

Assignment #9: Abstract

The abstract of your research paper is presented on the cover page of your project. The abstract is a summary, or critical review of your argument. Your abstract should be one paragraph – typically the shorter and more concise, the better the abstract. Your abstract should answer the following questions about your research:

1. What question is the author asking?
2. What answer does the author propose (e.g., what is the principal assertion of your study?)
3. In what ways does the study improve upon previous research?
4. How does the proposed answer compare with that provided by previous research?
5. What are the major logical or theoretical reasons for the author's argument?
6. What empirical evidence does the author provide?
7. What assumptions is the author making in his or her reasoning?

This is a lot of information to cover in a relatively short space – abstracts are very difficult to write well.

The research papers that you have read and reviewed will include abstracts and are the template you should use for your own. At this point, it may be difficult to answer 6 completely, but you should include work you've completed so far. You will probably need to modify your abstract before handing in your final draft.

***Your paper should include four revised sections: Introduction, Literature Review, Economic Model, Empirical Methodology, plus the Data Appendix and Bibliography. These sections should be integrated into one paper with section headers.

Some things to keep in mind when revising your empirical methodology and your paper in general:

- In describing the data, justify which explanatory variables you are including and why. This should tie back to the model you discussed in the previous section. Several of you have already done this (when you handed in your economic model section).
- Clearly indicate the sources of your data and how each variable is measured. This will be important for how you interpret the results.
- Include a regression equation that you believe reflects the economic model you discussed in the previous section. The regression equation will allow you to test your hypothesis and the economic theory you've used to address your research question.
- Remember that the economic model is a theory that provides an answer to your research question. The empirical methodology is your strategy for taking this research question to the data, to test your research question empirically.
- Please carefully look over the handout I provided on Empirical Methodology. Several of you may have completed this section with Assignment #7, so you can use this assignment to incorporate revisions and get more feedback for your final paper.