

## POLICY PROJECTS

Students in Public Policy Methods complete policy analyses on randomly assigned issues. Over the course of the semester, they do memorandum exercises intended to help them apply concepts introduced in [Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice](#) to their issues. Near the end of the semester, each student submits a fifteen page policy analysis (exclusive of an executive summary and an *unlimited* number of pages of appendices) to me and to one other student. The other student writes a collegial critique and I prepare a more comprehensive evaluation following a [template](#) that helps me cover important points systematically.

### Projects for 2006 randomly assigned from the following list:

Southeast Asia, especially the Malacca Straits, experiences dozens of acts of maritime piracy annually. At the prompting of the United States, Thailand has stepped up its patrols in the area, but there is concern about its capabilities to provide adequate protection to shipping. What further steps should the international community take to reduce the incidence of piracy? Client: Secretary-General, International Maritime Organization

Many states have facilitated the creation of a "211" telephone number to provide a single contact number for people seeking social services or volunteer opportunities. What role, if any, should the federal government play in expanding the availability of "211" nationwide? Client: Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

In the United States almost 100,000 persons die each year from medical errors. Consider policy alternatives aimed at reducing medical errors in hospitals. Client: Director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Department of Health and Human Services

What, if anything, should the federal government do to increase the supply of nurses in the United States? Client: Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

Law currently bans federal funding for needle exchange programs. Should this ban be lifted? Client: Chair, Subcommittee on Health, House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Twenty-five years ago the Senate passed what is known as the Bayh-Dole Act, which established a framework for the patenting of discoveries by universities. Should the act be amended to mandate non-exclusive licensing? Client: Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

What, if anything, should the United States do to further international efforts to require transparency in contracts between oil companies and developing nations. Client: Undersecretary for Democracy and Global Affairs, Department of State

The recent approval of BiDil for use by African Americans suggests the potential benefits of racial inclusion in drug studies. Should federal laws or regulations be changed to promote the inclusion of greater numbers of racial minorities in clinical trials? Client: Chair, Subcommittee on Health, House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Natural disasters often leave people homeless and in need of temporary housing. Review the strategies currently used by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide temporary housing to disaster victims. Should the rules governing Section 8 housing vouchers be modified to facilitate its use in the provision of temporary housing? Client: Chair, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Payments to drug companies through Medicaid are based on poorly defined average wholesale prices. A recent Government Accountability Office study found considerable variation and overpayment in the states it studied. Should Medicare drug payments be made on some other basis? Client: Chair, House Committee on Energy and Commerce

In December 2005, the World Trade Organization called for elimination of cotton export subsidies in 2006 and faster cuts in other cotton subsidies than in other agricultural subsidy programs. How should the United States respond? Client: Chair, Subcommittee on Production and Price Competitiveness, Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee

Some U.S. corporations have engaged in “corporate expatriation,” moving their headquarters overseas to avoid corporate taxes. Others reduce or avoid taxes altogether through the creation of offshore subsidiaries. Consider policies to restrict such tax avoidance. Client: Chair, Joint Committee on Taxation

Automobile manufacturers currently receive credits toward their Corporate Average Fleet Economy (CAFE) standards for producing flex-fuel vehicles that can use E85 as well as conventional gasoline. Should this incentive be changed? Client: Chair, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Many Americans fear identity theft. Should financial institutions and credit bureaus have greater responsibility for making identity theft more difficult or less costly to correct? Client: Chair, Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, House Committee on Financial Services

In 2002, a so-called sham surgery study cast doubt on the efficacy of arthroscopic surgery to treat the pain and dysfunction of osteoarthritis of the knee. How should the Department of Veterans Affairs use such information? Should it play an active role in supporting such studies? Client: Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs

Does current Wisconsin law provide an appropriate balance between the privacy interests of persons and insurance underwriters with respect to genetic testing? Client: Chairperson, Assembly Committee on Insurance

The University of Wisconsin currently sets tuition for out-of-state students substantially higher than for in-state students. Is this differential desirable for graduate programs? Client: Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities

A proposal to open a hunting season on feral cats recently sparked considerable controversy. Should Wisconsin adopt policies to reduce the number of feral cats? Client: Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Does Wisconsin's Budget Stabilization (Rainy Day) Fund have adequate rules for accumulation and disbursement? Client: Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Finance

In June Governor Doyle signed the Pseudoephedrine Law. Should additional steps be taken to reduce the manufacture and use of meth-amphetamines in Wisconsin? Client: Chair, Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Homeland Security

New vaccines to protect against the human papillomavirus, which causes cervical cancer, are about to enter the market. These vaccines appear to be most effective if administered to children prior to the onset of puberty. Assuming that the vaccine advisory committee of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that child vaccination, what actions, if any, should be taken in Wisconsin to implement this recommendation? Client: Administrator, Division of Public Health, Department of Health and Family Services

Wisconsin has a large number of small rural school districts that are under severe financial pressure. Should the state take actions to facilitate or encourage the merger of small school districts? Client: State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction

Approximately half of Medicaid expenditures in Wisconsin go toward long term care for the elderly. Should Wisconsin change its policies to slow the rate of growth in these expenditures? Client: Chairperson, Senate Committee on Health, Children, Families, Aging and Long-Term Care

The University of Wisconsin-Madison continues to be concerned about binge drinking by students. Binge drinking also has some negative impacts on the City of Madison. What, if anything, should Madison do to address binge drinking? Client: Mayor, City of Madison

Subject to some age limitations, juveniles charged with felonies in Wisconsin can be waived from juvenile court to adult court. Should restrictions be placed on these waivers to reduce the number of juveniles who end up in the adult criminal justice system? Client: Chair, Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Homeland Security