

Term Project Guidelines – GOVT 2306 Term Project (Mandatory)

Introduction

This activity is an opportunity for you to closely examine a contemporary policy issue between the state of Texas and the United States federal government. Over its history, the Texas government has had many conflicts with the national government as part of the dynamics under a federal system of governance (federalism).

Completing this activity is a mandatory component of this course. It serves as the standard course assessment for all GOVT 2306 students. Failure to submit and complete this project in its entirety will result in a failing grade for the course.

There are three steps to completing this project.

Step 1 – Identifying the Issue

Identify an issue that involves federalism, then conduct research on how both the US federal government and Texas state government addressing it (this requires examining the history, application and effectiveness of laws at both levels).

Pick one of the following topics:

- Women's rights and funding for family planning
- Women's rights and access to abortion services
- Public education policy and funding
- Public education policy and Common Core
- Environmental policy and air pollution
- Environmental policy and hydraulic fracking
- Affordable Care Act and Medicaid funding
- Joint law enforcement efforts to combat drug trafficking
- Joint law enforcement efforts to combat human trafficking
- Texas Voter ID Law and the Voting Rights Act (1965)

Step 2 - Gathering Sources

Conduct research to locate three peer-reviewed academic journal articles (aka: scholarly sources) that specifically address the policy issue that you selected and meet the following criteria:

- **The articles must be no more than ten (10) years old.**
- **The article must have more than five (5) pages of actual content (without graphs, charts, footnotes, citations, etc.).**
- **Books will not count toward the minimum research requirements.**
- Carefully choose those sources that provide a variety of perspectives on your selected topic.
- In addition to the minimum research requirements, you should offer "supplemental sources" for essential current events information relevant to your topic. These may include academic sources that are not peer-

reviewed (position papers), newspaper articles, magazine articles, and other quality or reputable sources.

- Textbooks, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias (including Wikipedia), Almanacs, or an Atlas are reference materials and are not to be listed as sources on the collegiate level.
- Provide the formal MLA citation for each source, both in the essay and on the works cited page.

Step 3 – The Policy Paper

Your task will be to prepare a formal research paper regarding the selected policy. The assignment is to be around 5-6 pages with in-text citations for your research. The minimum writing requirement is a 1000 of your own words or around 3 pages of a word document (excluding the cited information). The essay is to discuss each of the following prompts:

- An introduction and brief overview of the policy relationship.
- What are the major issues facing each level of government?
- What are the reasons for initiating changes to the policy?
- What are the options to be considered (discuss several)?
- What are the pros and cons of each potential reform (costs v. benefits)?
- Which is the best option moving forward (pick one)?
- A summary and conclusion

Special Notes:

The grading standards used to assess the quality of your work for this project will be detailed in a grading rubric, which will be provided during the semester.

It is strongly suggested that every student read ahead and use the library database during the first week of the course to begin researching a topic. This project requires carefully planning throughout the semester.

Refer to the course calendar for the specific due date. The final product is to be submitted as a single file via the submission guidelines identified by the instructor.

Procrastination on this project has resulted in some students, who were otherwise passing, having to fail and repeat the course.