**Policy Papers in the Martin Institute | International Studies**

As the name implies, these are documents designed to suggest policy options for a current problem/issue. Historical analyses, case studies, and the like are better suited as research papers, as the entire point of a policy paper is to convince policymakers that your idea is worth pursuing – and too much detail means they won’t engage with your paper in the first place.

At its core, a policy paper has four main sections, which are complemented by two more. The main four:

1. **Overview/Background**, including a statement of purpose, analysis of the current policy, and a justification (for lack of a better word) of the need for a policy change.
2. **Discussion of options**, including maintenance of the status quo, your preferred policy, and two others. All must be viable – no fair making yours look better by presenting only garbage as the alternatives in this segment. This is neither a comparative nor argumentative section.
3. **Policy recommendation**, featuring your detailed justification for exactly why this is your recommended solution. This includes a cost-benefit analysis of each; while this can be either quantitative or qualitative (or both, really), you need to show an understanding of the consequences of acting/not acting in accordance with the policy options.
4. **Implementation recommendation**, including specific information on how and when to implement the policy. This includes likely trade-offs necessary in the policy process, to get the support necessary to implement it. Also, some measure of success in the near and middle term must be identified.

The additional two:

1. **An executive summary**, which actually comes first in the paper but is generally written last because it must include detail from the four main sections. The summary includes:
   1. **Statement of current policy**
   2. **Reason(s) for proposing changes**
   3. **Policy options to be considered**
   4. **Pros and cons of each option**
   5. **Recommended course of action**
   6. **Justification of/for recommendation**
2. **Appendices and the like**, which follow the main body of the paper and provide supporting information in the form of maps, charts, expanded information/annexes that does not fit in the main body, and your bibliography.

Some format/style notes:

Because all Martin Scholar papers are automatically submitted for consideration to be included in the *Journal of the Martin School | International Studies*, and the JMSIS uses footnotes, that is the citation method to be used on these papers. Please use Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, with one inch margins all around. The main body of the paper should run about 12-15 pages.