

Writing in Law

Genre	Purpose	Audience	Role	Rhetorical Situation
Policy Brief	Inform policy makers of an issue faced by local Latina/o/x communities and recommend a course of action	Local NC policy makers	Policy analyst at El Centro Hispano	You work for El Centro Hispano, a local nonprofit organization focusing on issues facing members of the Latina/o/x community. You have been tasked with creating a policy brief on an issue of your choosing to be distributed to NC state legislators.

YOUR ROLE

For this assignment sequence, you are taking on the role of an intern in the legal department of [El Centro Hispano](#), a nonprofit organization advocating for Latinos in the Triangle area. On account of your experience with legal writing, you have been tasked with creating a policy recommendation on an issue facing Latina/o/x populations in the Triangle area. Your policy brief will be disseminated to local and/or state legislators to bring their attention to your chosen issue and to recommend the most effective course(s) of action.

Before composing your policy brief, you should review the UNC Writing Center's [Policy Brief Handout](#) and read [this sample policy brief](#).

FEEDER 1: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The first step towards creating an effective policy brief is to identify a specific problem that can be ameliorated through policy change. For your first feeder assignment, you will identify one such problem facing Latina/o/x communities in NC. While broad, far-reaching political and social issues like racial discrimination or income inequality may serve as a starting point for your research, you will need to research and choose a narrow issue. For example, if you are interested in income inequality, you might choose to focus on food insecurity among Latina/o/x households in Durham county.

A successful issue identification will:

- Include a brief description of factors that contribute to the problem
- Outline the scope of the issue
- Identify who this issue affects (stakeholders).

FEEDER 2: PEST CHART

Once you have identified a specific problem facing Latina/o/x communities in the Triangle area (Feeder 1), you will need to research what policies, if any, are in place that contribute to or attempt to address this problem, what actions have been proposed to address this problem, and what, in your informed opinion, is the best feasible course of action.

To help you keep track of this information as you conduct your research, you will [use the attached template](#) to create a PEST chart of **four to five policy options** that have been proposed or could feasibly be proposed to address the problem you have chosen. A PEST chart is a basic visualization and evaluation of the **Political, Economic, Social, and Technological** factors that affect various policy options. Creating a PEST chart can help you analyze and evaluate policy options from multiple perspectives with the aim of making a well-informed policy recommendation. The policy options you choose to evaluate should all share a common goal, although the proposed solutions may vary greatly.

Below the chart, indicate which policy option you plan on recommending for your policy brief.

Additional resources on writing PEST charts: [Tips for Writing Policy Papers \(p. 2-4\)](#)

UNIT PROJECT: POLICY BRIEF

For your unit project, you will create a legislative policy brief to be distributed to NC legislators. Your policy brief should address a specific problem affecting Latina/o/x communities 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 problem.

Your policy brief should include...

- **Title:** succinctly capture the topic of your policy brief
- **Executive 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 description 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.

Before composing your policy brief, you should review the UNC Writing Center's [Policy Brief Handout](#) and read [this sample policy brief](#) for more information on each of the standard components of a policy brief.

Your policy brief will be graded based on...

- **Tone:** You are writing for a busy non-specialist audience, so use clear, concise language and avoid jargon
- **Content:** Information in your policy brief must be accurate and correctly cited using [Basic Legal Citation](#) from legislative and/or scholarly sources; all parts of the policy brief must be present and fully fleshed out (min. 2 pages single-spaced/4 pages double-spaced)
- **Recommendation(s):** Your policy recommendations must be politically, economically, socially, and technologically feasible; recommendations should be clearly stated
- **Format:** Your policy brief should be presented in a professional, visually attractive way in 2 single-spaced pages. Draw the reader's attention to your main points and recommendations by using text boxes, headers, **bold type**, images, and colors.