

## The Term Paper

The most important assignment during the class is the term paper. You must select a topic with your group. Topics should address either an issue relating to real estate or urban public policy. Your paper must be informed by the economic analysis covered in class and include real-world detail. The paper must include data, and data analysis. The project should be completed in groups of three to six students.

### Content

There are many ways to write good papers. In content, most good papers will: address an interesting and well-defined research question, intelligently employ economic analysis from the class, present relevant data, and discuss pertinent institutions. In style, most good papers will: be well organized, be clear, be written with precision, and be logically coherent.

Particular requirements:

- Include a minimum of one regression (executed in Stata).
- Include a minimum of one map (produced in QGIS).
  - These are minimums, and well developed papers will likely include significantly more data analysis.
- Cite related research where helpful
  - I am not picky about citation style as long as it is clear (APA is a good option). Be sure not to plagiarize.

### Length

Paper lengths should be the following:

Group of 3 students: 10-15 pages

Group of 4 students: 13-18 pages

Group of 5 students: 16-21 pages

Group of 6 students: 19-24 pages

(Double-spaced. 1 inch margins. Not counting figures, tables, maps, or bibliography.)

### Deadlines

(1) Friday, March 9: Send me an email with the following information; (1) the names of all group members (2) a research question or topic. Topic can be general, or if you are deciding between multiple topics, send a list and I can give some advice. If I don't hear from you or your group member by March 9, I will assign you to a group myself.

(2) Friday, April 6: the paper is due. Failure to meet the deadline will result in a lower grade.

I will set up meeting times with groups, likely during class hours. The final four classes will be time to work on your papers in the computer lab. I will be available in the lab to meet with groups and provide help.

### Topics

Coming up with an interesting, well defined, and answerable research question is one of the more challenging aspects of conducting research. The selection is entirely up to you and should be motivated first and foremost by what interests you. Looking back through the class notes or reflecting on the current event presentations are likely

good sources for topics. Approach me with questions as I can probably provide information regarding what is feasible in terms of obtaining data and conducting analysis. I will compile some data resources and post them online.

Topics can be from a number of different areas:

- Real estate: analysis of a topic involving real estate in some way for which you can do an economic analysis of the subject in question.
- Urban and housing policy: analysis of a topic related to local economic development, urban policies, housing policy or transportation policy.

The setting is also up to you. Vancouver is fine, feel free to choose a different market. Comparisons across markets can also be interesting.

## Evaluation

Groups will be given a mark out of 12 according to the following criteria:

### (1) Depth of Analysis (5 marks)

- Analysis of original data sources should be used to answer the research question.
- Data analysis –through both Stata and QGIS– should demonstrate the group’s proficiency with these tools.
- There should be an underlying economic theory that motivates your question and can help explain results.

### (2) Completeness and Clarity (5 marks)

- Secondary sources should be included and cited appropriately to give context for the research.
- Writing should be clear and concise, free of errors, and follow a natural progression.
- Products of data analysis (graphs, tables, maps etc.) should be used to convey specific and relevant points.

### (3) Policy or Commercial Relevance (2 marks)

- The topic should be of interest; either to the public, to government policy, or to firms.
- The presentation of the topic and exposition of findings should demonstrate that the topic is important and interesting. The findings should provide actionable information to society.