

Final Assignment Course Policy Making in a European Context

November 2009

1. Students of the course are invited to write a paper.
2. The topic is free, but should clearly be related to the course. It can be based on the assignment that was presented during the course but has to show significant added value in terms of literature and (empirical) data used for analysis.
3. The paper can be written in the form of a 'policy plan', a 'scenario paper' or a 'classical academic paper'.
4. The total length should be around 10 pages (3000 - 4000 words, the front page and the bibliography not included), preferably in times roman .12, interval 1,5
5. The deadline for sending the paper is December 15 2009.
6. The paper has to be sent in digital form (Word) to both B.vansteenbergen@uu.nl and W.E.Bakker@uu.nl. **Upload it also into the IS – “Odevzdávárny” (remark by Ladislav Rabusic).**
7. The paper will be referred and commented by the lecturers. In case the paper is not of sufficient quality (yet), there will be given the opportunity to rewrite it on the basis of the given feedback before final grading.
8. Grading will be done according to the MU standards:
A= excellent, B= very good, C=good, D= sufficient, E=passed, F= failed

Some remarks on the form of the paper

Classical Paper

- The introduction is very important (also in the two other options). It works somewhat like a tunnel; i.e. it introduces the reader in the broad sense in the field and the topic of research and then it narrows down to the specific topic of the paper.
- Very important is the research question, which can be formulated as: how come that....., or, more scientific: 'how can be explained that....'.
- Example: Suppose you are interested in the backward position of some minority group in your country of city. You then can start with some remarks on the general position of minorities and then on the more specific position of the minority in question. Your specific research deals by example with the education of this minority and a possible research question could be: How can it be explained that (governmental policy)attempts to educate and alphabetize this minority failed so far. The introduction ends with a short announcement of the coming chapters.
- In the following chapters you elaborate on your research question (information on the specific problem, existing literature, presenting of data concerning the policies so far, analysing reasons for failure, conclusion/summary and developing a possible (policy

- alternative). A paper is not an information bombardment, but the presented information is selected on the basis of the research question.
- This kind of paper can (in real life) be used by policymakers as information to be used in the process of policy formation and decision making.

Policy Plan

- A policy plan has roughly the same structure as a classical paper in the sense that it starts with formulating the social problem and the policy goal in general, it also has elements of analysis, an assessment of possible alternatives, a clear choice on objectives, and the design of a policy.
 - 1) The policy plan is structured following the seven steps as discussed during the course: Choosing and defining the (social) problem, defining the policy problem; content and urgency
 - 2) analysing causes and effect as much as possible on the basis of facts/sources, making a causal model (in scheme)
 - 3) formulating the goal (including criteria for evaluation)
 - 4) considering policy instruments and their effects,
 - 5) designing the implementation (who has to do what, how and when and how do we manage that)
 - 6) estimating costs and benefits
 - 7) making the final policy model of instruments and effects (the intended goal) (in scheme)
- In the writing of the policy plan it is helpful to choose and play a role consistently (e.g. imagine you are civil servants working at the secretary of a certain staff department for a local alderman, or imagine you are an external expert hired to develop the policy for the local council, or you are representatives of a NGO/interest group.
- In the presentation of the text you use, more than is the case in a classical paper, bullets and schemes so that you easily can see goals, cause and effect relations, instruments etc. 'Storytelling' you use primarily in the beginning (introducing the subject etc.) and in those paragraphs where you describe situations.

Scenario paper

- A scenario paper is in form most comparable with a regular paper (introduction, analysis/argumentation/summary-conclusion) but has at least three distinct parts:
 - a. the vision of a future society or part/sector of society.
 - b. An analysis of the present situation.
 - c. The road from here to there in the form of identifying the stimulating and the blocking forces, trends, tendencies etc.

Frontpage

The paper has a front page with on it:

- the title and if desired a subtitle (advisable is a 'sexy title and a more informative subtitle. Example: 'Man on the Throne of God. The societal implication of the biomedical revolution')
- the name of the student and e-mail address
- the name, date and place of the course

References

- For references we use the so called Harvard method:
- this means that references are given in the text where they were used, in brackets with author's surname and the year of publication in brackets. For example: (Hughes 1997) or

- in case of more authors (Smith and Mallinson 1996). Page numbers should be given in case of direct quotation or reference to a specific part; example (Boddy 1997:93).
- References should be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the paper on the special page(s) with the bibliography.
 - References of books should give the city of publication and the publisher also: for example : Clasen, J. (ed.) (1997), *Social Insurance in Europe*, Bristol, Polity Press.
 - References to journal articles should also give the volume, issue, page numbers and the name of the article. For example: Forma, P. (1997), 'The rational Legitimacy of the Welfare State', in: *Policy and Politics*, vol.25, no.3: 235-49. This is the same for hardcopy articles or on-line journals.
 - References to documents/pages on websites used is a bit more complicated, but can be put in the bibliography and can have more or less the same structure as for articles (the web address is the publisher, and the last date on which you looked at it is the year of publication). The web address you should use is the page from which you can reach the document itself. The home page address is too general, the web address of the page often too long.
 - A list of websites visited/analysed should be given after the regular literature in the bibliography (more referring to a set of data than to a specific document). Make sure to give the (last) date on which you looked at the website.

Original text

- You have to hand in original text in which the use of other documents is clearly visible through:
 - . the way of argumentation (as Kjaer says in her famous article on Governance
 - . correct reference and citation (if you use a citation, argue in the text where it stands for or why it is important and make the citation itself visible (other interval, italic, tabs etc.)
- Be aware of not using collage techniques in the construction of your text (copy-past from the internet for instance), this technique, especially without reference, is regarded as fraud.