

Outline of the Research Paper

- 1) TITLE PAGE with ABSTRACT (*not included in page limit*)
 - a. A single page that should include the following:
 - i. Title of the paper
 - ii. Author name
 - iii. Abstract – This is a brief overview of the paper. What is the question and hypothesis, how do you test it, and what do you find?
- 2) INTRODUCTION and HYPOTHESIS
 - a. Give an introduction to your research topic and introduce your research question. Be sure to motivate the question, drawing on previous research. The question shouldn't have an obvious answer and, although it shouldn't be overly complex, it shouldn't be too simple or superficial. You want to convince the reader why this is an important question to answer and why it is worth a 12-page data analysis.
 - b. State your hypotheses and provide support for them. If your hypothesis seems bland, try to think of conditional hypotheses. For example, rather than simply hypothesizing that the turnout rate for Whites is greater than that of Blacks, you might instead hypothesize that the difference in the turnout rate is conditional on whether Blacks compose a more equal share of a District's population. Providing conditions to your hypothesis gives more depth.
- 3) DATA and METHODS
 - a. Here is where you want to describe how you plan to analyze your data in order to test your hypothesis. You want to describe your plan for the analysis in detail, providing support for the methods you will use. Make it clear to the reader that you are taking the best approach to testing your hypothesis and answering your question. If it is not the best approach, you want to explain what the better approach is and what limits you from carrying out that approach. Be transparent.
 - b. Describe your data in detail. Tell the reader where the data comes from and how it was collected. What are the dependent and independent variables and how are you measuring them using the data that you have. For example, if your dependent variable is the average household income of a neighborhood, you should describe in detail how the variable is computed. If it comes from a survey, you might describe how respondents were asked to report their income, whether or not there is top-coding, how a household is defined, how neighborhoods are defined, what year was the survey conducted, etc.
- 4) RESULTS

- a. Analyze the results of your analysis. Provide visuals and/or tables to present your results. The presentation and descriptions should be clear.

5) CONCLUSION

- a. Recap what your question and hypothesis was. Summarize what you found. And describe what the implications are of your findings.

6) APPENDIX (*not included in page limit*)

- a. Your plots and tables should go in the appendix. Each plot and table should be easily identified when reading your descriptions of them.

7) WORKS CITED (*not included in page limit*)