

# Economics 681 Research Paper and Seminar

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## 1 Course Objectives

In Economics 681, students undertake to study an economic issue and write a Research Paper (RP). The idea is that student will

1. apply their knowledge of economics to an issue of interest to them and to a wider audience.
2. produce a concise written report and a polished verbal presentation of the analysis.

The Research Paper (RP) prepared for Economics 681 is a piece of empirical economic research. The topic of study may be based on previously done research in a particular course or on research done during a work-term for those students enrolled in the Co-op option.<sup>1</sup> The topic can be an issue of public policy or one of positive economics. The evidence will normally be econometric, although, if appropriate, it can be experimental in nature or a simulation. Purely theoretical research papers will only be approved with prior approval of the course coordinator of Economics 681.

### 1.1 Before the term begins

Students are responsible for choosing an area of interest and a supervisor. The key is to pick a subject that **truly** interests you. This often comes out of life experience, job experience or a course you enjoyed. The course coordinator can recommend potential supervisors to the student. A list of potential supervisors will be circulated with the course outline distributed. To view the topics chosen by the graduates of our program go to the MABE webpage, and look for MABE Graduates tab in the left hand column below the MABE heading.

Once a topic and potential supervisor(s) has been identified, the student will arrange a meeting (or be in touch via email) with the potential supervisor(s) to further discuss the topic. The student must ascertain that the supervisor is able to work to the course schedule. Feel free to contact Maria Gallego, the EC681 course coordinator, for help in this area. Maria will be glad to return phone calls and emails.

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<sup>1</sup>In this case, the research paper is expected to significantly build on prior work and the student **must provide** the course coordinator and the supervisor with the paper on which the research in EC681 will be based. Laurier uses software that identifies whether the student's work has been plagiarized even when copying from previous work authored by the student, i.e., even when self plagiarizing (see also Section 2.2 and Appendix A).

## 1.2 Once the term begins

A short written proposal is submitted and presented during week 2 of the term. It is for this reason that we advise students to find a topic and a supervisor before the beginning of the term. In addition, by week 2, the student must also have an idea of the type of data required for the analysis of the topic they want to study. In particular, the student should have identified the two most important variables that best capture their testable hypotheses. More details of the proposal follow in section 4.1.

Course **timetable** is as follows:

Day and Date	Time (Location)	Event
Friday, May 9	1-2:30 pm (SBE 3245)	Welcome and Q&A Session
Friday, May 16	10-11:30 am (P2015)	Proposal Presentations
Monday, May 19	before 4 pm	Written Proposal due
Friday, May 30	11:30 am - 1 pm (P1017)	Writing Centre Presentation on writing a literature Review
Friday, June 6	before 4 pm	Literature Review due
Tuesday, June 10	10-11:30 am (P3015)	Peer Comments on Literature Review
Thursday, July 3	10-12:30 am (SBE1230)	Progress Reports (presentation only)
Monday, July 7	10-11:30 am (P3015)	Peer Comments on Progress Reports
Thursday, July 24	11:30 am - 1 pm (P1017)	Writing Centre Presentation on writing a Final Report
Friday, August 1	10 am - 1 pm (P3027)	Final Presentation
Monday, August 4	before 4 pm	Final Report due

Students are required to **attend all presentations by all students** and to contribute to the presentations of their classmates by **asking questions** during the presentations. While no marks will be given for participation, **up to 5% may be deducted from the final grade** for missing any presentation and/or for not participating in the presentations.

Students are also **required** to do a peer evaluation of the literature review and the progress report presentation of other students. **5%** will be deducted from the final grade if a student fails to participate on peer evaluations components of the course.

## 2 Evaluation

The course evaluation consists of three presentations and three written reports plus peer evaluations of literature review and the progress report. The weight for each segment of the course is given in the table below.

In week 3 after the written proposal has been marked, the course coordinator will assign each student to a group consisting of 2 to 4 students (if possible). The members of the group are to work together giving each other feedback through out the term and in particular during the two peer review sessions that will be held after the literature review and the progress report presentation (see details below).

Communication with students will be made through the EC681 Course home page in MyLearningSpace (MyLS). Students must submit all presentations and written reports using the proper folder in the Dropbox in MLS.

Deadline	Tasks	Weight
<b>End of Week 2</b>	Proposal presentation (10 minutes)	5%
<b>Beginning of Week 3</b>	Written Research Paper proposal and selection of supervisor (maximum 4 pages)	5%
<b>End of Week 5</b>	First Draft of Literature Review	15%
<b>Beginning of Week 6</b>	Peer Comments on the Literature Review	
<b>End of Week 9</b>	Progress Report presentation (15 minutes)	15%
<b>Beginning of Week 10</b>	Peer Comments on Progress Report	
<b>End of Week 13</b>	Final Presentation (20 minutes)	20%
<b>Beginning of Week 14</b>	Final Written Report	40%

If a student does **much** better on the final presentation **and** final written report than in other parts of the course, the final grade will be adjusted upwards to reflect the student's improvement through out the term. The adjustment will depend on the magnitude of the improvement and is to be jointly determined by the supervisor and the course coordinator.

Note that to pass EC681 you need **to pass the final report**.

Course announcements will be posted in the News section of the course webpage in MyLS. Occasionally, an announcement may be sent via email. University regulation requires that email communication with students be done using the Laurier email system. Students are required to regularly check their Laurier emails accounts. The email may come from Maria Gallego, the course coordinator, or from Ms. Helen Kaluzny, the MABE Administrative Assistant.

## 2.1 Written Submissions

All written submissions must be provided in **Word** format using the Dropbox in MyLS. We will use these documents to check for **plagiarism** (see Section 2.2).

Students must also submit their literature review and their progress report in the proper folder in the **Discussion Board** of MyLS so that other students can download these documents. They must also upload their written comments on both the literature review and progress report of the other students assigned to their group on the proper folder of the Discussion Board of MyLS.

## 2.2 Writing and Plagiarism

All written submissions are assessed based on both content and presentation (organization, clarity, style). Writing well is an important skill that requires effort and practice. In all of their written reports, students must write for an audience that has an undergraduate degree in economics but that has no knowledge of their topic. This means that all terms commonly used in a particular area must be defined in all the reports (and in the presentations too).

Laurier's Writing Centre is available to help you improve your writing so that you can effectively communicate with a general audience. The Writing Centre can be reached at extension 2220. They are located in the Dr. Alvin Woods Building (DAWB), room 1-102. Appointments can be requested on-line. Graduate students are invited to contact the Centre if they wish to use their services. The services include individual appointments to discuss your written work. They also provide some helpful on-line resources.

Please see also the relevant sections of this outline related to **plagiarism** (see Section 4.2) with respect to the literature review (see also appendix section on plagiarism). It is important for students to realize that all written submissions must be in their **OWN words**. That is to say that copying or cutting and pasting from un-attributed sources is a serious academic offence with serious consequences. The sanctions stipulated in the Graduate Academic calendar will be imposed on students caught plagiarizing. This may even lead to the student failing EC681. Since EC681 counts for two half-courses, this will lead to the student not graduating.

## 2.3 Research Question

The research question and its testable hypotheses are an essential part of the Economics 681 research papers (RP) and indeed of most research undertaken for any employer.

The target audience for the RP in EC681 is persons with an undergraduate degree in economics who are not familiar with the student's topic. Stating the research question in a clear and concise manner is **not** easy. Moreover, the research question may evolve as the student becomes better acquainted with the topic.

In each segment of the course, be it a presentation or a written report, students are required to **begin** with a brief research statement. This research statement may become more precise as the student learns more about the topic. The research question is a unifying concept for all the presentations and written reports. As such, **all presentations and all reports must clearly present the question, and the testable hypotheses that emerge from it.**

An **executive summary or abstract** of the paper is required in the final research report. This abstract will prove useful for job interviews since students can introduce the topic and convince employers of the relevance and importance of the topic. This will allow students to simultaneously show potential employers their deep understanding of the topic as well as to show their communication skills.

Note that by taking Economics 681, the student agrees that their name, picture, the title of their research topic along with the abstract of the RP and the name of their supervisor can be posted in the MABE Graduates webpage.

## 2.4 Written Reports

You must write your reports assuming that even though your readers have an undergraduate degree in economics, they know nothing about your topic. This applies to all reports, meaning that you are to assume that the audience knows nothing of your topic even if they have read your reports or attended your presentations.

When preparing a **written report**, the following applies.

1. Introduce and motivate your topic.
2. The **cover page** must include the title of the project, the student's name, the student's identification number and the name of the advisor.
3. **Pages** should be numbered.
4. The **page format** is 12 point font, 2 line spacing, 1 inch margins all around.

5. All **equations** must be properly displayed using the equations editor in Word or in PowerPoint (PPT). **Penalties** will be applied for improperly displaying the equation in written reports or in presentations.
6. The student must discuss tables and graphs included in the paper.
7. Any tables included in any report **must be the student's OWN tables**. They cannot be those given by a statistical package or some else's tables. All tables, or summaries of more extensive tables included in the Appendix, must be included **near the text** that discusses them and not at the end of the paper. All references to tables in the text must link the discussion to a table number. When a table goes over a page give all column heading in each page.
8. All reports must be submitted on time through the corresponding DropBox in MyLS. See penalties below for late submissions.

A **1% penalty** of the relevant report component for having no cover page or no page numbering.

## 2.5 Presentations

Each student makes three presentations during the term (the proposal, the progress report and the final presentation). The class meetings are intended to give supervisors, the course coordinator and the student's classmates a chance to offer suggestions and reaction to the research topic and strategy.

In each presentation, the student must introduce the audience to their topic since the assumption is that the audience knows nothing about their topic.

Students are expected to do their presentations within the allotted time. Students exceeding the specified time limit will be assessed a **penalty up to 10% of the presentation mark** for being over up to 5 minutes. More serious penalties will be applied if they exceed the time limit by more than 7 minutes. Students are encouraged to practice their presentations prior to the class meeting.

For all presentations, students are **expected to arrive 10 minutes early** to upload their presentations to the computer.

**Casual business is the dress code** in effect for all presentations.

Each presentation must be uploaded to the proper folder in the **Dropbox of MyLS prior** to the commencement of the first presentation. Presentations **cannot** be changed after they have been submitted to MyLS. This levels the plain field for all students. A penalty of up to 20% will be applied to the grade of the presentation if the student presents a different presentation than the one uploaded to MyLS.

If there is reference material (say a table of summary statistics) that you think members of the audience must have, either because it is not suitable for a slide or because you will be referring to it later in the presentation, please make twice as many hard copies as there are students in the class for distribution.<sup>2</sup> Note, you may not need to distribute additional material.

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<sup>2</sup>This is normally enough copies since there are usually few guests and not all supervisors attend the presentations.

### 2.5.1 Presentation Guidelines

For each presentation the following applies:

1. Introduce and motivate your topic.
2. Have a separate cover page that includes the title of the project, the student's name, the student's identification number and the name of the supervisor.
3. All equations must be clearly **displayed online** (see Section 2.4) using the equations editor. **Penalties** apply for improperly displaying the equation in the slides.
4. If you are printing handouts for supervisors and others, **print 2 slides per page**. We do not want handouts with tables that are too small to read. Handouts may be printed double-sided.
5. Presentations must be submitted using the corresponding Dropbox in MyLS **prior** to the presentation.

When preparing a presentation take into account that slides are there for two reasons. The main purpose is to remind the presenter of what follows in the presentation. In addition, the slides allow someone who drifted to rapidly catch up with what you are saying. This means that slides should not have too much or too little content.

- On the one hand, if slides are too crowded, such as happens when there are sentences in a slide, this forces the presenter and the audience to read. Moreover, if the presenter is ready to move on to the next slide, the drifter has no time to catch up. You may lose this person a second or third time. This person may then lose interest in your presentation altogether.
- On the other hand, if the slides are too condensed then the drifter, who is trying to catch up, does not have enough information to do so. Again, you lose this person a second or third time.

The content in each slide must then have just enough content to keep the audience interested in your topic but not too much to overwhelm them. If a slide is looking too crowded think about splitting it into two slides. If a slide is too empty, think about what else you can add that will help the audience understand what you are saying.

Presenters **should NEVER read** from the slides.

### 2.5.2 Websites on effective presentations

Giving effective presentations within a specified time is a skill that is acquired only through practice. Don't hesitate to consult with your supervisor as to what to include or not in your presentations. In addition, the following websites provide suggestions for making good and effective presentations.

- The Writing Center: Presentations by Molly Brown.
- PowerPoint Tips.

### 3 Roles of Supervisor and Course Coordinator

A student's supervisor is usually in the best position to answer questions related to the topic and content of the research paper, since they are the experts in the chosen area of study. The course coordinator is primarily responsible for the administration of Economics 681, and so questions about the format and scheduling of the class presentations are best addressed to the course coordinator.

Since the process is designed to involve both the course coordinator and the supervisor, there is some amount of flexibility in these roles. In other words, the course coordinator can be contacted to provide some advice on the content and organization of the RP, and the supervisor can give advice about the in-class presentations.

All grades will be determined **jointly** by the course coordinator and the student's supervisor. The input of other faculty present at presentations will be sought in the assessment of presentations. This will allow students to see how effective they are at communicating with someone not familiar with their topic.

### 4 Course Requirements

The requirements for each segment of the course are individually presented in this section.

#### 4.1 Proposal

The written proposal is relatively short. It includes a brief explanation of the topic (300–500 words), the name and signature of your supervisor and a short list (at least 3) of related **economic** references relevant to the research question.

The proposal must also provide a **schedule** for completion of the RP. Student and supervisor must discuss the schedule to ensure that it doesn't conflict with the supervisor's other commitments. This time table should be **accompanied** by a description of the expectations what will be achieved in the research paper by the supervisor and by the student (if possible).

Some students in the past have handed in Proposals with **no economic content**. While we encourage multi-disciplinary topics, the research proposal must have substantial and clearly identifiable economic content. Proposals with no economic content will not be accepted as a research topic. The student will receive an **F grade** for this portion of the course and will need to modify the research question and provide a new proposal before moving to do the literature review.

Your proposal presentation must cover the items noted below, but if you have an answer for some of the optional ones, please do give us an answer. The class meeting is intended to give classmates and the course coordinator a chance to offer suggestions and reaction.

**Topic:** What is your topic? Briefly and in plain language give a statement of your research question. This is a **first pass** at formulating your research question. (**Required**).

**Why:** Why did you choose your topic and why is it interesting to you and/or important to others? (**Required**)

**Testable hypotheses:** A **first pass** at formulating your testable hypotheses in a concise and clear manner. (**Required**).

**Data:** What data do you expect to use? You should present the **two main variables** that you will use in your analysis. One captures the event you want to study, the other is the main explanatory variable. You should discuss how these variables relate to the research question and (if available) present their descriptive statistics. Give, for example, the catalogue numbers. Discuss availability issues, if any. (**Required**).

**Expected Results:** What do you expect to find? You are allowed to say if you are leaning toward one finding or another. (**Required**).

**Possible Problems:** If you foresee a possible problem with the project can you see a way around it? (**Optional**)

**Work Plan:** Draft of the work plan specifying dates in which you expect to complete certain parts of your research and the expectation of what will be achieved during your RP. (**Required**). Repeating the dates given in the course outline does **not count** as a work plan, that is, much more detail is required in the work plan than what is given in the course outline.

**Advisor:** The name of your advisor (**required**).

The **written proposal** should not exceed four (4) pages, including a separate cover page and a separate page for the bibliography and must be page numbered. The Written Proposal will be evaluated using Rubric E1 in Appendix E. The feedback you receive may not refer to every item on the form.

The **proposal presentation** should be less than **10 minutes long**. This is partly to allow time for questions and suggestions from the audience. See Section 2.5.1 on presentation guidelines. The Proposal Presentation will be evaluated using Rubric E2 given in Appendix E. The feedback you receive may not refer to every item on the form.

Note that it is common for the topic and the specific research question to evolve as you work on the project.

## 4.2 Literature Review

The literature review should **provide evidence** that the student has more than started to read, write and to think about the topic. The review should identify the key issues related to the topic. At this stage, the student will survey the **main** articles in the literature. Note that as the student gets more involved in her/his research, the research question may also become more precise. This may mean that the student may need to modify (that is, add or delete papers) the Literature Review at a later stage.

The literature review must include a cover page, a separate page with the references and be page numbered.

A **second pass** at the research question and testable hypotheses must be included **before** the introduction to the Literature Review. In addition, introductory and summary paragraphs for the review itself are highly recommended. These state where the reader is going and has gone respectively.

The following two web sites are very helpful at indicating the objective of a literature review and what should and should not be included in the review:

- Writing a Literature Review: University of Toronto



- Write a Literature Review: University of California SC

Don't hesitate to consult with your supervisor, especially as far as what to include and not to include in your literature review. Note in particular, that the empirical specification and technique to be used in **your** paper are **not** part of the literature review.

The literature Review is intended to be a good draft of the review as it will appear in your final report. The guideline for the length of entire paper is 5,000-10,000 words, and the final literature review is typically 'about' 1/3 of that. Given that the literature review is likely to change and perhaps undergo further trimming as you redraft the paper, the suggested guideline for the Literature Review should be between 2,000 and 4,000 words with a **strict upper** limit of 4,000 words. The penalty for going about this limit is up to 20% of the grade in the literature Review.

**Plagiarism** is a an extremely serious matter. In at least some cases it became clear to us that students were unaware of proper citation of referenced works. A plagiarized Literature Reviews may receive **an F grade**. We may also impose more serious penalties (see Section 2.2). In addition, if allowed to proceed, the student will be asked to entirely re-write the Literature Review before proceeding to the next stage of their research project.

Students may refer to cited works, but you **cannot** copy whole sentences or paragraphs without making it clear that the passage is taken from another source. A Writing Centre web page addresses the issue of proper citation and avoiding plagiarism. You are expected to have read and understood the content of this page. **NO excuse for plagiarism will be accepted in Economics 681.**

Laurier uses software that helps detect plagiarism. Each students submission is checked for plagiarism as soon as the student submits any material the DropBox of MyLS. A plagiarism report is issued by the software giving the percentage content of material found in other sources. You can view this report sometime after uploading your submissions to MyLS.

Some students in the past have handed in a Literature Review that had **no economic content**. While we encourage multi-disciplinary topics, the literature review must mainly summarize the relevant economic literature in the area **at this stage**. Summary of relevant non-economic papers may also be included but this is not the main focus of the review at this stage. Literature reviews with **no** economic content will receive an **F grade** and will need to be **re-written** before the student can proceed to the next stage of the research.

#### 4.2.1 Specific Guidelines: Literature Review

The literature review should be between 2,000 and 4,000 words in length. The bibliography should include only the papers discussed in the review.

When summarizing the work of others the following applies:

1. **For a theoretical paper:** summarize the theoretical argument presented in the paper as it pertains to your topic. Relate your comments to the explanatory variables and if available comparative statics relevant to your research question. Include a **critical** evaluation of the paper's contribution to your research question.
2. **For an empirical paper:** summarize the hypotheses tested in the paper that are relevant to your research question. Give the sample period, the important variables included in the study and the econometric technique used and why this technique helps the researcher deal with the question being studied in the paper. Include a summary of the results relevant to your research question and a **critical** evaluation of the paper's contribution to your topic.

3. On evaluating the contribution of the theoretical and empirical papers, the discussion may include comments on the presence of competing hypotheses or the conclusiveness of the econometric tests. Students should show how each paper expands or surpasses previous papers in understanding the question at hand.
4. When **citing a paper** in the text give the year of publication, e.g., Barro (2007). When citing a paper with two authors cite both authors in the text, e.g., Barro and Sala-i-Martin (2011) and when there are three or more authors use “et al.” extension, e.g., Acemoglu *et al.* (2007).
5. A single citation style must be **consistently** used through out the entire Bibliography or List of References and in the various reports.
6. Remember that you must write for a person with an undergraduate degree in economics who knows nothing about your topic. Failing to do so will lower the grade of your report.

Any **one** of the following four well-known citation styles should be adhered to in all submissions.

**APA:** American Psychological Association citation style

**Chicago:** Chicago Manual of Style (Now by subscription) Available in the library.

**Turabian:** Kate Turabian’s Manual for Writers (Hard copy only, but an excellent reference)

**MLA:** MLA Handbook MLA stands for Modern Languages Association (Hard copy only, but an excellent reference)

The Literature Review will be evaluated using Rubric E3 in Appendix E.

### 4.3 Peer Review of the Literature Review

On week 6, students will meet with their group to do a peer evaluation of the literature review done by other students in the group. Students are to identify the issues in each review and discuss whether the literature review was successful in explaining the relevant issues pertinent the student’s research question and to comment on how the review can be improved.

These comments must be provided in writing and uploaded to the proper folder in the Discussion Board of MyLS **before** the Peer Review meeting takes place. Hard copies of the report must also be brought to the meeting of week 6.

At this meeting, the course coordinator determines whether the comments made in each group were high, medium or low quality and will use this plus the written comments of each student to determine whether the student has passed this segment of the course.

While no mark will be given for commenting on other students’ literature reviews, failure to provide comments of high enough quality on the literature reviews of other students will carry a penalty of 2.5% of the overall mark for the course.

## 4.4 Progress Report

In week 9 of the term, students present a **15 minute progress report**. No written submission is required at this time, although students are welcome to circulate a very brief handout if they feel it is necessary.

See Section 2.5.1 on general presentation guidelines. For the Progress Report the suggested format is as follows (you may choose to present these items in a different order).

1. Motivate your topic.
2. Briefly, state your research question. This will be a **third-pass** at formulating the research question in a concise and clear manner (**Required**).
3. Review of work to date:
  - A **brief** review of the most important (**no more than 4**) papers related to the student's topic. See information to include on each paper in Section 4.2 (**Required**).
  - Descriptive statistics of the data along with an explanation of why and how the variables contribute to our understanding of the research question (**Required**). See the content of the descriptive statistics **below**.
4. A brief introduction to the empirical specification you intend to use in your analysis. You must justify why this technique is the appropriate one to carry out the analysis of your research question. A more detailed explanation of the empirical specification will need to be given in the final report. (**Required**).
5. A **third-pass** at formulating the testable hypotheses emanating from the research question (**Required**).
6. Preliminary findings including some basic regressions results and a discussion of the findings (**Optional**).
7. Unresolved problems (if some have arisen) and possible solutions (**Required**).
8. **Compare** the original work plan with what you have achieved to date on an item by item basis.
9. **A completion plan:** including deadlines for data, model runs, writing, etc. Note that repeating the time line given in course outline does not count as your timetable and thus will accordingly receive a zero for this time in the marking rubric. (**Required**)

The **descriptive statistics** included in the progress report must contain tables and/or graphs and a discussion of how the raw data (that is, before any econometric analysis is done) supports their testable hypotheses.

The goal of constructing, investigating, and describing your variables using descriptive statistics is to force each student to get detailed and intuitive knowledge of the underlying data **before** any more rigorous statistical investigation is done. Often, complex techniques can mask one's true understanding of how the real world is operating. So, think of the exercise of getting preliminary descriptives together as telling a story with data.

Make sure you do **not just provide** a set of separate graphs and a brief description of what each graph is. This is **not helpful in telling a story**. We certainly learn from these graphs. But the question is what we can learn from these tables about your research question and your testable hypotheses.

In your graphs, you should try to illustrate the relationships you are interested in. For example, if you are studying whether there are recessions in election years, you should try plotting GDP growth and the election years in the same graph, see if there are any clear indications of recession in election years. As another example, if you are studying how debt related to the economy you can plot debt against GDP growth (or other variables such as employment). Plot them on the same graph so we can see if there is an obvious relationship. Do changes in debt occur before changes in GDP? Or vice versa.

Ask yourself, if there is any advantage at using more dis-aggregated data. Can some tables shed light on your topic? For example, if you are studying the probability of calling an election when the economy is doing well then having a table that shows the descriptive statistics for the years in which there is an election and comparing these statistics with those for non-election years might give us an indication as to whether political leaders tend to call election when the the economy is doing well (e.g., per capita GDP being higher on average for election than non-election years). Or if you are studying debt and recessions, you might think of something that summarizes the year or two before and after recessions, to illustrate the typical debt increase/decrease and whether this is changing over time.

The idea of the descriptive stats exercise is to see what the relationships between the variables included in the study are, not simply to find some variables and plot their time series behaviour.

The Descriptive Statistics section of your **final report** must contain the following required items:

1. A **description** of the variables used in the analysis and how they relate to your research question and testable hypotheses.
2. Tables and graphs of **basic** descriptive statistics that include the mean, median, standard deviation, the maximum and minimum of each variable and the number of observations in each variable. Remember to tell us what periodicity your are using in your sample (yearly, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily, etc.).
3. Any relevant **graphs and discussion** that illustrate and contribute to our understanding of your research question.
4. Tables should be placed close to the text discussing the information provided in the table. Each Table must have as footnote data sources and where relevant the definition of variables that may have been given in the text.

Remember to introduce the reader as to what will done and a conclusion as to what was accomplished in each section. The Descriptive Stats Section will be an integral part of the final report. Since students need to present their descriptive stats in their progress report it is **strongly advised** that students write this section of their paper at this stage. Supervisors can then comment on what the student achieve or is missing in the descriptive stats.

If other variables are added to the analysis at a later stage, then make sure to include them in the Descriptive Stats in the final report.

The criteria considered when grading the **Progress Report** are as follows:

**Coverage:** Did you adequately address all of the required items above, and problems if they apply to you?

**Clarity:** Was your presentation easily understood? Were you able to handle questions well?

**Timing:** Did your presentation run fluidly, or was it choppy at times?

Students are reminded that learning to do good presentations takes time and practice. In addition, students must learn to present their work in the allotted time. This requirement applies not only in school but also in the workforce. For these reasons, students are reminded that there are penalties for going over the time allotted to the presentation (see Section 2.5.1).

We highly recommend that students practice before presenting their progress report. The Progress Report will be evaluated using Rubric E4 in Appendix E. The feedback you receive may not refer to every item on the form.

#### 4.5 Peer Review of the Progress Report Presentation

At the meeting on week 10, students will meet with their group to comment on the progress report presentation of students in the group. Students are to identify the issues in each presentation and discuss whether the student was successful at covering all the items stated in Section 4.4 and in clearly communicating their research question, descriptive stats and technique to a **general economic audience**. Comments should also include suggestions on how the presentation could be improved.

Comments are to be provided in writing and uploaded to the proper folder in the **Discussion Board** of MyLS. This must be done **prior** to the Peer Review meeting. Hard copies of the report must also be brought to the meeting of week 10.

As in the previous peer review meeting, the course coordinator determine whether the comments discussed in each group were of high, medium or low quality. The course coordinator will use this plus the written comments of each student to determine whether the student has passed this segment of the course.

While no mark will be given for commenting on other students' progress reports, failure to provide high enough quality comments on the progress reports of other students will carry a penalty of 2.5% of the overall mark for the course.

#### 4.6 Final Presentation

The final presentation is limited to **20 minutes**, and so cannot cover all the detail of the report, but should be designed so that someone with a bachelors degree in economics could understand the issue addressed and the main findings without being familiar with the topic.

See Section 2.5.1 on general presentation guidelines. The format of the final presentation **mirrors** that of the report (see detail comments on the final report in the Section 4.7 below). While the student must introduce and motivate her/his topic, and present some of the most important papers in the literature relevant to their topic, a major share of the presentation is normally devoted to the findings. A common problem is for students to take too long with the introduction and background, leaving themselves pressed for time during the presentation of their findings.

The Final Presentation will be evaluated using Rubric E5 in Appendix E. The feedback you receive may not refer to every item on the form.

## 4.7 Research Paper (RP)

The RP is not a thesis. Unlike a Master's thesis, the RP is not required to be publishable. Nonetheless, it should shed some **new** light on the chosen subject. Students are **urged to take advantage of the earlier feedback** provided on their presentations and written reports provided by both the supervisor and the course coordinator.

In previous years, a number of students has supplied revised versions of their EC681 papers to employers as evidence of their ability to do careful detailed research and to write reports.

## 4.8 Research Paper Format Guidelines

There should be evidence that the comments made by the advisor, the course coordinator and the student's peers on previous segments of the courses have been **incorporated** into the final draft. The research paper follows the following general outline:

1. An **Executive Summary or Abstract** of **no more** than 200 words. This abstract will be published in the MABE webpage at the end the course.
2. An **Introduction** including problem identification and explanation; as well as the research objectives, an **economic** explanation of why the topic is interesting and a summary of the major findings of the study.
3. A **critical Literature Review** of relevant **economic** and (if applicable) non-economic literature.<sup>3</sup>
4. A **Methodology** describing the conceptual framework and methodology used in the paper and why it is appropriate for the study at hand.<sup>4</sup>
5. A **Data Section** giving an overview of the sources and features of the data included in the study. Students should use the guidelines for the descriptive statistics given in Section 4.4 and should provide evidence for the hypotheses in the **raw data**.
6. A **Findings Section** presenting and explaining the results of the study, in particular do the findings conform with expectations. Use summary tables in the main text to summarize your results. Full tables should go in the Appendix. (Remember that any tables included in the paper must be your own tables and not the output tables of statistical packages.)
7. In the **Summary and Conclusion Section** discussing the results including the project's limitations.
8. A **Bibliography/List of References**. See notes on style above.

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<sup>3</sup>See comments in Literature Review Section 4.2 above on what to include on each paper.

<sup>4</sup>Sometimes it makes sense to have a separate section on the conceptual framework.

9. **Appendices.** The paper may include one or more appendixes including additional data and tables with the full results. These include all the control variables included in the regression results. This must be done even when other tables are included in the main body of the report. Data appendixes do not count towards the page/word counts.

Departures from this outline must be approved by the supervisor in consultation with the course coordinator.

The RP's should be roughly 5,000–10,000 words. Large departures from this guideline must be approved in advance by the course coordinator and supervisor. Such approval is not routinely granted.

Use one of the styles mentioned above for your Bibliography or List of References.

The Final Report will be evaluated using Rubric E6 in Appendix E. The feedback you receive may not refer to every item on the form.

## **A Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Please read the university policies regarding Academic Integrity, and especially those related to plagiarism.

Be sure that you have read and understood these. Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. Students will be required to submit all written work in electronic form so that it can be checked for plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged presentation, in whole or in part, of the work of others as one's own, whether in written, oral or other form, in an examination, report, assignment, thesis or dissertation.

Plagiarism also includes presenting work from another course or previous coop work without substantially adding to the previous version of the paper. If caught doing this the penalties imposed by Laurier will apply.

## **B Ethical Review**

Ethical Review covers the following categories of research:

1. research involving human participants
2. focus groups
3. experiments with human participants
4. the secondary use of data that identifies those who provided the data
5. use of confidential data

### **B.1 Human Participants**

Graduate student and faculty research projects falling under headings 1 to 4 above require ethical review and approval by Laurier's Research Ethics Board. If you feel that your research paper may fall in any of these categories, you should read Laurier's Research Ethics Policy for more information and raise the issue with your supervisor prior to collecting data or information from the participants. Surveys and interviews are subject to ethical review.

### **B.2 Confidential Data**

Some MABE students have completed research papers based on confidential data supplied to them by a firm. By way of an example, a firm may provide some confidential financial data to an MABE student on the condition that the data remain confidential. In such cases, the following conditions apply:

1. The student and supervisor must take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of the information provided.
2. The research paper and all its findings are public documents, and providers of confidential information cannot interfere with the publication of the research paper, even if its conclusions are unfavourable to the provider of the data.



If you plan to base your paper on confidential information please contact the Director of the Master of Arts in Business Economics (MABE) program. The student, supervisor, the EC681 course coordinator and the provider of the data will be required to sign letters acknowledging an appreciation of these conditions.

## C Policy on Late Written Submissions

Late submissions are accepted with penalties as described below unless appropriate documentation is provided. Time pressures associated with other courses or normal work assignments are not acceptable excuses from being on time.

Assignment Submitted	Out of
On time	100%
Up to 48 hours late	80%
Up to 1 week late	60%
Over 1 week late	0%

When submissions are due on Friday, those submitted after 4 pm on Friday and before 9:00am on Monday morning are marked out of 80%. Those received later on Monday are marked out of 60%.

## D Extension Policy

A student may be granted an extension without penalty when there are valid documented reasons (illness or misadventure) for the request. Please see the graduate calendar provisions governing this situation.

### D.1 Timeline for Extensions

When an extension for the final written report is required, the student's advisor and the course coordinator will provide **in writing** the minimum requirements the student must meet to pass the course. The timeline for completion of the RP will be jointly determined by the student's advisor and the course coordinator and will take into account the advisor and the student's personal circumstances. On some occasions the Graduate Director may also be involved in the decision.

The student will also be given a **timeline** of tasks or reports s/he must submit to the advisor and/or course coordinator during the extension period. In particular, the student **must** provide **one week prior to the extension deadline** a draft of the final report. After reading the report, the advisor and the course coordinator will jointly determine whether the student has properly addressed and dealt with all the written comments given to the student at the beginning of the extension period, and thus determine whether the student has met the minimum requirements to pass EC681. The course coordinator and the advisor will determine minor changes (if any) to be done prior to the extension deadline.

### D.2 Extension for documented reasons

A student may be granted an extension **without penalty** when there are valid documented reasons (illness or misadventure) for the request. Once the student can begin working on the research

project, the student will have a maximum of **eight (8) weeks** to complete the requirements for EC681. The student must follow the timeline given by the advisor and course coordinator as stipulated above (see Section D.1).

If the advisor and the course coordinator determine that the student has done insufficient standard of work by the extension deadline, a second but substantially much shorter extension (**less than four weeks**) will be granted accompanied by a timeline and the minimum written requirements to pass the course. This extension is aimed at allowing the student to improve her/his research paper without failing the course. If the student fails to meet the minimum standard by the second extension, s/he will fail EC681 and will, according to regulations, have to withdraw from the program.

### **D.3 Extension for insufficient standard of work by the end of regular term**

A student will be given an extension **with penalty** when the course coordinator and the student's advisor deem that the student has done insufficient standard of work to pass EC681 by the end of the regular term. This extension is aimed at allowing the student to improve her/his research paper. The student's advisor and course coordinator will provide in writing comments and a timeline for completion (see Section D.1 above).

In this case, given insufficient standard of work by the normal deadline, the maximum grade the student can receive in Economics 681 is a **B-**. If the advisor and the course coordinator determine that the student is still below the minimum requirements for the course by the extension deadline, the student will fail EC681 and will, according to regulations, have to withdraw from the program.

**Appendix E -- EC681 Marking Schemes**

**Table E1: WRITEN PROPOSAL EVALUATION RUBRIC**

**Grade (%)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grader:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic of Paper:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Mark</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Research question</b> 5 x _____		Confused explanation for focus of presentation of research question.	Some economic question identified, but little effort made to explain why it is of interest (no motivation).	Economic question clear, but not well explained for general economic audience. Somewhat unfocused/unclear.	Economic question clear and reasonably well motivated. Shows importance of research question.	Clearly explained and motivated economic question, carried through report to end. Expressed well for general economic audience.
<b>COVERAGE: background and interest</b> 5 x _____		No understanding of economic background of research question at 2 <sup>nd</sup> year level.	Little understanding of economic background of the question.	Basic, but not complete grasp of economic background as it relates to question.	Economic background clearly explained and related to research question.	Explains economic background clearly with attention as to background and hypotheses.
<b>COVERAGE: plan for future work</b> 5 x _____		Plan for future work either vague or unrealistic	Plan for future work not well thought out.	Some basic plan, but lacking thought as to possible problems.	Plan for future work focused, but vague as to possible problems.	Plan for future work focused, Discussion includes possible problems.
<b>CLARITY: written style</b> 5 x _____		Reader cannot follow written report at all. No thought given to the flow/logic of the exposition. <b>Grammar</b> can be substantially improved. Spelling mistakes.	Reader consistently feels like asking 'why' or 'is this relevant'? Objective and purpose of written report unclear. Shows little ability to identify key issues. Shows little ability to identify key issues. Goes over- or under-length.	Report comprehensible. Style at worst does not interfere with substance. Readers follow with some difficulty. Grammar errors	Good written report, thought given to objective, form/style, and flow of report. Gets lost in the detail every now and then. Minor grammar errors	Report engaging and clear. All points made contribute to development of key economic argument. Outstanding presentation. Reader easily follows.

**Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2**

**Table E2: RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION RUBRIC Grade (%) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Presentation time (max 10 minutes): Begin \_\_\_\_\_ and End \_\_\_\_\_ . End of discussion period (max 10 minutes) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Grader: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Topic of Paper: \_\_\_\_\_**

	Mark	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Research question</b> 4 x _____		Confused explanation for focus of presentation. Poor presentation of question.	Some question identified, but little effort made to explain why it is of interest (no motivation).	Economic question clear, but not well explained for general economic audience. Somewhat unfocused/unclear.	Economic question clear and reasonably well motivated. Shows importance of research question.	Clearly explained and motivated economic question, carried through presentation to end. Expressed well for general economic audience.
<b>COVERAGE: background and interest</b> 4 x _____		No understanding of economic background of research question at 2 <sup>nd</sup> year level.	Little understanding of economic background of the question.	Basic, but not complete grasp of economic background as it relates to question.	Economic background clearly explained and related to research question.	Explains economic background clearly with attention as to background and hypotheses.
<b>COVERAGE: plan for future work</b> 4 x _____		Plan for future work either vague or unrealistic	Plan for future work not well thought out.	Some basic plan, but lacking thought as to possible problems.	Plan for future work focused, but vague as to possible problems.	Plan for future work focused, Discussion includes possible problems.
<b>CLARITY: presentation style</b> 4 x _____		Listeners either completely bored to tears, or tearing their hair out. Unprepared. No thought given to the flow/logic of the presentation.	Listeners consistently feel like asking 'why' or 'is this relevant?' Objective and purpose of presentation unclear.	Presentation comprehensible. Style at worst does not interfere with substance. May have a tendency to read a prepared script. Audience follows with some difficulty.	Good presentation, thought given to objective, form/style, and flow of presentation. Eye contact made. Listeners follow presentation.	Engaging and clear. Outstanding presentation. Audience easily follows. Does not simply read a prepared script. Good eye contact.
<b>TIMING: pacing and focus</b> 4 x _____		Points made are either irrelevant or wrong. Goes on way too long, or not nearly long enough	Shows little ability to identify key issues. Goes over- or under-length. Allows questions to digress from main point.	Manages to distinguish to some extent between more and less important economic points. Some problem handling questions.	Gets lost in the detail every now and then. Manages to keep audience somewhat focused.	All economic points made contribute to development of key argument. Completes presentation well in required time. Questions well handled.

**Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2**

Table E3: LITERATURE REVIEW EVALUATION RUBRIC

Grade (%) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Grader: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Paper: \_\_\_\_\_

	Mark	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Research Question</b> 3 x ___		No indication of what question the research is trying to answer	Some question identified, but little effort made to explain why it is of interest (no motivation).	Economic question clear, motivation somewhat lacking. Or motivation clear but question is not.	Economic question clear and motivated but limited use of economic terminology.	Economic question clear by end of opening paragraph. Well motivated using summary of current economic/policy debate.
<b>Theory</b> 5 x ___		Little or no use made to describe the economic theory/analysis in referenced papers. Or major misunderstanding of economics at the first year level.	Some discussion of economic theory from reviewed papers brought to bear, but either significant failures of understanding or mostly irrelevant to question.	Discussion of <b>economic theory</b> from reference papers is appropriate at an intermediate/second year level. Some gaps in understanding.	Discussion of economic theory from referenced papers is good, shows a higher level understanding.	Evidence of thorough critical appreciation and evaluation of economic theory presented in the referenced papers. Economics terms used appropriately.
<b>Empirical literature review</b> 8 x ___		Relies on one or fewer empirical papers. Uncritical use. Sources irrelevant.	Limited and uncritical use of a restricted range of empirical references.	Discussion of several relevant economic sources in a reasonable but uncritical way. Missing some key references or points from those papers.	Discusses a range of relevant economic sources including the paper's economic research question and testable hypotheses, variables, period of analysis and frequency of the data, econometric technique and results; makes an attempt to distinguish sources based on quality and uses evaluates sources critically.	Critically discusses a range of relevant economic sources, showing an understanding of their contributions and value in answering the referenced papers' research question including variables, period of analysis and frequency of the data, econometric technique and results. Economics terms used appropriately.
<b>Writing</b> 4 x ___		Unacceptable failings in written expression (sentence structure, grammar, spelling) that significantly impede comprehension.	Poor written expression, errors in grammar, word choice or spelling, causing difficulty in comprehension.	Noticeable errors or failures in clarity of written expression, but do not impair communication.	Generally well-structured and expressed, which communicates clearly. Minor errors only.	Writing style contributes to argument. Good range of sentence structures/ vocabulary.
<b>Other:</b>		Up to 20% points deduction for inadequate referencing or using multiple referencing styles; A 20% penalty for including empirical specification and technique to be used in the paper.				

Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2

**Table E4: PROGRESS REPORT PRESENTATION EVALUATION RUBRIC**

**Grade (%)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation time (max 15 minutes):** Begin \_\_\_\_\_ and End \_\_\_\_\_. **End of discussion period (max 10 minutes)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grader:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic of Paper:** \_\_\_\_\_

	Mark	1	2	3	4	5
<b>COVERAGE: research question and background 2 x _____</b>		Confused explanation for focus of presentation. No attempt to explain economic background.	Some question identified, but little effort made to explain why it is of interest (no motivation or reference to existing literature).	Economic question clear, but not well explained for general economic audience. Provides some background Somewhat unfocused /unclear.	Economic question clear and reasonably well motivated. Shows importance of research question.	Clearly explained and motivated economic question, carried through presentation to end. Expressed well for general economic audience.
<b>COVERAGE: Literature Review 2 x _____</b>		Confused as to how selected papers are linked to research question.	Selected papers somewhat linked to research question. But not clear link established to the research question.	Summary of selected papers clear. Papers shed some light on research question and on research strategy.	Clear summary of 4 most important papers in the literature. Links papers research question. Papers shed light on methodology and research strategy	Outstanding summary of 4 most important papers. Critical evaluation of their contribution to the research question. Summary of different research strategies shed light on possible strategies used to answer student's research question.
<b>COVERAGE: review of work to date 4 x _____</b>		No thought given to empirical issues/problems. Lack of understanding of econometrics/data analysis at 2 <sup>nd</sup> year level.	Little understanding of empirical specification and relation to dataset.	Basic, but not complete grasp of dataset.	Dataset and empirical specification described, but not in detail (e.g., variables not clearly identified or linked to hypotheses and data)	Explains data set clearly. Empirical specification clearly stated, with attention to detail and relevance to hypotheses.
<b>COVERAGE: plan for future work 4 x _____</b>		Plan for future work either vague or unrealistic	Plan for future work not well thought out.	Some basic plan, but lacking thought as to possible problems.	Plan for future work focused, and considers possible problems clearly.	Plan for future work focused, considers possible problems and likely solutions.
<b>CLARITY: presentation style 4 x _____</b>		Listeners either completely bored to tears, or tearing their hair out. Unprepared. No thought given to the flow/logic of the presentation.	Listeners consistently feel like asking 'why' or 'is this relevant'? Objective and purpose of presentation unclear.	Presentation comprehensible. Style at worst does not interfere with substance. May have a tendency to read a prepared script. Audience follows with some difficulty.	Good presentation, thought given to objective, form/style, and flow of presentation. Eye contact made. Listeners follow presentation.	Engaging and clear. Outstanding presentation. Audience easily follows. Does not simply read a prepared script. Good eye contact.
<b>TIMING: pacing and focus 4 x _____</b>		Points made are either irrelevant or wrong. Goes on way too long, or not nearly long enough	Shows little ability to identify key issues. Goes over- or under-length. Allows questions to digress from main point.	Manages to distinguish to some extent between more and less important points. Some problem handling questions.	Gets lost in the detail every now and then. Manages to keep audience somewhat focused.	All points made contribute to development of key argument. Completes presentation well in required time. Questions well handled.

Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2

**Table E5: FINAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION RUBRIC**

**Grade (%)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation time (max 20 minutes):** Begin \_\_\_\_\_ and End \_\_\_\_\_. **End of discussion period (max 10 minutes)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grader:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic of Paper:** \_\_\_\_\_

	Mark	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Research question, economic background, and literature review</b> 3 x _____		Poor presentation of question. Little use made of economic theory/analysis, or major misunderstanding. Fails to place question in context of literature.	Economic question identified, but little motivation. Some failure in understanding relevant economic background. Shows some understanding of contribution to the literature.	Economic question clear, but not well motivated for economic audience. Gaps in understanding relevant economic theory. Understand contribution of relevant literature.	Economic question clear and reasonably well motivated for economic audience. Uses economic theory showing upper level understanding.	Clearly explained and motivated economic question. Outstanding coverage of relevant issues including a summary of most relevant papers in literature. Highlights contribution to the literature and differences with most important papers.
<b>Research Design: methodology, technique, and data description</b> 4 x _____		Describes conceptual framework and methodology poorly. Fails to show relationship to research question. Presentation of data description does not contribute to understanding.	Shows some link of conceptual framework and methodology to the question. Presentation of data description seems somewhat related to question, but fails to address the issue directly. Lack of understanding of dataset or technique.	Shows research design and methodology relevant to question. Presentation of data description somewhat related to question. Basic, but not complete grasp of dataset. Shows some understanding of technique used.	Research design shows relevance of methodology and technique used. Attempts to show hypothesis through <b>raw</b> data. Dataset used effectively, though not creatively.	Research design shows in depth understanding of methodology and empirical technique. Critically discussed with attention to detail and relevance to economic question. Explains data clearly and how data related to hypothesis.
<b>Explanation and interpretation of key results</b> 4 x _____		Unclear on how results relate to question. No thought given to empirical issues/problems. Interpretation of results not warranted by analysis.	Results somewhat related to question. Some interpretation as to evidence for hypothesis. Some thought given to empirical issues/problems.	Some understanding of results and some interpretation as to support for hypothesis. Identifies some empirical issues/problems.	Understands key results. Good explanation of support for hypothesis. Deals with empirical issues/problems.	Critically shows how key results shed light on question. Provides insights as to what events affect results. Show limitations of the analysis. Creative in dealing with empirical issues/problems.
<b>Presentation structure and timing</b> 5 x _____		No outline and no conclusions. Presentation unfocused. No thought given to the flow/logic of presentation. Slides either too crowded or lack content. Timing way off.	Outline and conclusions. Some thought given to the flow/logic of presentation but unsuccessful. Some slides crowded or lack content. Timing/Pacing very uneven.	Outline and conclusions. Flow/logic of presentation does not interfere with content. Content of some slides unclear. Timing/Pacing somewhat uneven.	Outline and conclusions. Successful flow/logic of presentation. Content of slides clear and not too cluttered. Timing/Pacing occasionally uneven.	Outline and conclusions. Flow/logic of presentation contributes to understanding the topic. Content of slides easily understood and not too cluttered. Good Timing/Pacing.
<b>Presentation style</b> 4 x _____		Listeners either completely bored, or can't follow presentation. No eye contact. Unable to move away from script. Too much reading. Questions badly handled.	Listeners consistently feel like asking 'why' or 'is this relevant?' Some eye contact. Reading from a script. Allows questions to digress from main point.	Presentation comprehensible. Style does not interfere with substance. Some tendency to read. Some eye contact. Audience follows with some difficulty. Some problem handling questions.	Easy to follow presentation. Style adds to substance. Lost in detail every now and then. Occasionally reads. Eye contact. Question handled appropriately.	Outstanding presentation, engaging and clear. Points made contribute to key arguments. Audience easily follows. Finished on time. Questions well handled. Does not read. Good eye contact.

**Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2**

**Table E6: FINAL WRITEN REPORT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (%) \_\_\_\_\_

Grader: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic of Paper: \_\_\_\_\_ **Partial grades can be given in each category, e.g., 3.8 or 4.2**

	Mark	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Abstract</b> 1 x _____		Abstract sheds no light on the economic issue under study. No clear connection with objective of paper and results.	Abstract somewhat linked to economic question and results of the paper.	Abstract identifies economic problem and summarizes the results. Reader may be interested in reading further.	Abstract successful identifies economic issue and results. Abstract captures the reader's attention.	Clear and concise abstract. Very successful in defining economic question with succinct explanation of major findings. Captures readers' attention.
<b>Question</b> 2 x _____		Confused explanation of economic research question. No attempt to explain economic relevance or why it is interesting.	Some economic question identified, but little effort made to explain why it is of interest (no motivation).	Economic question clear, but not well explained for economic audience. Provides some background Somewhat unfocused/unclear.	Economic question clear and reasonably well motivated. Shows importance of research question.	Clearly explained and motivated economic question, carried through presentation to end. Expressed well for general economic audience.
<b>Research design: theory, methodology, empirical approach and data</b> 5 x _____		Little use made of economic analysis. Methodology and empirical approach sheds no light on research question. Uncritical review of the literature and its relevance to the question. Data badly presented or sheds no light on question.	Some economic theory but significant gaps in understanding. Uses relevant sources in uncritical way. Fails to understand gaps in literature. Methodology and empirical approach not clearly related to analysis. Some misunderstandings in dataset.	Appropriate use of economic analysis. Somewhat critical use of sources. Identifies some gaps in literature. Shows methodology and empirical technique used relevant to question. Provides evidence of research question in the data. Basic, but incomplete grasp of dataset.	Good use of economic theory. Attempts to distinguish sources based on quality. Shows importance of methodology to question and understands how it leads to empirical technique. Attempt to incorporate evidence into analysis. Data used effectively, though not creatively.	Outstanding coverage of relevant issues. Clearly identify gaps in literature. In depth understanding of methodology and empirical technique used. Critically discusses empirical specification with details and relevance to question. Explains data clearly.
<b>Research Findings and interpretation</b> 6 x _____		No thought given to empirical analysis. Lack of understanding of results No interpretation of results. No sensitivity analysis. No discussion of limitations of empirical approach.	Little understanding of empirical specification and relation to dataset. Some understanding of results and sensitivity analysis. Some discussion of limitations of empirical approach.	Understands results. Some insights and sensitivity analysis of results. Uncritical interpretation and its insights into research question. Shows understanding of limitations of empirical approach	Understands results. Provides insights and sensitivity analysis. Somewhat critical evaluation of results. Clear on limitations of empirical approach	Critically shows results shed light on economic question. Provides good background on how economic events affect results. Clearly outlines limitations of empirical approach
<b>Conclusions</b> 2 x _____		Conclusions show no critical evaluation of results or its contribution to literature. States conclusions not warrantee by results.	Conclusions unclear and show no link to question. Digresses from main point. Results somewhat related to literature but contribution not made clear.	Conclusions reached with difficulty. Some effort made to critically evaluate results. Results related to literature with some reference to contribution.	Conclusions some what clear. Some evaluation of results, including its limitations. Results clearly related to literature. Clear outline of contribution to literature.	Conclusions effective and shed light on question. Critical evaluation of results. Outlines limitations of analysis. Clear on how results contribute to literature
<b>Writing</b> 2 x _____		Unacceptable failings in written expression (sentence structure, grammar, spelling) that significantly impede comprehension.	Reader consistently asks 'why' or 'is this relevant?' Poor written expression, errors in grammar, word choice or spelling, causing difficulty in comprehension.	Style at worst does not interfere with substance. Noticeable errors or failures in clarity of written expression, but do not impair communication.	Thought given to objective, form/style, and flow of paper. Generally structured and expressed, communicates clearly. Minor errors only.	Writing style contributes to argument. Good range of sentence structures/vocabulary. Economics terms used appropriately.
<b>Organization</b> 2 x _____		No thought given to flow/logic of paper. No headings and sub-headings. No introduction and conclusion of each section	Some thought to flow/logic of paper. Headings and sub-headings add to flow but not quite successful. Leads reader from section to section	Flow/logic of paper adds to comprehension as do headings and sub-headings. Introduction and conclusions to sections somewhat identifies purpose of section.	Clear flow/logic of paper and headings and sub-headings. Introduction to sections ease reader into discussion. Conclusion to sections outlines what was achieved.	Flow/logic of paper and headings and sub-headings make paper really easy to follow. Introduction and conclusion to sections very successful in explaining content of section.
<b>Other</b>		Up to 20% points deduction for inadequate referencing or using multiple referencing styles; penalty for not showing all results in appendices.				