

BEST PRACTICE 2023



Usman Nasir

'Brief the CEO' Assignment: Blending problem-based learning with policy brief writing.

Course:

PAI466 Global Software Engineering course imparts knowledge about risks, challenges and practices associated with managing projects with globally distributed software development activities.

Course learning activities include lecturing, problems-based discussions, global software project simulation and classroom policy debates. The lectures focus on technical and strategic risks and the impact of these risks on software development projects. Numerous emerging situational factors, such as COVID-19, geopolitical shifts, and work policies that affect global software development projects are taught as related risks.

The course assessments are designed to assess student's abilities to identify risks associated with global software development projects and critically evaluate risk mitigation strategies. Project and risk management are interdisciplinary subjects that require engineering students to acquire knowledge of management principles. 'Brief the CEO' assessment was designed to support and assess their learning about management.

Assessment: Brief the CEO

'Brief the CEO' is a policy writing assignment that is a blend of policy brief writing assessments, typically used for evaluating students in politics and policy studies [1] and the problem-based learning (PBL) approach, where students learn concepts by solving cases or problems [2].

The policy brief note seeks an overview of the issue that warrants a new policy directive from the CEO in the problem scenario. It requires students to suggest a policy, examine its advantages and disadvantages and support their arguments with relevant literature.

The assignment requires students to write an advisory note for the CEO about policies for globally distributed projects or teams. The case problem is at a large software development organisation with a global presence and multiple offices worldwide.

- 'Brief the CEO' assignment is about policy recommendation, envisioning policy implementation and its advantages and disadvantages analysis in the situational context given in the problem scenario. The assignment allows students to organise their perspectives, discover new information and put their knowledge into action.
- Students have been creative with their implementation strategies, offering out-of-the-box solutions. Many students strongly argue against or in favour of the policy using blogs and social media-based comments to support their arguments. Writing policy briefs enhances students' writing abilities, and solving problems improves their managerial thinking [2].

[1] Judge, A. (2021). Designing and implementing policy writing assessments: A practical guide. *Teaching Public Administration*, 39(3), 351-368. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0144739420961442>

[2] Smith, G. F. (2005). Problem-Based Learning: Can it Improve Managerial Thinking? *Journal of Management Education*, 29(2), 357-378. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562904269642>

/ The presentation is given in English

Multisalen / 18 October / 8:15 - 10:00

