

Public Health Policy and Decision Making

POLICY ANALYSIS INSTRUCTIONS

Background: You will conduct a public health policy analysis, commenting on current oversight and regulation of a public health issue. This is an important skill building exercise for the “real world”, to continue your growth and development as Public Health leaders. The well-known policy analyst Carl V. Patton (1993) defines a policy analysis as “the process through which we identify and evaluate alternative policies or programs that are intended to lessen or resolve social, economic, or physical problems.” It takes into account that many problems, including public health problems, are complex issues requiring complex solutions. Identifying these solutions comes in part by analyzing a policy through the lens of the following 6 step process:

- 1) Verify, define and detail the problem
- 2) Establish evaluation criteria (your landscape)
- 3) Identify alternative policies
- 4) Evaluate alternative policies (your options analysis)
- 5) Select and recommend the preferred policy
- 6) Implement and monitor the chosen policy

Note the following key points about your Policy Analysis:

1. You should select and analyze a specific policy addressing a public health issue. Pick any public health issue you are interested in **EXCEPT** the case study topics, obesity, childhood obesity, or the ACA (“Obamacare”).
2. The policy could be one created and/or enforced by a regulatory agency to reduce an adverse health outcome, such as by reducing exposure to a hazard contributing to the issue. It could be a policy dictating specific intervention program requirements on the local, state, or federal level at a government, healthcare, or community agency. If you are focusing on the issue from a global or another country’s perspective, you can analyze policies that reflect this. Regardless of the policy selected, the policy analysis will include explicit statement of the problem/issue (remember as a question), the policy in question, alternative policy options, your target population, and relevant stakeholders. You should also consider:
 - a. How the problem/issue is a public health issue. Convey your topic framed within its history as a public health problem/issue.
 - b. Your specific target population(s) can have implications for the success or failure of a policy, so consider them carefully.

- c. Equally important are your audience/stakeholders. They may/may not differ from your target population. For example, a vaccination policy designed to increase vaccination rates in children (target population) could be designed for an audience of parents, health care providers, community agencies, or other stakeholders.
 - d. Clearly and succinctly present the issue, its context, and recommended action (includes your evaluation and recommendation of the alternative policy (ies) addressing the problem/issue).
3. Use the additional guidance content and policy analysis examples provided in Blackboard LEARN to inform your analysis and design of your report.
 4. Superior spelling and grammar is expected.
 5. This is not a lengthy report or white paper on the topic. Policy analyses can be as short as a policy brief, i.e., a couple of pages, to a robust, 50-page review. For this assignment, **your policy analysis should be 4-6 pages long**. Save your document as Name_PolicyAnalysis.doc. So my assignment would be *Staley_PolicyAnalysis.doc*.
 6. Your analysis should be created using Arial, Calibri, or Cambria font, and no smaller than 11 pt. font. **SINGLE space is normal practice in a brief. Again, note SINGLE SPACE.** Policy analyses often have a variety of fonts, pictures, and other items to convey the message in a way that attracts the reader. Sell your analysis. This should not be a boring, single spaced paper.
 7. All sources should be cited in text and referenced per APA style. Include a final page with your references at the end of your analysis (this is not a part of the page limit).

Reference:

Patton, Carl V. & Sawicki, David S. (1993). *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning* (3rd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.