

PLS 505 – Policy Analysis

Expectations for the Final Policy Analysis Project Report

Title and cover page (bind the report if possible)

Executive Summary (page i & ii)

Table of Contents (page iii)

Main Body of the Report (page 1)

- Introduction
 - What is the problem?
 - Who is the client for the analysis? Who are you producing the analysis for?
 - Can be real or hypothetical
 - What is the objective or parameters of the report and following analysis?
 - Most of you will be focusing on some piece of a larger problem or some subset of policy alternatives that address one or more aspects of a larger problem.
 - Need to clearly delimit what is and more importantly what is not included in your analysis.
- Statement of the Problem
 - Need to clearly define the problem
 - Why is the problem important?
 - Use some sort of data to define its scope, magnitude, trends, etc.
 - Be sure to cite where the data comes from that is used to describe the problem
 - What are the causes of the problem?
 - Is there a causal theory?
 - What does the data and literature suggest are the causes of the problem
 - This section needs to lay the foundation to support the alternatives that comes later since the alternatives should address causes of the problem
 - There should be literature to support this section
 - Why is this a problem government should do something about?
 - What is the rationale for government intervention? (e.g., public goods, information asymmetries, externalities, preserving human dignity, protecting public health safety, and welfare, etc.)
 - Why is this a problem that should be addressed by the level of government indicated?
 - Some policy problems involve questions of federalism. Why is some level of government better suited to addressing the problem than another?
- Alternatives, Evaluative Criteria, and Analysis
 - The main body of the report includes a discussion of the
 - Each alternative – remember the reader may be unfamiliar with how the alternative would work. Include do nothing and at least two other alternatives
 - Evaluative criteria – Need to define the criteria, why they were selected, and how they were measured. Need at least three criteria. Need data to support conclusions about the application of your criteria.

- Systematic comparison of each alternative using each of the criteria.
- Two basic ways to structure this set of materials in the report.
 - Option 1 – build the narrative around the alternatives.
 - Introduction to the section summarize the alternatives
 - Then you define the evaluative criteria, why selected, and how measured
 - Alternative 1
 - Fully define the alternative
 - Examine alternative 1 using each evaluative criteria
 - Alternative 2, 3, etc.
 - Fully define the alternative
 - Examine alternative 1 using each evaluative criteria
 - Option 2 – build the narrative around the evaluative criteria
 - Alternative 1, 2, 3, etc.
 - Fully define and explain each of the alternatives
 - Evaluative criteria 1
 - Evaluative criteria 1 – define, why selected, and how measured
 - Compare Alternatives 1, 2, 3, etc. using the evaluative criteria
 - Evaluative criteria 2, 3, etc.
 - define, why selected, and how measured
 - Compare Alternatives 1, 2, 3, etc. using the evaluative criteria
- Summary and recommendations
 - Need to summarize the analysis
 - Need one or more tables summarizing and comparing the alternatives and the criteria if they have not been included in the earlier sections
 - If you do option 1, you now need to compare and contrast each of the alternatives in terms of your criteria since that has not occurred yet. After this comparison you need to state how you selected and formed your recommendations. This makes for a longer summary and conclusions section.
 - If you do option 2, much of the comparison between the alternatives has been included in the previous section but you still need to summarize a bit and then describe how you arrived at your conclusions and recommendations.
 - Make your recommendations and be sure to fully explain them and the rationale behind them
 - Describe any additional information or items that must be considered when implementing the recommendations
 - In some cases, an implementation strategy may be needed
 - In other cases, recommendations for additional analysis and further investigation of items identified in your analysis might be needed
- Appendix (pages A-1, B-1, etc.)
 - Be sure to include necessary supporting materials when necessary
- References
 - Report should have at least 10 references