**ECON 3810: Intermediate assignments for research proposals**

**Guidelines\* and grading criteria**

\*All documents associated with the research proposal are ***REQUIRED*** to be submitted in ***full APA style.*** See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> and/or a librarian for detailed guidelines.

**Important dates**

1. January 16 Topics due
2. February 1 Annotated Bibliography (min 10 peer reviewed sources) and Outline due
3. February 22 Preliminary draft due (application to Development Economics Conference)
4. February 15 & 22 Proposal consultations
5. March 12 Final draft due
6. March 8-12 Proposal informal pitch (groups of 6-8)
7. March 14 Development Economics Conference (6-8 participants)

**I. Topic for paper**

On the due date, you must submit an APA style abstract describing your intended research topic. This should include a well-defined, specific, answerable question to research, and it should be based on preliminary reading you have done. I will not provide you with written feedback at this stage, unless I have a concern about your choice. However, you are encouraged to discuss your ideas with me of course. I am AAA by appointment!

IMPORTANT: you will not be able to come up with a well-defined topic simply off the top of your head. You will have ideas off the top of your head for sure, but then you should start doing some preliminary reading to make a decision and refine your idea.

**II. Annotated Bibliography**

What is an Annotated Bibliography? <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>

Annotated Bibliography Requirements:

* Minimum of ten (10) sources on your topic (This does not necessarily mean that each of these will make it into your research proposal—use discernment at this stage to save work/time later)
* Sources must be ***peer-reviewed*** (see me for approval if you have found an important, relevant source that is not peer-reviewed—make a case for its inclusion)
* APA style citation, with
  + summary (what did the source contribute to the knowledge?)
  + critical analysis (assess and reflect)
* Formatting
  + 11 point font
  + 1 inch margins
  + Georgia (preferred), Times New Roman, Garamound, or Calibri font
  + right aligned paragraphs
  + 1 or 1.5 spacing

**III./V. Research Proposal (Preliminary and Final Drafts)**

You should state your research topic as accurately as possible. Your research proposal (preliminary draft will most likely be 1000-2000 words, excluding references) should address the following:

Abstract

1. Introduction
   1. What is your general topic? Why is it important?
   2. What question(s) do you want to answer? Why?
2. Literature review (\*)
   1. What is the key literature and its limitations?
   2. What is the place of your question in the bigger picture?
   3. What is the next step in this research area?
   4. Tell your story using the literature: why the issue and your specific question are relevant
3. Motivation
   1. Reiterate the importance of your issue and specific question in the context of the research that has been done
   2. State your hypothesis(es)
4. Methodology
   1. How will you answer your questions?
   2. If using data analysis, what is the source of the data?
   3. What are your case studies, if any, and what are your case selection criteria?
5. Conclusion
   1. Restate your question, its importance, and your hypothesis(es)

References/Bibliography (APA style)

This is a generic outline indicating the main components your research proposal will contain. Organize your proposal in the manner that best enhances the communication of your research objectives rather than attempting to stuff your research into a pre-scripted box.

(\*) This section will comprise at least half of your proposal. You will be explaining the research done so far, the frontier in the literature, and where your research fits into the literature. (How are you contributing to research in this area?) You must include properly formatted citations and a bibliography (references), using the APA style.

**III. Research Proposal Preliminary Draft**

Please note that your preliminary draft will be graded based on the following criteria:

* thoroughness of literature review
* definition of question
* development of methodology

A preliminary draft that scores well in these three areas **WILL NOT** be a *first* draft. Each of these elements requires considerable refinement and thought. Remember, I am AAA by appointment to discuss any element of your proposal.

**V. Research Proposal Final Draft**

The final draft submitted must include a cover page with your title, name and date submitted. Your final draft will most likely be 2000-4000 words, excluding references. Do NOT exceed 4500 words with references.

It also must include a cover page, with the following:

* Title, Name, Date, Institution, Class
* A 300-500 word abstract (polished summary) centered, justified, 2/3 down the page, where you:
  + Explain what your topic is and why it is important
  + Clearly formulate your question and thesis
* Acknowledgements of people who were instrumental in the completion of your research (ie: proof readers, librarian, brainstorming participants, etc.) centered at the bottom

At this stage, you must have reached an excellent understanding of different strands of relevant literature and incorporated them into your own thinking and argument.

Please note that your final draft will *also* be evaluated primarily on the following three criteria:

* thoroughness/appropriateness of literature review
* definition of question
* development of methodology

In addition, the following criteria will impact the final grade:

* grammar and punctuation
* diction
* organization
* voice (academic research)
* clear motivation for research
* adherence to APA guidelines