

FE460 Policy Issue White Paper Prompt

Context: As part of your major requirements, you must submit a major paper required for a Writing Intensive Course (WIC) for your ABET portfolio. You MUST receive a grade of at least 60% on this assignment for it to be included in your portfolio.

For WP3 you will be writing a White Paper on a topic of your choosing for submission to your ABET portfolio. This White Paper should demonstrate your competence in the following course learning outcomes:

- a) Comprehend the framework that federal, state, and local laws and policies operate within;
- b) Understand how key laws such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and Oregon Forest Practices Act impact forest operations;
- c) Explain how the administration of regulations can affect their implementation and exposure to legal challenges; and
- d) Distinguish among facts, hearsay, values and biases in information sources and demonstrate such understanding in written communications.

In addition, you must demonstrate that you understand the mechanics of preparing a White Paper based on the 8 Steps in *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*. In WP1 you defined the problem and assembled evidence; in WP2 you constructed alternatives and selected and applied evaluation criteria. In the White Paper, you will need to do these four steps, as well as the remaining four: project outcomes; confront tradeoffs; focus, deepen, and decide; and finally, tell your story.

White Paper Requirements:

- a) The topic of your white paper must be a forest management issue that involves federal, state, or local laws such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and OFPA.
- b) Your white paper will provide a summary and analysis of your chosen topic and consider the topic's implications for your supervisor and your organization.
 - Your analysis must critically evaluate multiple perspectives (for and against) on the issue.
 - Laws, regulations, and court cases must be used as evidence to support your analysis and recommendations. You will use the techniques developed in this course to evaluate and interpret evidence for analysis (i.e., canons of statutory interpretation; reading laws and court opinions, interpreting regulations).
 - You will provide recommendations on potential strategies to benefit your organization. These recommendations must be supported with evidence (sources) from your analysis.
- c) Per WIC requirements, the white paper must be at least 2,000 words (approximately 8 pages double-spaced; 4 pages single-spaced).
- d) White Paper must follow the format of the provided template unless an alternative format is approved in advance by the instructor.

Suggested Approach:

- a) **Identify your topic of interest.** This should be a forest management issue of interest that is regulated in some way. There need to be laws and statutes involved, and as well as a court case(s). To choose a topic, you can work backward from a court case to determine the relevant laws and regulations associated with that case; or, you can examine a law or regulation to see how it has been litigated. Be as specific (narrow) as

possible in your topic choice, remember you are making a claim (recommendation) about the topic and supporting it with evidence. Too large of a topic can make it difficult to successfully support your claim, especially in the space allowed (4 – 6 pages single-spaced). **We will schedule conferences to discuss your topic and insure that it's appropriate.**

b) **Research relevant laws, regulations, and court cases.**

- Google is a good place to start your search. Typing in a search phrase such as “forest harvest steam temperature regulation Oregon” will give you a list of “hits” that you can plow through to find the laws and regulations.
- Alternatively, you can go straight to the regulations, backtrack to the law, then look at the “Annotations” section of the law to find any court cases. Similarly, Google can help you find legal cases by using that term along with the name of the law.

c) **Identify and organize relevant information both supporting AND countering your claim.**

- Matrices, as we demonstrated in class, provide a useful structure to do this.

d) **Synthesize and analyze relevant sources that support your claim.** Remember that supporting your claim isn't “arguing”. You will need to provide evidence that your strategy is appropriate for your organization.

Expectations: Your White Paper should be professional, in template format, and appropriately considers its audience. You should feel comfortable providing this product to your supervisor, other officials in your organization, and your colleagues as an example of your best work. We will evaluate your White Paper based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrates effective use of the both the policy analysis tools covered in class as well as the 8 Steps in the *Policy Analysis* guide;
- Is concise and targeted to the main issues and points;
- Effective paragraph and sentence structure, including grammar and spelling.

Schedule of Deliverables:

Tuesday 11/10	Identification of topic and draft bibliography (initial list of statutes, rules, and court cases likely to be used in your White Paper).	1 point
Thursday 11/17	Initial outline of paper using the provided White Paper template.	2 points, instructor feedback opportunity
Tuesday 11/24	Complete draft due.	3 points
Tuesday 11/24	Peer Review in-class.	1 point
Thursday 12/1	Revised draft due.	3 points, instructor feedback opportunity
Tuesday 12/8	FINAL White Paper due by 9:50PM (end of Final Exam time)	20 points
		30 points total