

General Comments on Paper Drafts (in no particular order)

- Your introduction should (1) make the research question clear, (2) motivate the reader to care, and (3) **HIGHLIGHT** the results (i.e. briefly answer the research question so that the reader can read your paper in that context). Read examples from your lit review to see what I mean.
- **PRESENT TENSE!** Your previous assignments used a lot of future tense (“I will download data...”, “I will run a regression...”); this is no longer appropriate. Search for “will” in your document and change.
- If you include a direct quote from another paper, you must provide a page number in the citation.
- The theoretical economic model must be explained thoroughly and then linked to the hypothesis that you test. Example: If you have a supply and demand model, explain why a curve is shifting and what happens (theoretically) to equilibrium P and Q as a result. Then tie that *theoretical* prediction to the null hypothesis that you test *empirically*.
- You should be generating your own charts and figures.
- The order of information in the paper (in most cases): (1) data description (table of variables, summary stats), (2) data exploration (charts and figures), (3) data analysis (regression equation and results).
- **Discuss** any tables or figures that you include. You’re not allowed to just slap something in there and not discuss it (or discuss it in one sentence). Most of you don’t discuss your summary statistics... you need to. Use this as an opportunity to spend some time talking about each variable and what it actually measures (clarify units, clarify definitions, clarify why you include it in your model).
- Discussion of tables and figures should be **ABOVE** the tables and figures; readers should encounter the discussion before the table or figure.
- Discuss statistically significant results first **or**, if the focus of your research is on one variable, discuss that variable first even if it is insignificant.
- Right justify cell contents in your tables so decimals line up. Use a consistent number of decimal places.
- All tables and figures must be numbered and have a title.
- Tables (e.g. summary stats or regression results) should not have your shortened variable names in the first column... spell everything out. Make the first column of the table wider than the other columns to accommodate the extra words.
- Report p-values (or at least check them to make sure your statements about statistical significance are accurate).
- Null hypothesis is H-sub-zero (H_0), not H-sub-oh (H_o).
- Your conclusion should summarize your empirical findings and then compare your results to the results from the papers in your literature review. If you don’t do this, then your audience has no idea whether your results are normal or odd.
- If you earned below an 8 on this assignment, that is a clear signal that you still have a lot of work to do.