

PSCI 3110: The Legislative Process
Fall 2019

Specifications for Bill-Writing Assignments

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a legislator is sponsoring a bill that is eventually enacted into law. This is not an easy task for a number of reasons. Legislators will often disagree about priorities, and resources are limited for even those things that legislators do agree deserve attention. Fewer than 1 out of 10 bills introduced in Congress eventually makes it into law.

All students are responsible for introducing at least one bill during the course of the semester. Students earning Bs and As must introduce at least two bills, with at least one being a “major bill.” These are minimum expectations; there is no limit to the number of bills you can introduce—you can sponsor as many bills as you prefer on any subject!

The major bill assignment requires you to research and draft an *original* and *significant* bill of your choosing. If you’re not sure whether or not a proposal is a major bill, just ask us!

Specifications for Minor Bill Assignment

- The bill is introduced in LegSim and uploaded in Canvas by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 27.
- The bill includes a title that includes no spelling errors.
- Student chooses the correct Legislative Type (bill, resolution, or joint resolution) from the drop-down menu.
- The Legislative Text meets the following specifications:
 - Bill/resolution is structured appropriately. It is organized in sections.
 - The proposed policy (what you are trying to accomplish) is clear.
 - If proposal would require implementation, the bill gives authority for implementation to a specific executive branch agency.
 - If the proposal would require the appropriation of federal monies, the bill includes a reasonable estimate of the bill’s costs.
 - The text of the bill/resolution is written clearly with no more than 3 grammatical/spelling errors per 250 words.
- The Supporting Text meets the following specifications:
 - The supporting text includes a short explanation of what the bill/resolution does.
 - The information used to estimate the bill’s costs is explained clearly.
 - The supporting text is written clearly with no more than 3 spelling or grammatical errors.

Specifications for Major Bill Assignment

- The bill is introduced in LegSim and uploaded in Canvas by 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 3.
- The legislative text and supporting text are (combined) a minimum of 750 words.
- The bill includes a title that includes no spelling errors.
- The topic of the bill is original and important.
The bill must propose a major policy change.
- Student chooses the correct Legislative Type (bill, resolution, or joint resolution) from the drop-down menu.
- The Legislative Text meets the following specifications:
 - Bill/resolution is structured appropriately. It is organized in sections.
 - The bill includes a “Findings and Purposes” section that explains the need for the legislation.
 - The proposed policy (what you are trying to accomplish) is clear.
 - If proposal would require implementation, the bill gives authority for implementation to a specific executive branch agency.
 - If the proposal would require the appropriation of federal monies, the bill includes a reasonable estimate of the bill’s costs.
 - The text of the bill/resolution is written clearly with no more than 3 grammatical/spelling errors per 250 words.
- The Supporting Text meets the following specifications:
 - The supporting text includes a section-by-section summary of what the bill does.
 - The information used to estimate the bill’s costs is explained clearly.
 - The supporting text is written clearly with no more than 3 spelling or grammatical errors per 250 words.
 - Includes full citations of 3 or more resources used to complete the research for the assignment.
Note: a web link is not a complete citation.