Final Assignment Guidelines

Overview

Your final assignment is worth a **maximum of 50 points**. The goal is to demonstrate your ability to motivate, correctly apply, and critically evaluate automated text analysis methods.

Final Paper Requirements

- **Topic**: Apply one or several automated text analysis methods to a topic related to your Master's thesis *or* a topic of your own choice.

- **Research question**: Your work may focus on either

  - a **substantive research question** (e.g., political communication, social media, public opinion, etc.), *or*

  - a **methodological research question** (e.g., comparing topic models, testing preprocessing choices, evaluating dictionary methods).

- **Content**: Your submission should include the **Methods**, **Results**, and **Discussion** sections of a (pseudo-)academic paper.

- **Length**: **Approx. 6–8 pages** of text (excluding references, figures, and appendices).

- **Code**: Provide fully **commented code**. Accepted languages: **Python, R, or Julia**.

- **Files**: Submit a **PDF** of the paper and attach all source code files or notebooks.

Evaluation Criteria (50 points total)

1. Consistency (15 points)

Your analysis should be conceptually coherent. You will be evaluated on:

- A clear motivation and statement of objectives.

- Alignment between your motivation, chosen method(s), and reported results.

- Interpretations that directly follow from your analytic approach.

2. Correct Choice of Method and Code (20 points)

Assessment of technical and methodological soundness:

- Appropriate method selection for your research question and data.

- Fully runnable code in Python, R, or Julia.

- Code is clearly commented and structured.

- Correct application of the method (e.g., preprocessing, model specification, diagnostics when relevant).

3. Critical Reflection (15 points)

Demonstrate methodological awareness and critical thinking:

- Reflect on major design decisions (e.g., preprocessing, feature selection, parameter choices).

- Discuss limitations of the chosen method(s) and potential alternative approaches.

- Interpret your findings with appropriate caution.

Submission Details

- Submit the assignment as a **PDF**.

- Include all code (and data) as separate attached files.

- Figures, tables, and references do not count toward the page limit.

Deadline

January 6, 2025 (deadline for grades submission is Jan 12)

Academic Integrity

All work must be your own. External sources, models, or datasets must be properly cited.