- Analyze the problem and establish its causes:
 - How did it come about?
 - Why is it important to solve?
 - Who are the stakeholders, and what positions have they taken?
 - What are the likely consequences of maintaining the status quo and of making change?
- If useful, use charts, tables, bullet points – whatever concisely lays out how the problem is caused etc.;
- Rubric:
 - Establish what causes the problem (2 pts);
 - Consequences of maintaining the status quo (1 pt);
 - Stakeholder analysis (1 pt);

Policy Options

- Establish evaluation criteria and present the top policy options:
 - Include concise discussion of pros and cons for each;
 - No straw people – the options not recommended should be the next best;
- If useful, use charts, tables, bullet points – whatever conveys viable options with an assessment of each;
- Rubric:
 - Establish evaluation criteria (2 pts);
 - Clearly list two to three options (2 pts);
 - Articulate pros and cons for each option (1 pt);
 - Detail implementation plans (1 pt);
 - Establish policymaker authority to take action (1 pt);

Recommendation

- Argue for the option that you believe presents the best strategy.
 - Discuss strategy of implementation, e.g. are you proposing a multi-step strategy/solution?
 - Highlight potential unknowns or contingencies that might alter the recommendation;
- This is the heart of your memo!
- Rubric:
 - Clearly recommend exactly one option off the list of options (2 pts);
 - Link option pro/cons to basis for analysis/decision criteria (2 pts);
 - Identify next steps to ensure effectiveness of recommended policy (1 pt);

Conclusion

- Should not simply rehash of what you've written:
 - Summarize your recommendation (one sentence);
 - Leave your audience with an impetus to act on the problem by adopting your strategy;
- This is your only opportunity for impassioned rhetoric!
- Rubric:
 - Meet page limit and organizational structure (2 pts);
 - Consistent citations (2 pts);
 - Grammar/writing clarity (1 pt);

- Peer review = evaluation of work by people with similar levels of expertise as those who produced the work;
 - Very old – examples from 9th and 17th centuries;
 - Flawed – low sample size, closed mindedness, high outcome variance;
- For us, peer reviewed source = published at an academic journal or by a university press;
- Policy memos are NOT peer reviewed;
- Government research is 'sort of' peer reviewed;
- Published in scientific journal > government research > everything else.