

Assignment #1: Introduction to Economics Research

Write a summary of a research paper in economics from the *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (available through JSTOR – Saclink authentication required). You should pick a research paper related to a topic you think you may be interested (this assignment doesn't commit you to a specific topic). The summary should be between one and one-half to two pages (one-inch margins, double-spaced, 12-point Times font). **DO NOT** exceed the two page limit. Your summary should be concise and clearly written. I encourage you to outline the article according to the bullet points below, then, think about how you are going to summarize this information within the two-page limit.

Your summary should include the following:

- A statement of the research question posed in the article. Do not copy the research question if it appears in the article. You should paraphrase the author's research question (in your own words).
- A brief motivation of why this is an interesting/important question. This means explaining why this is a research question worth addressing, not only to other economists, but to individuals and/or institutions in general (the government, private business, etc.)
- A summary of earlier work on this topic. Note, this does not mean going through each article cited by the author and explaining what each did. You should summarize this information in a few sentences, while citing relevant work.
- A statement of the economic theory or theories used. In some economic research, a theory is developed and then tested. This means the economic theory referred to in the article may be something new to you. Other research investigates an existing theory.
- A brief description of the data (and sources) used in the study.
- One or two sentences describing how the author used the data to answer the research question.
- A statement of the results the author finds from empirical work.
- The implications of the author's results for policy makers and/or the general public.
- A list of references cited in your paper. This list does not count toward your two-page limit. This includes the research paper you are summarizing, and the work you cite in your summary of earlier findings. Refer to the APA Style Guide for how to appropriately cite work in your paper and compile a list of references. This guide is available on the course web page and the Sac. State Library.