

GUIDELINES FOR THE CLASS PROJECT

This guide contains a general outline and format for your class projects. Please read carefully and follow all rules related to content and presentation.

INTRODUCTION

Provide a brief introduction to set the stage for the problem you are going to address. You may want to provide some introductory statistical information and/or a discussion of the current economic or political environment which contributes to the importance of the problem.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Explicitly identify the problem in two or three sentences. A problem is something that requires a solution. It is important to state the problem in a clear and concise manner.

PROBLEM JUSTIFICATION

After you define the problem you need to convince the reader that it is important and they should be interested in potential solutions. How will they benefit from your analysis of the situation? This is where you will want to state the major contribution of your project. This includes identifying your clientele. Are you providing advice to investors, money managers, business owners, etc.?

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is extremely important to be aware of and familiar with work of other analysts who may be examining the same or a similar problem. For this project you must review at least one article or presentation on a topic similar to the one you are

addressing. In the review you need to indicate how the author(s) handle or address the problem, the main recommendations, and the implications of the article relative to your project.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

State the main objective of the project. This should be short and to the point.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

This is where you discuss the details. You should have at least two specific objectives which together satisfy the general objective outlined above. Be sure and express your objectives in an explicit and positive way. For example, rather than saying "we will try to examine..." you should write "we will examine..." or "we will investigate...".

PROCEDURES

Tell the reader exactly how the objective of the study will be accomplished. This may include a theoretical strategy (i.e. based on economic theory), a quantitative strategy (a statistical model or a mathematical model), or even constructing simple correlations and graphical descriptions between economic data.

DATA

You will generally be relying on some type of data to solve your problem (prices, production levels, etc.). In general, the more data you have from which to draw inferences the better. However, at least 30 observations is a general rule of thumb. The specific sources of data are unlimited depending on the question you want to address. Do not forget the library as a potential data source. If you want price data and cannot find it elsewhere, come see me and we will discuss where it might be available. However, you will be responsible for collecting your own data.

It is often useful to organize your data in a spreadsheet. The computers in the teaching lab in Taylor Hall have several spreadsheets available on them. The spreadsheets are handy environments in which to make graphs, tables, etc. Make sure any data, whether in a table or graph, included in the project is well described and labeled.

CONCLUSIONS

The main body of the newsletter should conclude with a brief discussion of the results of the analysis, the implications for the clients based on the analysis, and any caveats which might be appropriate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Be sure and acknowledge any individuals or organizations which provided direct input into your project.

REFERENCES

List in a bibliography any reference materials used to complete the project.

MISC.

1. The project should include a title page. This page must have each group member's name. In addition, a separate paper should be turned in with the project documenting each member contribution to the overall project.

2. The newsletter must be in NEWSPAPER FORMAT; that is two columns per page, single spaced, and 10 pt. font (Courier or Times Roman --

see examples below). You also must include at least one figure and one table.

3. The total project length cannot be more than 4 pages (this does not include the title page).

This is Times Roman 10 pt.
This is Courier 10 pt.