

## Guide to writing an advocacy brief for Hoberg's Simulations (March 2013 version)

1. "A policy brief is a document which outlines the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate. It is commonly produced in response to a request directly from a decision-maker or within an organization that intends to advocate for the position detailed in the brief." <http://www.policy.hu/ipf/fel-pubs/samples/PolicyBrief-described.pdf>
2. The template for marking is inspired by a standard methodology for neutral policy analysis. There are 6 core steps:
  - a. Problem definition
  - b. Criteria selection
  - c. Alternative specification (lots of students get confused by the word alternative. It may be better to think of it as an "option." The status quo is an alternative. Your recommendation is an alternative. So is the recommendation of that group you are opposed to.)
  - d. Analyze the consequences of the alternatives for the criteria you've identified
  - e. Compare, make trade-offs
  - f. Recommend decision
3. While inspired by traditional, "neutral" policy analysis methodology, there are some important differences between policy analysis briefs and policy advocacy briefs.
  - a. Policy analysis takes a neutral stance on problem framing and solutions; policy advocacy uses strategic problem framing and positions clearly based on your group's interests. Understanding the position of your real world group, if they have one, is critical.
  - b. Policy analysis has careful, balanced use of evidence; policy advocacy uses selective evidence.
  - c. Despite selective evidence, good policy advocacy effectively addresses the strongest claims of opponents (this is the basis for insisted you discuss at least 2 alternatives, one of which can be your recommended position).
4. Good advocacy reflects the values and traditions of your group, but is presented in a professional and authoritative manner. Your research, writing, and referencing should be impeccable. Proofread!
5. Cover all of the bases identified in the marking guidelines
6. Avoid Hoberg pet peeves:
  - a. Do not quote my lecture notes; do the research to find the sources in the literature
  - b. A table of contents is NOT necessary in such a short document
  - c. Do not use "evidence" as a section heading; build evidence into multiple sections (flunkable offence)
  - d. Do not package briefs in plastic or bind them in an way except a staple in the upper right hand corner (flunkable offence)
7. Submission requirements
  - a. Note (accurately) word count on brief (not including references)

- b. You must submit the brief to turnitin.com (see simulation page)
- c. You must submit the brief in paper to FSC 2045 by 4 PM on the due date
- d. You must submit the brief by email to [george.hoberg@ubc.ca](mailto:george.hoberg@ubc.ca) and your TAs by 4 PM on due date (pdf preferred)