

ASIC 200

The Group Problem Based Learning (PBL) Assignment

1) Introduction

In this course, all students will participate in a group project using basic Problem Based Learning (PBL) techniques. PBL is focused around a problem, issue or scenario which acts as the starting point for exploring a subject. From this starting point, learners then explore what tools and knowledge might be needed to understand the problem and proceed to design solutions and responses.

Students will be presented with specific problems related to the central global issues discussed in class and the relevance of these issues for the local community. Working in groups, students will be expected to complete the following learning components for each PBL assignment:

- 1) Discuss the problem. Students should deliberate on the nature of the problem, the various aspects of the problem, and identify the tools and physical and life science and social sciences and humanities knowledge needed to understand the problem and respond to it. Students should generate possible options for responding to the problem.
- 2) Conceptualize and write a practical project proposal designed to respond to the problem. The proposal should include a one page introduction to the problem, a two page description of the project and what contribution it will make to addressing the problem, a one page statement of project requirements, a proposed budget, and a fundraising plan identifying possible donors and community partners. A template of required elements is provided below.

This assignment will develop teamwork skills, and writing, fundraising, event planning, and final report writing skills. The proposals should be presented in formal English prose. Limited use of point form (when making lists, etc.) is permitted.

You may want to meet as a group or in sub-groups outside of class time. We encourage you to do this, but please observe some basic rules: meetings should take place in public spaces and not at someone's residence and students should not be excluded if they cannot make certain meeting times.

2) The Group PBL Report

Students will submit a Group PBL Report. Templates for this assignment are provided below. Groups should follow this template when organizing their report (although you do not have to use this style or this specific document to do so: feel free to hand in something that looks attractive and professional). Grades for the PBL assignment will be the product of an assessment of the Group Project Report (75%) and a group self-evaluation component (25%).

Action Plan for the First Session

- 1) Introduce yourselves! (10 min.)
- 2) Review the assignment requirements and the structure of the report (last page).
- 3) Discuss the problem you have been presented with. Begin by identifying the most important localized features or aspects of the problem you have signed up to address. (15 min.)
- 4) Discuss the physical and life science and social sciences and humanities knowledge needed to understand the problem and respond to it. (20 min.)
- 5) Discuss the questions that come with your topic. (20 min.)
- 6) Design a homework plan so your group can begin drafting the report and proposal in the next session. (15 min.)

Action Plan for the Second Session

- 1) Begin a group discussion to establish the content of your report so you can begin a first draft of your document.
- 2) Design a homework plan so your group can finish the entire report by the due date.

Action Plan for the Following Week

- 1) Finish drafting your Policy Proposal project. Submit your completed report in class on the due date (March 3rd).

Policy Proposal Project Template

For the PBL assignment, you are asked to design a specific project proposal, one that translates concept and theory into policy and practice. In essence, you are trying to design a practical plan to achieve some of the objectives and goals of your PBL assignment. Your project proposal should include the following:

- 1) Cover Page (page above, filled out and signed).
- 2) Project Title Page. Make it professional!
- 3) Executive Summary. Summarize your group project. Include a brief description of the problem and emphasize the conclusions and recommendations of your proposal. (200 words)
- 4) Your group identity. Summarize who you are as a group. Are you a not for profit citizen's association or non-governmental organization? Are you a company with a service or product to sell? Are you a consultant company? (100 words)
- 5) Identify your target audiences or groups (Business groups? General public? Municipal leaders? Students? City Hall?) Why should these target audiences be interested in your proposal? (100 words)
- 6) Problem description. Identify the key issues or elements of the problem. Discuss the magnitude, impact, and consequences of these problems in the global and then local context. (500 words)
- 7) Knowledge requirements. Identify the physical and life sciences and social sciences and humanities knowledge needed to understand the problem and respond to it. What kinds of expertise and knowledge does your project require? (100 words)
- 8) Recommendations. Describe the key components of your recommendations and what contribution they will make to address the problems you have identified. (1000 words)
- 9) Project requirements. Describe what the staffing, facilities, and equipment requirements of your project will be. (150 words)
- 10) Community partners. Identify community individuals or organizations that might become partners in your project. (150 words)
- 11) Proposed budget. Provide a proposed budget (max. one page)
- 12) Fundraising plan: Identify possible donors and community partners (200 words)