Chloe Hamer

ENGL105.015

**Unit 2: Writing in the Social Sciences**

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| Genre | Purpose | Audience | Role | Rhetorical Situation |
| Policy Brief | Inform policy makers of an issue faced by NC migrant workers and recommend the most effective course of action | NC state policy makers | Intern at [Student Action with Farmworkers](https://saf-unite.org/about-us/), a local nonprofit organization | You work for a local nonprofit organization focusing on issues facing migrant workers in NC. You have been tasked with creating a policy brief on an issue of your choosing in line with the organization’s mission.  |

**YOUR ROLE**

For this unit assignment sequence, you are entering into the role of an intern at Student Action with Farmworkers (SAF), a nonprofit organization bringing together students and farmworkers to protect the rights of agricultural laborers in NC. Because migrant laborers and their families are particularly vulnerable to issues affecting their health, safety, and wellbeing, SAF has hired you to create a policy brief on one such issue. You will use your critical thinking, rhetorical analysis, and situation-based compositional skills to create an informational, persuasive policy brief to be distributed to local and/or state legislators through SAF.

**Feeder 2.1: Issue Identification**

The first step towards creating an effective policy brief is to identify a specific issue facing Latina/o/x migrant laborers living in NC that can be ameliorated through local or state-level policy change. For your first feeder assignment, you will write a paragraph (200-300 words) identifying the political or economic issue that you would like your policy brief to focus on. The issue you choose should be one that affects Latina/o/x migrant laborers either across North Carolina or in one location within the state (for example, a county or city). Remember that you are writing a policy brief for **local** or **state** legislators, so any policy changes you recommend must be feasible at a state or local level. This means that while broad, far-reaching political and social issues like border militarization or income inequality may serve as useful starting points for your research, you will need to narrow the issue down to fit the scope of the policy brief.

In your description of the issue, you should include a brief discussion of sociopolitical, economic, and cultural factors that affect the issue, the scope of the issue, and who this issue affects.

Consider the following questions as you write:

* What historical factors have contributed to this issue?
* What geographical area does this issue affect? For example, does it primarily affect people living in the Triangle area, or is it a problem affecting people all over the country?
* What is the scope of the issue? Who is affected? Be as specific as possible concerning which groups of people or demographics are affected and in what ways.
* What do those most affected by the issue want to be done? Is there a consensus or a wide variety of opinions? If there is not enough information available to answer this question, what steps could be taken to obtain this information?
* What level of legislation (local, state, federal) is needed to address this issue? Can it be at least partially addressed at a local or state level? (If not, you will need to narrow down the scope of your issue).

**Feeder 2.2: Comparative Policy Analysis with Sources**

Now that you have chosen an issue to focus on, you need to consider what policies, if any, are currently in place to address the issue, what policy alternatives have been proposed, and what course of action is most likely to prove effective in resolving or ameliorating the issue. To help you make this decision, you will write a short comparative analysis of an existing policy or policies and an alternative policy option.

In your own words, write **two paragraphs** (150-200 words each, or 300-400 words total) comparing the **existing policy or policies** that aim to address the issue you have chosen (or if none exist, a policy that perpetuates the issue) and **one alternative policy** that has been proposed to either replace or supplement the existing policy/policies. Include the following information in your paragraphs:

* A brief description of the policy/policies and when they were first implemented.
* What aspects of the issue do these policies address?
* What aspects of the issue do these policies fail to address?
* What individuals or groups were involved in the creation of these policies? What individuals or groups implement these policies? How?
* What groups benefit politically, economically, socially, and/or culturally from these policies?
* Do any groups oppose these policies? If so, which groups? What are their grounds for opposition?
* Do these policies necessitate, disrupt, or work in tandem with any non-governmental strategies for social change (see this [chart](http://mncampuscompact.org/wp-content/uploads/large/sites/30/2016/04/social-change-wheel-handout-2014-2-page-version.pdf) for some examples)?

Cite your sources using APA format. At least three of your sources must be scholarly.

**UNIT 2 PROJECT: POLICY BRIEF**

For your unit project, you will create a policy brief for [Student Action with Farmworkers](https://saf-unite.org/about-us/), a NC Latino nonprofit organization, to be distributed to local or state legislators. Your policy brief should address a specific problem affecting Latina/a/o migrant workers living in NC (see Feeder 1), provide clear, concise information on policy options (see Feeder 2), and recommend the most effective course of action to fully address the issue.

Your policy brief should include the following elements:

* **Title:** A short, relevant title informing the reader of the issue
* **Summary:** an introductory paragraph in which you summarize your policy brief
* **Scope of Problem:** a paragraph explaining the issue, who is affected by it (stakeholders), and major contributing factors to the issue
* **Policy Alternatives:** a brief overview of the existing policy or policies in place as well as a summary of what policy options or courses of action have been proposed to address the issue
* **Policy Recommendation:** one or two paragraphs recommending a specific course of action, including a brief justification of this recommendation and a list of the concrete steps that need to be taken by NC policy-makers
* **Consulted/Recommended Sources:** a list of sources that you used to create your policy brief and that readers could refer to for further information on the issue; sources are relevant (not based on outdated studies or policies) and cited in APA format

Your policy brief will be graded based on…

* **Tone**: You are writing for local or state legislators without specialist knowledge on the issue, so use clear, concise language. Avoid jargon and define terms when needed.
* **Content**: The information in your policy brief must be accurate and correctly cited from scholarly sources in APA style. All parts of the policy brief must be present and fully fleshed out (min. 2 pages double-spaced).
* **Recommendation(s)**: Your policy recommendations must be politically, economically, socially, and technologically feasible; recommendations should be clearly stated in a series of steps.
* **Style:** Subheadings with appropriate titles are used, formatting adheres to APA style.

**Resources**

[UNC Writing Center Policy Briefs Handout](https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/)

[Policy Brief Example](https://writingcenter.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/346/2019/10/policy-brief-better.pdf)

[SAF Fact Sheets](https://saf-unite.org/resource_category/fact_sheets/)

[“Living and Working Safely: Challenges for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers”](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3529146/)

[The Term “LatinX”](https://www.wral.com/news/noticias/video/16334607/)

[Latina/o Studies Program Civic Engagement](https://lsp.unc.edu/civic-engagement/)