Labor Economics – Econ 4311  
Fall 2008  
Term Paper Information

Below is a list of topics for the term paper. You can also choose your own topic. If you would like to choose your own topic, please get it approved by me in office hours before you submit your paper proposal.

Note that one way to find additional resources on your topic is to review the bibliographies of the listed resources.

Term Paper Requirements

1) Paper Proposal
Your paper proposal should be two pages in length. This proposal should motivate your paper (i.e. why did you choose your topic, what is interesting/important about it). A good proposal can be incorporated into your paper in the introduction.

2) Term Paper (2 drafts)
Your term paper should be at least 5 pages long and no more than 8 pages long. Concise presentation will be an important part of your grade (i.e., don’t ramble or “waste” sentences).

General Rules

1) Use 12-point font and 1-inch margins and double-space everything.
2) Be sure to address the topic you choose thoroughly and concisely. Your grade will depend on your ability to stay focused on the topic and provide a relevant discussion.
3) When referencing other work in the text, do so with the author(s) last name and year of the paper/book. For example, Johnson (1997) provides evidence of customer-based discrimination in automobile markets. Be sure that all cited work is listed in your bibliography.
4) Your paper should be formal and scientific. Avoid using the pronoun “I” whenever possible and be sure not to include unsupported opinions. That is, if your research leads you to believe that teachers’ levels of education raise student performance, do not write “I think teachers’ levels of education raise student performance.” Instead, write “Evidence from Author (year) indicates that teachers’ levels of education improve student performance.”
5) Do not plagiarize. It is not worth it.
6) Include page numbers on each page and be sure to write your name and student ID number on the first page.
7) Sample bibliography entries:
Journal Article

Book

Topics List
Please choose a topic and provide a thorough evaluation of the research in the listed article(s). This evaluation should include an overview of the primary research question, why it is important, an overview of the methodology used by the researcher(s) to answer the research question (and why it works), any sources of doubt about the results, and a discussion of the implications of the research.

1) **Inequality (general)**


2) **Inequality (racial)**


3) **Education (School Choice)**

Cullen, Julie Berry, Brian A. Jacob and Steven D. Levitt, “The Effect of School Choice on Participants: Evidence from Randomized Lotteries,” *Econometrica* - 2006

4) **Education (Teacher Quality)**


5) **Labor Supply**


6) **Crime**


7) **Crime (2)**


8) **Student Effort in College**

*Note: Please tie papers on this final topic into a discussion about the returns to a college degree*

Babcock, Philip, “Real Costs of Nominal Grade Inflation? New Evidence from Student Course Evaluations” – Available at http://econ.ucsb.edu/~babcock

Babcock, Philip and Mindy Marks, “The Falling Time Cost of College: Evidence from Half a Century of Time Use Data” – Available at http://econ.ucsb.edu/~babcock