

Paper Guidelines for Economics 323: Economic Restructuring in Latin America

Question

The goal of the paper is to ask a question that no one knows the answer to. This is the essence of real research.

Introduction 1-2 pages In Draft

The introduction contains the question you are trying to answer and the motivation for studying this question.

Literature Review 3-4 pages

The literature review contains a summary, told in story form if possible, of the current state of knowledge relevant to your question. The literature review should read in such a way as to show quite clearly that your question is the next logical step in understanding your topic.

Theory 3-4 pages

The theory section contains a formal and structured way to think about your question. How should we approach it? What does our current understanding of economics imply about the answer to the question? The theory section may draw upon the literature review by using an approach that has been used successfully, or has not been used (but should be) in the literature. Since nearly all of the theory you have learned so far in economics uses graphs, your theory section may use graphs. Supply and demand is one example of theory. The PPF is another example.

Data (Sum Stats) 1-2 pages

To answer your question, you probably need data. In the data section you describe the "ideal" data set that would help you answer the question. Then you go on to describe the data that you found: who collects it, how did you get it, what people does it represent, and what time frame does it cover.

Analysis 3-4 pages In Draft

In this section, you "test" the theory by looking at patterns in your data. For example, if you are testing whether or not unemployment insurance is correlated with higher unemployment, you could compute the correlation coefficient between unemployment insurance and unemployment in a set of countries. You then should discuss what assumptions are important in your analysis, and whether or not you get the same results if you change those assumptions (or countries, or time, or whatever).

Conclusion 1-2 pages In Draft

In this section, you summarize what you found by restating your question and then stating the answer you found. You discuss how this fits into the literature and what other things you could do if you had more than just one semester to do this project.

Then you are done!! Your final paper is due on the last day of class!

