

Guidelines for Writing the Term Paper

Course: Economics and Gender, University of Economics in Prague, Kalíšková & Cingl

Deadline: one week before the last day of semester

Why? Reason

We want you to get a hands-on experience with research and policy on gender. That is, in a team, you should write a coherent text targeted on a topic directly related to the economic issues of gender that are of an up-to-date relevance. You can write an analytic or research essay (see <http://utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/types-writing> for details), an empirical investigation, or a (policy-oriented) descriptive paper, or a cost-benefit analysis. By doing this, you should get familiar with the topic, read a lot of scientific literature from preferably quality journals and authors, and summarize the findings in the text. You should be able to divide the work in the team, and be able to show the added value of your text, i.e. why is your text worth reading, what new aspects you bring into the overall discussion about the topic and what your findings mean.

What? Topic

The topics are up to you but here we provide two leading examples:

"Nature or nurture - on the origins of gender differences in labor market"

"Unintended consequences of gender equalization policies"

How?

Don't forget to include your names and the number of the group. Length should be 5-8 pages, 1.5 line spacing, Times New Roman font size 12; include the Abstract as a short summary. Write it in an academic style (<http://utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/academic-style>), not a news magazine or other way. Please cite all resources that you use, preferably using the APA style:

http://utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/sites/utsc.utoronto.ca.twc/files/resource-files/APACitation_June2012.pdf. **No**

copy-paste and no plagiarism acceptable. Please note: plagiarism will result in a failing grade, potentially in further consequences. If you are not sure how to reference and/or paraphrase, see this link:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>. A citation program like Mendeley can save your time.

English grammar: I need to understand the text, so write rather shorter, clear sentences than some complicated structures that look good but actually have no meaning.

Please come to my office hours to discuss whatever you need regarding the paper or the course.

Structure

The structure should follow the standard rules applicable to your format, e.g. for the empirical investigation it typically is this: introduction, where you have to argue why this topic is important for economists or policy makers and what is the current state of the arts. You should provide a short literature review to show that you know what has been already done, potentially what you follow up on (at least 3-5 quality papers). Then you can provide the research question. After this, the methodology should follow, where you describe how you deal with this question, e.g. data, model, and the analysis. The results section should include the outcomes of the

methodology, i.e. the outcomes of the statistical tests or regression analysis with a description of what they mean. Then you could discuss what these actually mean in terms of the policy recommendations, and how they relate to other literature, e.g. if they are in accordance with findings in other papers. Then you conclude.

You may find more useful hints here: <http://utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/online-resources>

Criteria for evaluation of essays

from a syllabus of the Ohio State University, course Economics 597.01 by Bruce Bellner

The Unsatisfactory Paper:

The D or E paper either has no thesis or else it has one that is strikingly vague, broad, or uninteresting. There is little indication that the writer understands the material being presented. The paragraphs do not hold together; ideas do not develop from sentence to sentence. This paper usually repeats the same thoughts again and again, perhaps in slightly different language but often in the same words. The D or E paper is filled with mechanical faults, errors in grammar, and errors in spelling.

The C Paper:

The C paper has a thesis, but it is vague and broad, or else it is uninteresting or obvious. It does not advance an argument that anyone might care to debate. "Henry James wrote some interesting novels." "Modern cities are interesting places." The thesis in the C paper often hangs on some personal opinion. If the writer is a recognized authority, such an expression of personal taste may be noteworthy, but writers gain authority not merely by expressing their tastes but by justifying them. Personal opinion is often the engine that drives an argument, but opinion by itself is never sufficient. It must be defended. The C paper rarely uses evidence well; sometimes it does not use evidence at all. Even if it has a clear and interesting thesis, a paper with insufficient supporting evidence is a C paper.

The B Paper:

The reader of a B paper knows exactly what the author wants to say. It is well organized, it presents a worthwhile and interesting idea, and the idea is supported by sound evidence presented in a neat and orderly way. Some of the sentences may not be elegant, but they are clear, and in them thought follows naturally on thought. The paragraphs may be unwieldy now and then, but they are organized around one main idea. The reader does not have to read a paragraph two or three times to get the thought that the writer is trying to convey. The B paper is always mechanically correct. The spelling is good, and the punctuation is accurate. Above all, the paper makes sense throughout. It has a thesis that is limited and worth arguing. It does not contain unexpected digressions, and it ends by keeping the promise to argue and inform that the writer makes in the beginning.

The A Paper:

The A paper has all the good qualities of the B paper, but in addition it is lively, well paced, interesting, even exciting. The paper has style. Everything in it seems to fit the thesis exactly. It may have a proofreading error or two, or even a misspelled word, but the reader feels that these errors are the consequence of the normal accidents all good writers encounter. Reading the paper, we can feel a mind at work. We are convinced that the writer cares for his or her ideas, and about the language that carries them. The sure mark of an A paper is that you will find yourself telling someone else about it.



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Operační program Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání



Národohospodářská fakulta VŠE v Praze



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