

## Final Paper

Up to this point in the class, each of you has chosen a research question, looked at research that has already been done on the topic, and explored one related paper in detail. As we enter the final stages of the class, the focus turns to your own research.

Our goal over the next few weeks will be to get as close to an answer to your question as possible. Given the limited time frame and the difficulties inherent in most of your questions, I don't expect that we will get to that answer (or even very close). As a final product for the class, I do not expect a traditional research paper, but more of a reflection on what you were and were not able to accomplish in answering your question. The final paper should include (page recommendations assume double spacing, 12 point font):

1. Introduction/Motivation (~1 page). In this part you can draw on some of the things you found during assignment 1 in exploring articles on the topic. Your goal should be to convince the reader that the topic is worth studying and that finding an answer to the question you have posed would be valuable.
2. Literature Review (~1-2 pages). What research has already been done on this topic and how close to an answer to the question has previous work come to answering it? What aspects of your research question remain unanswered or still need more exploration? You may use the papers from assignment 3/4, but can also add in other papers if you think there are others that are important.
3. Ideal research design (~1 page). If there were no limitations to the data and information you could collect and access, how would you approach your research question? What data would you need and how would you analyze it?
4. Findings (~2-3 pages of text plus graphs/tables). What did you find in your analysis? This section will vary a lot for each of you depending on how far you were able to get in answering your question, but you should show me that you at least did some data analysis and include some graphs/tables/statistics that are not exactly the same as already done in other papers. If you are able to get far enough along to run a regression or a more complicated research design that would be great, but is not required.
5. Reflection (~1-2 pages). Why is the question you are working on difficult to answer? What aspects of the question could you answer and what remains unanswered? If you had more time to work on this question, what would you have liked to try given the data you have? Do you think it would ever be possible to come to a definitive answer to your question?

Please note that the page recommendations listed above are rough guidelines and can be adjusted based on how much you are able to get done. You should not go much over 10 pages for the paper as a whole. The paper is due by Friday of finals week by 11:59pm. Please see the next page for details on expectations.

## **Workload/Expectations**

Since this project is relatively open-ended and you are not expected to produce a completed academic research paper, I want to be a bit more clear on how much work I expect from you. UCLA suggests that students should work 3 hours per credit per week, which would suggest 12 hours for our class - I think that's a little bit too much, so instead I am expecting you to work 7-10 hours on this class per week for the rest of the quarter (30-40 hours total including finals week). We will not have lectures or any required meetings outside of our 20 minute weekly group meeting so you can devote all your time in the class to your project.

If you have worked 10 hours in a week, regardless of your progress, you may stop there. I know that everyone in the class is in a different place in terms of the difficulty of their question to answer, availability of good clean data, and previous experience in data analysis/coding, so I don't want to place too many objective requirements on what I expect you to accomplish in the next 4 weeks. If you spend most of your 10 hours one week trying something and it doesn't really work out I don't want to punish you for that.

Since this open ended structure leaves some temptation to put off work for this class and prioritize other things, I will ask for a progress update each week briefly outlining how you spent your time that week (post on Bruin Learn each Sunday).

To help pace yourself, here is a possible schedule you can follow:

Week 8: Finish importing data into Python, figure out exactly what pieces of the data you want to use, clean the data and explore, look at some basic summary statistics and correlations. start thinking about what kinds of analysis you want to do.

Week 9: Analyze your data and do your best to get as close to an answer to your question as you can. If possible, try to use one of the methods we have discussed in the class, but this is not required.

Week 10: Create nice looking tables/graphs summarizing your findings. Finalize what you would like to include in your paper.

Finals Week: Finish up your analysis and write your paper.