

USC Price

Sol Price School of Public Policy

PPD 342: *Crime and Public Policy*

Section 51118

Units: 4

Fall 2022, Tuesdays, 6:00 – 9:20 p.m. PST

Location: Lewis Hall (RGL) 100

Ralph and Goldy Lewis Hall is the University Park Campus home of the USC Price School of Public Policy

Instructor: Candice Cobarrubias (she/her)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:00pm to 5:30pm or by appointment. Can be held virtually.

Contact Info: ccobarru@usc.edu

Course Description

This course will seek to develop a student's knowledge on criminal justice, the law and how they apply into the framework of public policy. The course will explore the public policy making process (setting agendas, formulating alternatives, and implementation of policies in a crime specific focus). The intent of the course will seek to intermingle contemporary examples with the intellectual foundation of policy analysis and public policy creation.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe how scientific research guides policy and evaluate criminal justice policies with established methodologies.
2. Evaluate policy implementation strategies which incorporate evaluative models and anticipate potential policy reform.
3. Prepare a criminal justice policy brief, which will include policy recommendations.

Course Focus and Orientation

Public Policy is a long-standing mechanism for solving a myriad of societal problems and is accomplished in a variety of contexts, cultural, social, economic, demographic, constitutional, legal and intergovernmental. Public policy has been defined as "whatever governments choose to do or not to do." There are three major aspects to public policymaking: public policy agenda-setting, formulation of public policy alternatives and implementation of public policy. There are several policy tools available, including regulation, taxation, governmental operations, partnerships, contracting, inspection and testing, and legal sanctions. Legal sanctions are to be the primary focus of this course.

Criminology is the scientific study of making the laws, violation of the law, and the reaction to each. When a crime has been committed and entities such as law enforcement, social services and court services are in play, the criminal justice system has been set in motion. The criminal justice system is a societal

response to crime and involves three major activities: law enforcement, the judicial process, and corrections.

What lies underneath the system is the intersection of criminology and public policy. The focus of society has remained steadfast on the law enforcement mechanism without further consideration into the public policy method that created the system in the first place. This will be the focus of PPD 342.

The course will attempt to show how the two disciplines share a highly co-dependent relationship with one another and the greatness of their impact. We will deal with the etiology of crime and what each branch of government (local, state, federal) can do, choose to do, and choose not to do. Within the criminal justice forum, there have been significant public policy issues which have caused major distress in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Issues such as the appropriateness and effectiveness of the death penalty; gun control; public health mandates; bail reform and the legalization of drugs and narcotics.

Most of those who are involved in the policy making process begin their journey by trying to find the most immediate and available solution to the problem they are tasked to resolve. The matters at hand are often much more complex than what an immediate resolution can provide. They usually require an in-depth examination into cause and effect. However, time constraints and demands placed by voters, constituencies and other government entities do not allow for a true analysis to occur. In this course, time is on the side of the student, and they will have an opportunity to review, discuss and evaluate cultural, historical, political, and economic factors to determine what is truly possible and probable.

Problems generated from public policy or by public policy are not stagnant. They evolve based on the current socio/political environments. It is not a one solution fits all metric for public policy issues. The perception of a solution is more often than not more important than its efficacy. Policy makers understand they have only a small window of time in which to assess and develop a long-term strategy. The path of least resistance leads them to supporting the perception of a successful resolution rather than an effective one. In knowing this, is not difficult to grasp why outcomes have not had a good track record.

Regardless of the type of policy created, alternative solutions will be brought to light. There will always be another way, a more successful way, depending on the author but these alternative measures deserve to be acknowledged and if necessary, pushed to the front of the line. How they get there has been more about the power of persuasion and political savvy than about it being a “good” solution.

Policy analysis continues to have the following characteristics: (1) it seeks knowledge about the causes and effects of government policy; (2) it seeks to formulate problems about how something should and could be done; (3) it seeks to give advice to those in authority that are the decision makers; and (4) it is both objectively diagnostic and subjectively judgmental.

Problem solving has the following characteristics: (1) problems are formulated within a framework of available solutions; (2) effectiveness is the primary goal of the process; (3) basic causes of problems are usually beyond the ability of a legislator to change and, (4) persuasion rather than analysis often determines which decrees get implemented.

Crime and Public Policy will take these two subjects, marry them, and demonstrate how difficult and incredibly vital they are to the way in which we live and act.

Course Goals

The purpose of this course is for the student to examine criminal issues within the United States judicial system and how they interconnect with the public policy making process. Upon the completion of this course, the student will understand:

- a. a fundamental basis for justice and law.
- b. the American societal response through public policy and its criminal justice system to the challenge of crime in a free society.
- c. the relationship between public policy, crime and the criminal justice system.
- d. the application of the scientific method to the study of (1) public policy, (2) crime and the criminal justice system; and,
- e. the discrepancies which exist between the American explanations of crime and criminality and the public policy responses to this phenomenon

Overall, the student will be able to analyze the public policy-making process in its application to crime and criminal justice and, to some degree, evaluate the effectiveness of the judicial system and its response to policy issues in the United States.

Required Materials

Larry J. Siegel, *Criminology 13th Edition* (Belmont: West/Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2016, 2018)
[hereinafter Siegel]

THE SIEGEL BOOK IS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE IN THE USC BOOKSTORE AND ONLINE

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC.

Course Requirements

Attendance

This course will be in person for a majority of the semester. There may be an online session dependent on guest speaker availability but, student attendance is required.

The students are expected to be on time and remain until the completion of the class; unauthorized early departure or late arrivals will constitute in a grade reduction. Students are expected and required to participate in classroom sessions. Participation allows for students to apply the content gleaned from the course and engage in healthy discussion with their peers and faculty. Benefits of participation include interacting with resident experts, gaining an understanding of peer perspectives, building community, and strengthening communication abilities.

Authorized absences include those involving participation in preapproved University activities, religious holidays, and medical contingencies. Students are responsible for obtaining the information covered during their absence from class, whether authorized or not.

Participation Grading

Active Participation	Moderate Participation	Low Participation
Exhibits evidence of having completed all assignments and activities according to guidelines that were assigned	Attempts to participate and has completed most assignments and activities	Exhibits lack of preparation and noncompletion of required assignments
Initiates discussion and supports points using page specific references to readings or other materials	Supports points during discussion but uses general references to readings and other materials	Rarely initiates discussion and is not able to reference required readings or other materials
Furtheres the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; comments and questions reflect having thought deeply about the material	Furtheres the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; general or limited references to course materials	Comments do not further the discussion and do not exhibit careful reflection on the material

Written Work

Three papers, which are described in Annex A, will be due throughout the semester. The papers will be in Word format as well as PDF format. They will be transmitted via email attachment to the professor no later than 9 p.m. (PST) on the due date.

Papers submitted late will not be accepted absent exigent circumstances -- verifiable extreme medical contingencies (e.g., student in hospital for operation). Papers must be submitted in Word as well as in PDF format. The paper must be double-spaced with 1" margins. No other media will be accepted.

Examinations

Two in-class examinations will be scheduled. The examinations will be drawn from the required readings, faculty lectures, classroom discussions, and issued papers. The examinations will be comprehensive from the beginning of the course to the point of examination and include multiple choice as well as essay questions. Students will write in blue or black ink and bring bluebooks for the examination.

Student Grading and Evaluation

Grade requirements serve two purposes:

- a. to provide the student and instructor with a means to assess achievements of the course goals; and,
- b. to serve as a forum of feedback on the student's performance.

Judgment of student performance will be based solely on the student's ability to achieve pre-determined standards, specifically the course goals and performance objectives which will be defined during the first day of class. Student work will be judged on meeting those standards, and not by way of comparison with other students. There will be no grading "curve" for this class. You will be graded based on your written assignments, participation, and examinations. Individual performance alone will determine the final grade.

The course requirements and the weighing of the graded requirements are as follows:

Participation	10%
Written Assignments	40%
• Problem Statement Paragraph (5%)	
• Pathway Paper (10%)	
• Final issue paper (25%)	
Midterm Examination	15%
Final Examination	35%
Total:	100%

There are no push points (extra credit points) for this class. Students are required to attend, be prepared for, and participate in class.

Letter grades for each requirement and the final course grade will be determined using the following criteria:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	92 - 100 %
A-	89 - 91.9%
B+	87 - 88.9%
B	85 - 86.9%
B-	83 - 84.9%
C+	80 - 82.9%
C	77 - 79.9%
C-	73 - 76.9%
D	67 - 72.9%
F	Fewer than 67%

Course Evaluation by Students

Students should share with the instructor suggestions which would improve the quality of the course. These suggestions may be made at any time. The student will also receive a request to complete a formal questionnaire about the course at the end of the semester.

Course Schedule

Week 1: 8/23/22 Syllabus review and Introduction in Criminal Justice system

This week will be dedicated to introducing the course, a syllabus review, and an introduction to the criminal justice system.

Required Reading for Week 2:

- *Siegel Chapter 1 & 2*
- *Understanding prevention policy*
- *Evidence Based Policymaking*
- *S.M.A.R.T Way Management Review*

Week 2: 8/30/22 Crime, Criminal Justice & Criminology

This section will broadly introduce crime, criminal justice, and criminology. This section is designed to be a broad overview of what the subsequent weeks will build upon. We will discuss crime trends, patterns, how they are determined, what is done with that type of information in law enforcement. How is this data used to impact crime in today's environment?

Required Reading for Week 3:

- *Siegel Chapters 3 & 4*
- *Sentencing Project: Deterrence*
- *5 things on Deterrence*

Week 3: 9/6/22 Victims & Victimization/Theories of Crime Causation

We will evaluate the challenges associated with crime victims, the cycle of violence, characteristics of a victim and theories associated with victimology. How do we as a government take care of crime victims?

We will review theories on crime causation. ***To participate you will need to be familiar with the concepts in Chapter 4.***

Required reading for Week 4:

1. *21st Century Policing*
2. *New Perspectives on Policing*
3. *Reimagining Public Safety*

This reading assignment aims to re-imagine public safety. Through a 5-step plan, the authors aim to provide a policy plan for policing in America that prevents harm and leads with truth.

4. *Principles of procedural policing*

Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian mindset to build public trust and legitimacy. Toward that end, police and sheriffs' departments should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices to guide their interactions with the citizens they serve.

5. *Required Listening*

Rand podcast: Policies to improve policing in the US

After the killing of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis and subsequent nationwide protests, the United States is seeing urgent action to reform policing. In this Call with the Experts podcast, RAND researchers who work on policing and community safety issues share their insights.

Week 4: 9/13/22 Guest Speaker: Radhika Patel Jonas, Deputy District Attorney, Radhika is a veteran of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office who is working the Justice System Integrity Division. Her division is responsible for the criminal prosecution of lawyers, police officers and judges. She will be able to provide you with a candid perspective on the role of the District Attorney, the difficulties in trying such cases and her journey from being a criminal prosecutor to where she is today.

We will examine the role of the police and the court system to see what impacts they have on deterrence.

There will also be a healthy dialogue on the role of law enforcement pre and post George Floyd and the incidents leading up to it.

Problem statement is due next week

Problem Statement: This problem statement paper will be used to identify the policy you will be addressing in your final project. To help you present your policy in an efficient and clear manner, it may be helpful to complete the sentence prompt below.

The policy being addressed in this paper is [insert evidence and sources here]. This is important to address because...

Your Problem Statement Paragraph will be used to identify an issue within our community that you believe can be solved by the creation of a public policy. Reflect on what we have talked about in class and see what has moved you the most, what got your heart racing a bit more, what frustrated you, what have you been thinking about that you would like to see a change in? In this assignment, clearly and succinctly state the problem you have chosen as the focus of the paper. Make sure that you have incorporated credible evidence that supports your statement that this is indeed a problem. Make sure you research your problem statement to ensure you have enough outside resources material to support your policy. Policy is not made up of thoughts and opinion, it must be supported by strong articulable fact and data to support your statement. Just because you do not like something does not mean it is not good for the whole. This is about changes made to better your community. Be holistic in your thought process, not myopic. Challenge yourself.

Length: Your paper should be 1 - 2 paragraphs in length (12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced). Points will be deducted for papers that exceed the specified length (see rubric below for more details).

Adapted APA: Please adhere to the APA Style Guidelines for headers, spacing (double spaced), and citations.

Required reading for Week 5:

- [Siegel Ch 5 & 6](#)
- [Conflict Theory & Policy: Black Shootings](#)
Please read this 2016 published article. Pay particular attention to the introduction, the conflict theory, and the policy implications. Does the theory hold true? Does equality exist or are policies biased in favor of the "In Group" or "powerful groups"?
- [Differential Social Organization, Collective Action & Crime](#)
Do politics and laws deter crime or is its collective efficacy and social control?

Week 5: 9/20/22 **Problem Statement Due**/Trait & Social Structure Theory

There will be a very generic conversation on Trait Theories with a deeper dive into theories on Social Structure, Cultural Deviance, and the impacts they have on Public Policy. We will investigate the significance of criminal profiling, personality types and socio-economic factors and how essential are they to one's disposition to commit crime. Theories will be evaluated to discern their applicability to modern day.

Notes:

"Social Control" is the actions and practices of individuals and institutions designed to induce conformity with the norms and rules of society. Social control has formal sanctions and informal sanctions.

Formal sanctions are imposed by a legal system (or authority); such as Laws, Law Enforcement, Court System, and Prisons.

Informal Sanctions are rules and expectations about behavior. They may be unspoken but are generally understood. They usually maintain order and cohesion in society while providing the foundation for formal social control.

Required reading for Week 6:

- [Siegel Ch 7](#)
- [Siegel Chapter 8 \(only these sections\)](#)
 - *Race and Justice*
 - *Alternative Views of Critical Theory: Left Realism, Critical Feminist Theory, Power Control Theory, Peacemaking*
 - *Critical Theory and Public Policy: Concept of Restorative Justice, Reintegrative Shaming, Process of Restoration, Challenge of Restorative Justice*
- [Article on Bail Reform](#)

Week 6: 9/27/22 Socialization Theories, The Court System, Social Conflict & Diversion
We will look at one's life (family, religion, education, and peers) to determine how much they contribute into one's behavior. How does the social bond theory influence one's behavior? What roles do diversion programs and restorative justice play in the court systems? How do the alternative views of social conflict theory influence the way we evaluate criminal behavior?

Week 7: 10/4/22 Mid Term Examination
This will be held in class with more instruction to follow.

Required Reading for week 8:

- [Siegel Ch 9 & 10](#)

Week 8: 10/11/22 Life Course & Interpersonal Violence
We will discuss how certain events in one's life may influence their desire to commit crime as we examine human nature and developmental theories. Focus will be on what causes violence, our view, and values on crime and on those who commit it. Where do we see the subcultures of crime most often?

There will be a robust discussion on violent crimes seen throughout the world. We will cover topics such as rape, homicide, robbery, workplace violence, sexual harassment, mass shootings and aggravated assault on all communities but, the elderly, BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and other underrepresented communities. This class will be dynamic and participatory from start to finish. It will be done in the style of a Fireside Chat. The goal is to create an environment of psychological safety and respect for each other's differentiating points of view and triggers.

Required reading for Week 9:

- [Siegel Ch 14](#)

Week 9: 10/18/22 Guest Speakers: Homeless, Mental Health, Social Work & Policing
We will welcome two speakers who are subject matter experts in this topic. They will provide an in-depth analysis into current best practices, activities, diversion programs and complications surrounding the intersection of these topics.

Reminder: Pathway paper is due Week 10

Week 10: 10/25/22 Remote Writing Period
Pathway paper must be submitted no later than 9pm at today's class session.

You can either write at a place of your choice or come to the classroom. Please make sure you have the materials you need (laptop and a hot spot device if necessary) in order to complete the assignment. You will use this time to compose your Pathway Paper. The paper must be turned into me electronically by 9pm on Wednesday, October 25, 2022.

Guide for writing your paper:

Now that you have stated the problem, provide background into the issue you have chosen. This section should be extensive, but you can be abbreviated in your overview of the pertinent aspects into the problem. What are the important highlights? Use topic statements to begin each paragraph. Support those statements with summaries and paraphrases from key resources to validate your sentences.

In this paper, briefly expand on the literature or credible news articles related to your problem. What is the history of the problem? What has been done in the past to solve the problem? Please do cite previous research and include disagreements and discrepancies in the present literature.

LENGTH: 2-3 pages (12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced).

Required Reading for Week 11:

- [Siegel Ch. 11](#)

Week 11: 11/1/22 Political Crime and Terrorism

Another topic which will generate sentiments and emotions. We will be looking at a variety of political activities that are criminal, may be criminal or may be the new norm.

- ❖ Election Fraud
- ❖ Treason
- ❖ Political Corruption
- ❖ Domestic Terrorism
- ❖ Motivations
- ❖ The rise of militant accelerants and white nationalists
 - Mass shootings
 - Lone Wolf actions
 - Propaganda platforms
- ❖ Social Media responsibility & accountability
- ❖ Law enforcement gathering intelligence by monitoring social media
- ❖ The “See Something/Say Something” campaign
 - Is it working?
 - Why is there a Code of Silence found at mass school shootings?

Required Reading for Week 12:

- [Review Siegel Ch 14](#)

Week 12: 11/8/22 Policing Policies

Police departments' policies should be conducive to building and maintaining law enforcement legitimacy and public trust. By legitimacy, we mean the public's belief that the police have the appropriate authority to enforce the law. We will look at how public policy can help improve public safety and who are the appropriate factions to enforce certain laws and mandates.

- Public Health Orders
 - Vaccination Mandates
 - Masking
 - Medical Freedom
- Does morality have a place in law?
- Who is impacted by social harms?
- What role do moral crusaders have and does this conflict with the separation of Church and State?

Week 13: 11/15/22 Gun Control

We will be having a free style conversation on gun control. We will touch on the following, but more will come forth as the class gets started.

- Why is it so difficult to pass gun control legislation?
- What are the components in play?
- What does the Second Amendment of the Constitution say?
 - What was the history behind that?
 - Can we as a country divided come to a positive outcome?
- How important is this to us as a Country? As a community? As a student? A parent?

Required reading for Week 14:

- [Siegel Ch 15](#)

Week 14: 11/22/22 The Dark Net: Cybercrime and Cyberdeviance

We will cover the more contemporary issues surrounding the internet and crimes committed over the last decade.

- Ransomware
- Cyberbullying
- "The most hated man in the world"
- Distribution of dangerous drugs
- Hacking
- "Tinder Swindler"

Week 15: 11/29/22 Final Paper Due

The final paper must be submitted by 9pm on 11.29.22

Week 16: 12/6/22 Study Day

No class this week to help you prepare for the final examination. I will be available by appointment for any questions you may have

Week 17: 12/13/22 Final Examination

This will be held in class. More instruction will be provided closer to the exam.

Accommodation

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 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. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

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”

<https://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>

Academic Integrity

SCampus, the USC student guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code and information on Academic Integrity. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with and abide by these guidelines, which are found at <https://scampus.usc.edu/>. A summary of behaviors violating University standards can be also found at: <https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740- 9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

<https://equity.usc.edu/>

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

<https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

<http://dsp.usc.edu/>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710 <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101 <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

<http://dps.usc.edu/>

<http://emergency.usc.edu/>

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

Annex A

Written Assignments

There are three written assignments required for this course: a Problem Statement, a Pathway Paper, and a Final Paper. The problem statement and pathway paper are designed to build upon each other and develop into your final paper.

The overall purpose of these written assignments is to succinctly state an issue/problem that needs to be addressed, explain why this is an issue/problem, explore its ramifications if this issue/problem is not addressed, identify collateral issues, propose alternative ways to deal with the issue/problem, and anticipate the consequences of the solution.

Problem Statement (1 Paragraph)

Your Problem Statement Paragraph will be used to identify an issue within our community that you believe can solve with the creation of a public policy. There are several common problems that exist in communities around the nation. These problems can be associated with and the responsibility of the local, state, or federal government. For instance, a local government's response to safety concerns associated with Electronic Scooters in their community, or issues pertaining to criminal history and hiring practices, death penalty policy, or state/federal drug laws. In this assignment, clearly and succinctly state the problem you have chosen as the focus of the paper. Make sure that you have incorporated credible evidence that supports your statement that this is indeed a problem.

Pathway Paper (2 – 3 pages)

Now that you have stated the problem, give the reader a bit of background into this problem. In a literature review paper, this section is extensive. However, for this paper, you want to give an abbreviated overview of relevant aspects of the problem. Think about important highlights of the problem and use synthesis topic statements to begin each paragraph. Then support with summaries and paraphrases from key resources as support for the topic sentences. In this paper, briefly review the literature or credible news articles related to your problem. What is the history of the problem? What has been done in the past to solve the problem? If available, cite previous research and be sure to include disagreements and discrepancies in the extant literature.

Final Paper (5-7 pages)

This paper will build upon your previous two written assignments and provide a summary of the policy recommendation you are posing. The summary must include (but not limited to) an explanation of the importance of the policy, ramifications associated with not addressing the issue, and your recommendation(s) for policy. In this paper you will explain why it is important to solve this problem. Prioritizing the issues / problems a government is going to address can be difficult. People assign varying levels of importance to issues in the community. Solving problems and addressing common problems in the public sector usually affects other problems as well. Think about and articulate the specific ways in which solving this problem might affect the public and conversely, the ramifications associated with not addressing the problem. (Think about its impact on a particular population, on the community, and on society.) Use citations and the research literature to support the need to solve this problem. What are the consequences of not solving this problem?

Finally, provide a solution (policy) to address the problem. Many people can talk about what problems need to be solved; however, very few can provide well thought out solution (policy). Use your research to explain your solution. Make sure you address unintended consequences to your solution.

This paper allows you to practice the critical-thinking and academic-writing skills you will continue to develop in throughout the studies.

Writer's Guide:

It is essential that the student follow a standard writer's guide such as Element of Style (Strunk and White), A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Turabian), or the McGraw-Hill College Handbook (Marius and Weiner). To avoid plagiarism, it is necessary that the source(s) of non-original materials and ideas be identified.

Do not be late and do not procrastinate. No late papers will be accepted.

All issue papers must meet acceptable University standards for grammar, composition, syntax, spelling, and citations for non-original materials.

Grading Criteria for Papers

Grades will be assigned based on the following criteria.

"A" Paper

The principal characteristic of the "A" paper is its rich content: "meaty," "dense," "packed." The information delivered is such that one feels significantly taught by the author, sentence after sentence,

paragraph after paragraph. The "A" paper is also marked by stylistic finesse: the title and opening paragraph are engaging; the transitions are artful; the phrasing is tight, fresh, and highly specific; the sentence structure is varied; the tone enhances the purposes of the paper. It is completely free from grammatical or typographical errors. Finally, the "A" paper, because of its careful organization and development, imparts a feeling of wholeness and unusual clarity. Not surprisingly, it leaves the reader feeling bright, thoroughly satisfied, and eager to reread the piece. An "A" paper clearly takes a stand and argues and defends that stand to completely persuade the reader, without leaving dangling questions and unexplored avenues of discussion. It is complete unto itself.

"B" Paper

It is significantly more than competent. Besides being almost free of mechanical errors, the "B" paper delivers substantial information in quantity, interest, and value. Its specific points are logically ordered, well developed, and unified around a clear organizing principle that is apparent early in the paper. The opening paragraph draws the reader in; the closing paragraph is both conclusive and thematically related to the opening. The transitions between paragraphs are smooth, and the sentence structures are pleasingly varied. The diction of the "B" paper is typically more concise and precise than that found in the "C" paper. Occasionally, it even shows distinctiveness—finesse and memorability. Overall, a "B" paper makes the reading experience a pleasurable one, for it offers substantial information with few distractions. It establishes a stand on an issue and for the most part clarifies and defends that stand, leaving few unanswered questions and unexplored angles. It is successful in convincing the reader.

"C" Paper

It is overall competent: meets the assignment, has few mechanical errors, and is well organized and developed. However, its information seems thin and commonplace. One reason for this is that the ideas are cast in the form of vague generalities that prompt the confused reader to ask marginally, "In every case?" "Exactly how large?" "Why?" "But how many?" Stylistically, the "C" paper has little to draw the reader in; the final paragraphs are often bumpy; the sentences, besides being a bit choppy, tend to follow a predictable (hence, monotonous) subject-verb-object order; and the diction is marred by unconscious repetitions, redundancy, and imprecision. The "C" paper will get the job done but lacks both imagination and intellectual rigor. It attempts to establish a stand on an issue but achieves only average success. It leaves ideas dangling and opens as many doors for further questions as it closes. It is not a very convincing read.

"D" Paper

Its treatment and development of the subject are yet rudimentary. While organization is present, it is neither clear nor effective. Sentences are frequently awkward, ambiguous, and marred by serious mechanical errors. Evidence of careful proofreading, if any, is scanty. The whole piece gives the impression of having been conceived and written in haste. Or the paper, while of standard writing, missed the assignment completely by achieving something other than requested, such as presenting a summary of an article rather than an analysis and opinion derived from the article.

"F" Paper

Its treatment of the subject is superficial; its theme lacks discernible organization; its prose garbled or stylistically primitive. Mechanical errors are frequent. In short, the ideas, organization, and style fall far below what is acceptable college-level writing.