

## Topic Outline: Thinking About Projects

Revised: March 29, 2016

### Materials

- Today's handouts: this outline, project examples, mini-cases
- All posted on *Topic outlines & links* page of website

### Followup courses

- [My list](#) of quantitative courses
- Or ask other students

### Project brainstorming

- Back to where we started: **thinking about data**
- The **project** is the heart of the course — and a demonstration of your skillset that you can share with potential employers.
- Components: revised ideas, proposal, data report, project (see due dates)
- Typical project has
  - Data
  - A **graph that tells a story**
  - Additional graphs that explore follow-up questions
- The nature of project ideas
  - Ideas are developed, not discovered
  - Ideas have friends (if you find an idea, there are others nearby)
- Idea machines
  - Start with an idea or subject
  - Start with a dataset
  - Start with an example
  - Start with a suggestion from the people you work with
- Another place to look for ideas
  - Course [data page](#) (skim links, see what strikes you)
- Who has an idea of what they want to work on?

- Project examples (see handout)
  - Do them, or use to jump-start creative thinking
  - Prepackaged: demography, current economic conditions, emerging market opportunities.
  - Random ideas: energy prices and use, time use, HK-Shanghai stock premium, deflation odds from bond prices
  - Data and package projects: choose one you like, describe it for others

## **After class**

- Required
  - Submit Revised Project Ideas
- Recommended
  - Skim Project Guide
  - Skim Project Examples
  - Bounce around project ideas with friends