**Research/Policy Position Papers**

Purpose

A research/policy position paper will provide your party with an objective analysis of a policy issue by providing a summary of the information necessary to take an informed decision towards the desired policy objective.

For the purpose of this assignment, a *policy* is an end goal that follows a lengthy process of research and political debate. The policy, or rule, results in a *priority*, the desired state of affairs. This means the policy contains some claims about cause and effect relationships and about norms or values (‘the new state of affairs is better than the current one or other alternatives’). A policy ultimately reflects the consensus values of all the parties that participated in creating it.

Suggested Format / Sections

I. Introduction—The introduction should include a brief abstract of the issue; a statement of the current policy, including the essential elements of the policy. Spend no more than 10-15 percent of the paper’s length on this section.

II. Background—Your background section should contain any relevant information necessary to objectively analyze the issue. Provide only timely and relevant information. For example, your foreign policy chair does not need to know a detailed history of Iraq—s/he needs to know the recent history and the current state of affairs.

III. Policy Objectives—What policy options do you have? Which one are you recommending to your party leaders? What would be the actual, practical impact of your chosen policy? What values would be served?

IV. Analysis—The analysis should provide your Chairs with a balanced look and the available policy options. This section should include the pros and cons of each option. This section should include your recommended policy based on what you understand about your party’s goals. Your policy recommendation should provide a logical basis from which the correct decision is clear.

Proper documentation is essential. The research/policy paper should have, at minimum, an annotated bibliography and endnotes or footnotes.

**Research/Policy Paper Rubric (200 Points)**

1. **Introduction**: Abstract of the Issue; statement of the policy; thesis \_\_\_\_\_\_\_/20
2. **Background**: Thorough background, including recent history of the issue, and the current policy. \_\_\_\_\_\_/40
3. **Policy Objectives**: Provided multiple policy options, the impact of the policy and the Party values that the policy will serve. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_/50
4. **Analysis**: Pros and cons of each policy choice and of your policy recommendation to the party \_\_\_\_\_\_/50
5. **Organization, Conventions, Authenticity**: Research is clear, well-documented and well written. Bibliography and footnote/endnotes are present. \_\_\_\_\_\_/40

 **Other Comments:**

**Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_\_/200**