

ValeUs Policy Writing Workshop Series

Register for February 27 Seminar: [HERE](#)

One of the key deliverables of the ValeUs Network is to produce policy recommendations in the form of fact sheets and policy briefs provided to the EU Commission and other stakeholders. To help facilitate this, the University of Pittsburgh is offering a Policy Writing Workshop Series that will begin in February and will meet once a month until our meetings in Zagreb and Banja Luka in October. The workshop series will take on policy issues aligned with the themes identified as the ValeUs research platforms in Astana: De/Migration; Decolonization, Europe Viewed from the South; Populism and Euroscepticism; Nation-building/state-interventionism; Critiquing or Affirming the EU/Values versus Realpolitik.

The Policy Writing Workshop Series is open to colleagues throughout the ValeUs network – faculty, staff, and students – who are broadly interested in skills related to policy writing. We particularly encourage students to participate with their faculty leaders in drafting policy briefs which will be published in *International Review of ValeUs*. While commitment to participate in the entire series is not required, it is encouraged for peer reviewing purposes. All participants will be given access to workshop materials, slides, templates and resources as noted in the detailed description of the workshop series below.

February 27, 2025

Policy Writing Seminar: Strategy and Style

10:00-13:00 EST/16:00-19:00 CES (Hybrid Session)

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The Policy Writing Series will begin with a synchronous hybrid seminar offering an overview of policy writing. The workshop will be led by [Professor Müge Finkel](#), Director Ford Institute for Human Security and co-director of the Gender Inequality Research Lab (GIRL) at the University of Pittsburgh. Professor Finkel has extensive experience writing policy briefs and has taught courses and workshops incorporating policy writing.

This first session is designed to provide the big picture on policy-focused writing to help participants familiarize themselves with the rationale, context and formats of policy-focused writing. It will provide guidance on selecting a topic, identifying an audience, and discuss strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the overall output. It will review the instrumental parts that make up a policy-brief and leave the participants with a template that they can adopt for their selected topics.

March – October 2025

Research Platform Meetings (virtual)

During the subsequent workshop meetings, Dr. Finkel will discuss the building blocks of the policy-writing process. In these once-a-month virtual meetings, Dr. Finkel will guide the participants as they formulate and craft the distinct parts of their policy briefs and will provide feedback. The breakdown of the components of the briefs and the deliverables for each month are provided in the table below.

October 2025

Research Platform Policy Workshop (Banja Luka)

During this in-person workshop, participants of the research platforms will come together to present their work and to exchange draft policy briefs. Hybrid sessions could also be arranged for members of the platforms who cannot travel to Banja Luka.

Date	Format	Focus	Preparation	Deliverables*
Feb 27	Hybrid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Big Picture: policy writing for impactful communication• Introduction to policy brief	Reading: <i>The Little Guide to Writing for Impact (Chp 1&2)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Brief Template (by Dr. Finkel)• Resource List (by Dr. Finkel)
March		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Problem Identification• Stakeholders and information environment set-up (context/background)	Reading: <i>The Little Guide to Writing for Impact (Chp 3&4)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 paragraphs on target policy of choice• List of stakeholders• 3-minute oral presentation
April		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Alternatives	Reading: <i>The Little Guide to Writing for Impact (Chp 5, 6&7)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 paragraphs total (one on each policy alternative)• Resources• 3-minute oral presentation
May		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommendation	Reading: <i>The Little Guide to Writing for Impact (Chp 8)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2-3 paragraphs on recommended course of action• 3-minute oral presentation

June		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary • Resources • Design • Editing 	Reading: <i>The Little Guide to Writing for Impact (Chp 9-12)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exe summary draft • Boxes, graphs
Sept		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Design & Editing • Visual design for presentation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft of the full brief • 1-page visual summary
Oct		Presentation and Workshop		

*Unless noted otherwise, deliverables are by participants and will be submitted three days prior to the date of the workshop.