

Final Paper Grading Rubric

For grading, points will be assigned according to the following guidelines (which follow the sections called for in the Final Paper Guidelines):

- **Abstract (5 points):** Does it concisely summarize the motivation, question, methods, findings, and implication?
- **Introduction (10 points)**
 - Does this section motivate why the topic and specific question are important to answer?
 - Is the research question clear and connected to the motivation?
 - Does it explain the methodological challenge and reason for selecting this context, empirical strategy, and dataset?
 - Does it concisely describe the main results?
- **Literature review and contribution (15 points)**
 - Does the literature review capture the state of knowledge on the topic of this paper? (Don't just summarize papers, but rather organize what the literature knows into clear domains. And focus on published economics research, although you can also reference literature from other relevant disciplines.)
 - Does this section make clear how this paper contributes to the existing literature?
- **Data (10 points)**
 - Is the data appropriate for the question and the empirical strategy? (and for a big data class)
 - Are the datasets and variables clearly and comprehensively described?
- **Empirical Strategy (15 points)**
 - Is the empirical strategy appropriate for the research question? Is evidence provided to defend the specific strategy (e.g. evidence of parallel trends for DiD, McCrary test for RDD, etc).
 - Does the writing make clear why this strategy addresses the challenge of causality?
 - Are the estimating equations explicitly stated, making clear what the independent and dependent variables are?
- **Results (20 points)**
 - Are the findings clearly motivated and explained?
 - Does the discussion make clear how we should interpret the results and what their contribution is in light of existing work on the topic?
 - Is there effort to show that the results are robust to alternative specifications (variables or models)?
 - Do the exhibits present the findings in an easy-to-understand way?

- Do all exhibits have proper notes underneath them explaining what they present?
- Conclusion (10 points)
 - Does the conclusion concisely summarize the highlights of the paper?
 - Are the limitations of the analysis explained in an accurate and comprehensive manner?
 - Do the suggestions for further research build upon the work that was done and make sense for deepening our understanding of the topic?
- References (2 points): Are all references properly cited and formatted? (please use the [Chicago Author-Date style](#) that is most common in economics, but no need to reference specific page numbers)
- Above and beyond (13 points): does the analysis go above and beyond the basics? This could include but is not limited to:
 - Multiple additional tests to understand heterogeneity
 - Discussion of and effort made to evaluate external validity
 - Use extra data beyond what was necessary to go deeper into the results
 - Extra effort to present the findings in a visually appealing and concise way (beyond basic regression tables and figures)