

SAMPLE FUNCTIONS AND FEATURES ANALYSIS CHART
Effective Writing Pedagogies in Public Affairs Seminar
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Based on examination of examples and/or reading guides about the particular genre, the class together fills in a “functions and features” chart describing the genre. You might give students categories of features to consider, such as content, formatting and design, structure, and sentence-level writing.

Genre: The Policy Memo

Functions	Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate a decision-maker • Influence a decision-maker’s thinking • Convince a decision-maker that action must be taken • Persuade a decision-maker to support—and possibly implement—a particular action • Persuade that the recommended course of action is the best possible option • Earn widespread support for an action • Prove the writer’s understanding of an issue 	<p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write for the specific audience (consider reader’s needs and priorities) • State central claim up front • Follow through with all points previewed • Use appropriate, efficient, and judiciously chosen evidence to support claims <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First sentence must convince reader that issue is worth their time • Paragraphs lead with most important next point • Sometimes start with Executive Summary • Limit “background” information to the most necessary • Paragraphs are relatively short <p>Sentence-level Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are concise and readable • Limit jargon to the absolutely necessary • Appropriately formal (but not stilted) tone <p>Formatting and Design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use strategic subheads • Use “scannability” devices such as bullets, numbers, boldface—but not too many! • Use charts and graphs where efficient