

Econ 450, Hanes
General instructions for papers, Fall 2021

1) What am I looking for in the paper?

From my point of view the paper is a test of reading comprehension, writing ability and ability to reason using the concepts taught in this course.

The material you should use to write the paper is the class notes, anything I said in class, the Glossary and the readings, including any extra glossary or readings posted on my website. Don't forget the Glossary! I do not intend for you to use any other sources. I do not *forbid* it, but it won't help you. I want you to make use of *all* the readings that are relevant to your argument. Your grade will be lower if you fail to use a statement in a reading that is obviously relevant to your argument.

Another point of the paper is to test whether you know the difference between relevant and irrelevant information. Do not tell me irrelevant things just to show me that you did the readings. Many, many statements in the readings will be irrelevant to the prompt. The more irrelevant things you tell me, the lower your grade.

I cannot forbid you to use Google but I do not want you to. If you use something you read on the internet (or in print) without properly citing it, that is plagiarism. If you copy a sentence from the internet (or something printed) without putting it in quotes and properly citing it, that is plagiarism. Remember that I can use Google too. If I am suspicious about anything in your paper, I will look for it on the internet myself. If I find it you are dead meat.

Do not copy material from another student's paper. That is plagiarism.

I will take off for errors in spelling or grammar. Do not rely on SpellCheck to correct your spelling - it lets many errors go through.

2) Format

Turn the paper in as one Word file or one pdf file. **I will not accept anything other than a Word or pdf file. I will not read multiple files.**

No title page is needed. At the top of the first page, put your name and the short title of your prompt.

Number the pages (at top or bottom of page, I don't care which).

Double-spaced.

12 or 11 point type.

If you want to use equations or graphs, great! Equations and graphs may be hand-drawn. Put all of the graphs together at the end of the paper and number them. Within the paper, refer to the graphs by number, e.g. "Figure 1 shows that..."; "This system is illustrated by Figure 4..." Then scan everything together into one pdf.

You may or may not need a reference list. See below.

3) Length

The text of the paper must be no shorter than five pages, no longer than seven pages. Graphs and the reference list, if you have them, do *not* count toward the page requirement.

4) Avoid blather

Do not make meaningless space-filling statements such as "Monetary policy is important" or "Unemployment is a problem for societies." They annoy me.

5) Make sure you have a proper introductory paragraph

The first paragraph should introduce the topic and preview the argument you will make. It must have a *thesis statement*. If you don't know what I mean by thesis statement, look it up.

6) Cites and references

When you quote or refer to a reading assigned for the class, you must properly cite that reading. Use a simplified method of citation: just use the *title* of the reading. If you are quoting, you must also give the page number where the quote can be found. Here's an example of a quote:

An important factor monetary policymakers must take into account is the rate of productivity growth. John Fernald argues that "Economic growth during the recovery has been slower on average than its trend before the Great Recession" ("What is the New Normal for U.S. Growth?", p. 1).

If you repeatedly quote from a reading, you need not repeat the title over and over; just give the page number for each subsequent quote. Like:

Fernald also says that "productivity growth was exceptional before 1973" (p. 2).

If you refer to a reading in a general way, without quoting or referring to something like a specific number the reader might want to look up in the reading, you need not give a page number. Like:

The composition of the labor force can affect the natural rate of unemployment ("Changing labor force composition and the natural rate of unemployment").

When you quote or refer to my notes or the Glossary, just refer to “Hanes notes” or “Glossary.” E.g.:

A professor says it is inadvisable to buy illegal drugs with Ven-Mo (Hanes notes).

If you use a reference that was not assigned for class, you must give a full reference in the ordinary way. That is, you must give the citation or citations in a list of references at the end of the paper with the name of the author, the title of the work, the name and publication date of a periodical or the year and city of publication for a book, etc. The reference list does *not* need to include readings from the coursepack, it just includes the readings you used that are not in the coursepack. Within the text, you give a reference with the author's name, publication year, and page number. Like:

The theory behind GDP statistics was developed on the 1920s (Rockoff, 2019).

7) Warnings about grammar, diction etc.

Write in simple sentences.

Unless you know what you are doing, do not try to construct complicated sentences. Stick to short subject-verb-object sentences when you can. It is usually a bad idea to start a sentence with a subordinate clause.

Avoid fancy, big, odd words.

Always ask: is there a shorter word that means the same thing?

As much as possible, avoid using words you don't use in ordinary conversation.

You may refer to the Federal Reserve system or the FOMC as the "Fed." You may not refer to it as the "FED" (all caps).

Be careful with semicolons. *Do not use semicolons at all* unless you are sure you know how to use them.

Know the difference between "its" and "it's," between "who's" and "whose," between "effect" and "affect." (If you don't know what I mean here, look it up.)

Look up the difference between "compare with" and "compare to." Usually, what you want to use is "compare with" NOT "compare to."

"Relate to," "correlate with." NOT "relate with," "correlate to."

"Reason for" NOT "reason of."

"Research on" or "research about." NOT "research of."

There is no such word as "researches."

Avoid the passive voice.

NO I was bitten by the dog.

YES The dog bit me.

NO Models have been designed

YES Economists have designed models

Avoid unnecessary adjectives and adverbs.

NO little universal consensus has been achieved

YES little consensus has been achieved

oh, wait...that's passive. Better:

economists have not come to a consensus

NO it is very likely

YES it is likely

NO of utmost interest

YES of interest

oh, wait...even better:

interesting

Make sure that the nouns, pronouns and verbs within a sentence all match in number.

If the noun is singular, the corresponding pronouns and verbs must be singular. Thus, if the noun is singular the pronoun must be one of the following:

he

she

it

she or he

he or she.

In speech and informal writing, people sometimes use the plural pronoun “they” to refer back to a singular noun. Please don’t do that in this paper. It confuses me. If you do not want to use "she or he" or "he or she" to refer back to a singular noun, restructure the sentence so that the pronoun can be plural or simply do not use a pronoun (that is, repeat the noun as needed).