**EXAMPLES**

**From a Seminar in Law Enforcement Leadership (Criminal Justice)**

The dozen young men and women in this graduate seminar were all being groomed for future leadership roles in the police and sheriff’s departments of a large metropolitan area. Their instructor wanted to help them learn to analyze problems and improve their writing skills. He used the Analytic Memo technique to get feedback on their progress toward both goals.

The officers participating in the seminar were given a short case involving a precinct commander faced with proposed budget cutbacks. They were to write analytic Memos to the commander, taking into consideration the stakeholders, the potential winners and losers, and the political resources available. A quick reading of their memos uncovered the officers’ strengths and weaknesses. Nearly all had done a good job of identifying the stakeholders and figuring out who stood to lose or win. They were relatively poor at identifying political resources, particularly informal ones. The instructor also told the group that very little of the writing would stand up to scrutiny if the commander’s superiors, or the newspapers, were to gain access to their memos. With that general feedback in mind, the students rewrote their memos, this time as a graded assignment. Though far from perfect, the memos were more informative and better written the second time around.

**From Environmental Policy Analysis (Environmental Studies)**

During the first month of this environmental studies course, the instructor decided to find out how well her students could analyze a typical environmental policy problem. Since a story about contaminated groundwater had recently appeared in the local newspapers, she directed her students to write an Analytic Memo about this topic. They were told to write as environmental policy analysts, to address their memos to the state’s secretary of environmental affairs, and to point out the major policy implications of the groundwater crisis.

The students were given three days to prepare their memos. After collecting them, the teacher assessed and responded to each memo with a five-point checklist and short comments. From her quick assessment of the memos, the instructor realized that her students were generally successful at describing the problem and probable causes but demonstrated little ability to analyze its policy implications and the interests of various actors and agencies involved. In response, she planned several increasingly challenging assignments on applying political and policy analyses to environmental problems.