

## Micro 232 Writing Assignment

You may select 1 of several topics to do your writing assignment on:

- Illegal immigration
- Education reform
- Air pollution in Northeast Texas
- Trans Texas Corridor
- Alternative Energy
- Farm policy
- Check with me if you are passionately interested in a different topic.

Your paper will consist of a letter to a policy maker and an executive report supporting your opinion or request in greater detail. At the end of the report you will include a works cited page. Works cited MUST be in a conventional format (I prefer APA or MLA).

Some of these topics are quite broad but I want you to select a policy directive within the broader topic and research the specifics. When you're picking a topic, before you begin writing, *evaluate easy it will be to demonstrate your understanding of microeconomic principles using this topic*. REMEMBER, your grade will depend on your *application* of the topics we cover in ECON 232.

### Steps to writing the paper

1. Pick a topic of interest to you. Do some basic research to become more familiar with the issue.
2. Look on <http://thomas.loc.gov> to find pending legislation related to your topic. Alternatively, for the state topics you can go to [www.state.tx.com](http://www.state.tx.com)
3. Evaluate the proposal in economic terms. Do the benefits outweigh the costs? How will people respond to incentives created in the bill? Is this likely to help the objectives of the legislation or hinder it? What unexpected costs are in the bill?
4. As you are researching, begin writing the executive report. This will be a condensed paper that pulls out the most relevant information and presents it in a way that someone whose time is scarce can easily read and understand the issue. Your summary should make use of at least three graphs. They should be similar in format to those in the book – they should explain the economic principles that make your argument sound. You are welcome to include additional graphs, but the three to comprise part of your grade should illustrate an economic principle and not just be a visual aid to portray data you are basing your argument on.
5. As you are researching, develop your opinion of what should be done. This will be captured in your persuasive letter. Your letter should lay out what should be done on the topic and what the benefits of your proposed course of action are. Specific details and additional support will be included in the executive report. If there are drawbacks to your suggestion, mention them and explain how they do not outweigh the merits of whatever you are advocating.

Depending on the topic you choose, the letter you write could be addressed to a congressional representative, an appropriate agency representative, or to the public record if you are responding to a request for comments.

### Grading

- The paper must be submitted both in hard copy and to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Originality scores of greater than 30% will result in an F.\*
- Your opinion and research will make the paper and the assignment more interesting. However, your grade will depend principally on *demonstration of understanding the concepts we are learning and your ability to apply them to real world problems.*
- More specific information will be provided in a grading rubric.

After a precursory search for an example of Executive Reports, here are two that you can use as an example. Please do NOT spend time reading these reports. I also don't expect 32 pages in your report, but you can get ideas for formatting and the general layout from these examples.

[http://www.psu.edu/ur/topics/economic\\_impact/images/psu\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.psu.edu/ur/topics/economic_impact/images/psu_final_report.pdf)

[http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/pdf/RG\\_ConservationPlan\\_ExecRep.pdf](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/pdf/RG_ConservationPlan_ExecRep.pdf)