**Assessing the Issues: Policy Brief Assignment**

HSB4U – Social Studies and Humanities Dept.

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| **Learning Goal**: In this assignment you will apply course terms and theories to a variety of curriculum-based questions regarding several current social issues.  **Task:** In a small group you will research, prepare and present a Policy Brief connected to your assigned question. The class will then respond to your Policy Brief and decide whether it should be accepted or not. |

**What Is a Policy Brief?**

* A short document (2-4 pages) that presents the findings and recommendations in regards to a specific research project
* A tool to research an issue, look at current impact/effectiveness based on that research, and give policy advice as we look to the future

**Why Should I Learn How to Present One?**

It will help you:

* Further develop research skills
* Synthesize data for the purpose of not just reporting but developing next steps
* Write and present with purpose (you have an audience in mind)
* Develop skills in a format you might see at the post-secondary level (social work, policing and justice, education, social sciences, medical profession, etc.)

**How Will I Present This?**

* With your partner or small group you will prepare the following document in a PowerPoint to present to the class
* Although this will appear as one clear presentation, each section must be written and presented by specified individuals (for individualized assessment)
* You will also provide a hard copy of the Policy Brief for Mr. Shields (examples to be discussed)
* The presentation portion should take 15-25 minutes
* It will be followed by group-led discussion questions and then a vote on whether this Policy Brief should be adopted
* In your presentation you can also include (but not rely) on video, further statements from sources, news articles, books, etc.

**How Will I Work On This?**

Initial Inquiry and Assignment Details – Fri May 12

In-Class Research/Work – Mon May 15

Library Research – Tues May 16

In-Class Research/Work – Wed May 17

Lab 143 – Thurs May 18/Fri May 19

Policy Brief Presentations Begin – Tues May 23 (will be able to do 2-3 a day)

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| **Components of a Policy Brief**  (Adapted from the IRDC – International Research Development Centre of Canada)  Executive Summary   * Give a brief overview of the issue that entices readers to go further   Introduction   * Answer the question of why the topic is important and why people should care (significance) * Answer the question of what were the goals of the research and overall findings * Entice the reader to go further   Approaches   * Explains how the study was conducted, who conducted the study, and methods used to obtain data   Results   * What did we learn? * Paint a general picture to start * Reduce detail to only what the reader needs to know * Use this section to inform Conclusion   Conclusion   * Use section to interpret data * Aim for concrete conclusions * Express ideas using strong statements * Ensure ideas are balanced and defendable   Implications and Recommendations   * Implications are what *could* happen * Recommendations are what *should* happen. State as precise steps for action (but ensure they are feasible. * Both flow from conclusions * Both must be supported by evidence   Key Connections to HSB4U   * In addition, discuss key connections to terms/topics/themes of the course (minimum 5)   Discussion Questions and Voting   * Your group will take questions from the class (likely 5 minutes of discussion) and then each member of the class/voting panel will state whether or not your policy should be adopted and provide a reason for their vote |

**HSB4U – Policy Brief Rubric NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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|  | **Below Level 1** | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4** | **Mark** |
| Knowledge and Understanding   * Content * Course Terms and Theories | * Individual does not make specific course terms/themes | * Individual makes few specific references to course terms/themes (1-2) | * Individual makes some specific references to course terms/themes (2-4) | * Individual makes several specific references to course terms/themes (4-6) | * Individual makes numerous specific references to course terms/themes (6+) | \_\_\_\_\_  10 |
| Thinking and Inquiry   * Connection | * Does not elaborate on policy question/theme | * Elaborates on policy question/theme in a limited way | * Somewhat elaborates on policy question/theme | * Elaborates on policy question/theme well | * Elaborates on policy question/theme in a mature and sophisticated way | \_\_\_\_\_  10 |
| Application  (GROUP)   * Handouts * Questions | * Handout and presentation do not support each other and/or not done * References provided in full APA format | * Handout and presentation are limited and do not fully support each other   References provided in full APA format | * Handout and presentation are somewhat researched, organized and support each other well * References somewhat provided in full APA format (2-3) | * Handout and presentation are researched, organized and support each other well * References provided in full APA format (3-4) | * Handout and presentation are extremely researched, organized and support each other very well * References provided in full APA format (5+) | \_\_\_\_\_  5  \_\_\_\_\_  5 |
| Communication   * Discussion * Delivery | * Does not contribute equally in presentation * Clearly not prepared and struggles to connect to class | * Does not contribute equally in presentation * Limited preparation and struggles to connect to class | * Somewhat contributes equally in presentation * Somewhat prepared and connects to class well | * Contributes equally in presentation * Well delivered with good connections, reflective of focused preparation | * Contributes equally in presentation; communicates very well with partners * Extremely well delivered with excellent connections, reflective of focused preparation | \_\_\_\_\_  10 |

**Policy Brief Process Work**

HSB4U – Challenge and Change

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| Research Sources | Value |

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| Executive Statement |
| Introduction |
| Approaches |
| Results |
| Conclusions |
| Implications and Recommendations |
| Key Connections |
| Possible Questions (Anticipate) |