**1. Assignment: Format**

* Assignment 2: 6 pages (max) double-spaced [if you need more space, please email me]

12 pt font

**2. Structure**

Structure is whatever makes more sense to you. Please make sure the introduction addresses the following points:

* what is the question investigated in these papers?
* why is this question important? Provide some context
* **very brief** overview of the papers, based on these papers what is the most likely answer to this question? [keep in mind that answering a question can mean reformulating it]
* most important point(s) one learns from these papers with regards to this question and how to answer it [can’t just be “its complicated”]

🡺 Note that the latter two points are NOT summaries, they are your own take on the papers Think of this as a review essay [examples can be found [here](https://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/jel.20171419) and [here](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0010414010370431?casa_token=yjdVtfjaOCwAAAAA:0SFAa7eXL_PF2UQWUhzJ9dTR7GPsz5SSOUkc6aOWO3uLYJWqDYiHNof64LJmxoqxgBfywoQVXHA), don’t take these as templates though, but I hope they inspire you to go beyond mere summaries!]

For pairs 2 and 3, there are two possible versions of this exercise [which will affect the main point you seek to convey in the introduction]:

1) version 1: studies contradict themselves and you need to come up with your own interpretation of these conflicting results. This means you might:

* be convinced by one study and not the other [and thus go with the conclusion put forward by the study you are convinced with]. If this is the case, you need to make a case against one and in favor of the other.
* be convinced by both and argue that more research is needed to arbitrate, giving your readers some ideas on what this additional research might look like.
* be convinced by none, explain why and conclude that more research is needed, giving your readers some ideas on what this additional research might look like.

2) version 2: the studies do not contradict themselves but speak to different aspects of the research questions. If this is the case, then you need to summarize the contributions in ways that go beyond a bullet point summary: what is the cumulative knowledge acquired by readings these studies? As always, some studies will be more convincing than others, so feel free to criticize (see the rubric). You should also highlight what you think is missing from these studies.

For pair 1, the prompt is a little different. On the one hand, you also need to identify the main question these readings help answer and propose an answer to this question that builds on these two readings. On the other hand, you also need to bring them in conversation with class lectures / readings. Specifically, the Hacker and Pierson reading include a critique of economic explanations of rising inequality, which we covered in the first part of the class (e.g., What does the WTA arguments presented in the essays can explain that economic theories cannot? And conversely, what do economic theories have over WTA? Do you agree with their critique of economic theories, why, why not?). Again, think of this as a review essay: you are building on these readings to try and provide your own answer the lead research question in the Hacker and Pierson piece.

**THROUGHOUT ENSURE YOU ARE NOT PARROTING THE AUTHORS, USE YOUR OWN WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO A NON-SPECIALIST. IN OTHEWRWORDS, DO NOT MERELY IDENTIFY THE SUMMARY SENTENCES IN THE PAPER AND QUOTE THEM.**

**3. Rubric Assignment 2**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Well executed | Close enough | Poorly executed – off topic | Not addressed |
| All the points listed above are addressed in the intro (and developed in the paper), especially, a clear statement of the lead research question and an answer to this question. |  |  |  |  |
| Good understanding of the studies, meet the “explanation” bar set in assignment 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Does not get bogged down into too many irrelevant details when discussing the design and empirics |  |  |  |  |
| The substantive discussion of the two papers makes at least 3 important points, each bringing the studies in discussion with each other |  |  |  |  |
| Amount of parroting left to a minimum |  |  |  |  |
| Writing style |  |  |  |  |