

Assignment Handouts:

1. Concept Map

What is a concept map?

A concept map is a diagram that displays concepts and ideas, along with the ways they are connected or influence one another. To make a concept map, you need to have a purpose for it. In this assignment, your team will develop concept map whose purpose is to show your understanding of the complexity of the New Zealand and California dairy production systems, aid you in the development of a stakeholder perspective, and enable your analysis of policy solutions to address the social and ecological challenges presented in the case.

A plan for making a concept map

Begin by getting a stack of 30 or 40 post it notes of different colors on which to write your ideas and a large poster board to use to draw the concept map. On that board, begin by drawing one big oval in the center of the board with the label “Water and nitrogen management decision. This is the start of your concept diagram. Use the post it notes to add concepts, ideas or issues that your team has identified from the case study materials that would be important to the decision. Write one concept, idea, or issue on each post it note. Then place the post it notes on the board. Think about arranging similar ideas/concepts/issues close to one another on the board, but leave lots of space for drawing arrows. As you add post it notes (concepts) to your diagram, draw arrows that show the interdependencies among the concepts. The arrows should point from a concept into another concept that in some way is affected or depends on the first. See the concept map below. This shows how one particular student is weighing the decision to go on a camping trip with their friends next weekend. Notice how each “node” (oval or rectangle) either has an arrow leading into it or out of it (a node with no arrows into or out of it is not relevant to your story). Also notice how the arrows are labeled with verb phrases (action phrases) that describe the relationship between the two connected nodes. You can check yourself to see if your nodes and connections make sense by seeing if each pair of connected nodes and the labeled arrow can form a sentence that makes sense. For example, the arrow from “my job schedule” to “my bank account” can be translated to say “My job schedule supports my bank account.” The relationship between “my outdoors comfort level” and the “go camping?” concepts is this: “My outdoors comfort level affects how much I want to go camping.”



Assessment criteria for concept map

Criteria	1 Unacceptable, major errors	2 Acceptable, minor errors	3 Very good, no notable errors
Neat and easy to read			
Connected concept and labeled arrows to form meaningful and correct statement			
Considers major economic or ecological concepts explained in the course			
No obvious missing connections			

2. Stakeholder debate

What is a stakeholder debate?

A stakeholder debate is a structured group discussion whereby students assume the roles of various stakeholders to take a side on a policy recommendation. One group of students should take a specific position “for” a particular policy intervention, while the other group should advocate “against” that position. Each side should provide logical arguments and evidence to support their positions. The teacher's role is to monitor and assist each group with understanding their roles, maintaining focus, and eliciting clarifications where necessary.

Criteria	1 Rarely/never	2 Usually	3 Always
Addresses key issues			
Supports with facts			
Is persuasive			
Exhibits teamwork			
Is organized			

3. Policy memo

What is a policy memo?

The main purpose of a policy memo is to provide analysis and/or recommendations regarding a certain issue. Policy memos are written for a specific, often limited, audience and should be written succinctly so that readers can efficiently access fact-based information in order to make an informed decision. An effective memo will do its job if the reader comprehends the main points after one quick read or even after reading just the first sentence of each section. To ensure that the memo gets the intended results, pay close attention to the following: (1) content, (2)

structure, (3) organization, (4) word choice, and (5) clarity. Numerous good examples of policy memos may be found online.

Grading rubric for policy memo

Formatting (10 points) [Memos substantially under 2 pages or over 2 pages will be penalized]

- Are all of the fonts and margins as specified?
- Is the heading as specified? Are the pages numbered? Is the author's name clearly listed.
- Are all in-text citations present and properly formatted? Is the bibliography properly formatted (in Chicago Manual of Style formatting)?

Organization and Style (30 points)

- Is the memo organized with a clear summary that defines the problem, provides a roadmap for the memo, and summarizes the main recommendations?
- Does the memo have a conclusion that draws together the key points?
- Are there section headings, and do the section headings help the reader to follow the memo's "story"?
- Is the memo free of spelling, grammatical, usage, and major stylistic errors? Is it clear and easy to read, yet written in a formal tone? Does it avoid jargon and state the problem and its solution in plain English? Note that the first-person ("We recommend...") is perfectly acceptable. Also note that, with very limited exceptions, bullet-points should be avoided in favor of plain language.

Statement of the Problem (20 points)

- Does the memo demonstrate a grasp on the major issues and actors involved in their "current world problem"?
- Does the memo accurately describe the scope of the problem, explaining to the reader why he or she should care?

Describing the Issues: The body of the memo (20 points)

- Does the memo draw accurately and effectively on the research presented for the case study (all sources cited correctly)?
- Does the memo effectively summarize and explain the various (and often competing) positions taken by relevant actors on the problem?
- Does the memo accurately describe the key economic theories covered in the class and their applications? (If relevant to course)
- Does the memo describe existing policies to address the problem, including those that run against the memo's recommendations?

Recommendations and Conclusions (20 Points)

- Does the memo clearly state their recommendations in a way that leaves no doubt as to the position of the authors?
- Do the recommendations address competing proposals and potential counter-arguments?
- Does the memo take its chosen audience into account, recommending actions that could plausibly be taken by the memo's recipient?

- In general, are the recommendations plausible, taking into account the resources and circumstances necessary to carry them out?