

**Quantitative Methods for Lawyers
Final Assignment
Winter 2012**

Due May 9, 2012 @ 4pm EST

**Please Submit a Hard Copy to
either Sue Nelson or Jacklyn Beard
in Room 465**

EACH STUDENT IS TO WORK ON THEIR OWN

One of my major goals for this course was to prepare you to both consume and produce quantitative analysis.

Your Final Assignment is to Prepare a Research Note using one of the provided datasets:

(1) **crime1.dta** which is available on the course website and is also available here:
<http://ideas.repec.org/p/boc/bocins/crime1.html>

(2) **pension.dta** which is available on the course website and is also available here:
<http://ideas.repec.org/p/boc/bocins/pension.html>

(3) **smoke.dta** which is available on the course website and is also available here:
<http://ideas.repec.org/p/boc/bocins/smoke.html>

(4) **attend.dta** which is available on the course website and is also available here:
<http://ideas.repec.org/p/boc/bocins/attend.html>

Select one (and only one) and provide insight and analysis.

As was the case in Problem Set #3, this is an intentionally unstructured assignment and will be graded based upon the accuracy, clarity and insight you bring. I will evaluate this as an potential employer.

A research note is a brief report (**6-8 pages or so not including the appendix**) of quantitative findings. In this report, you will use one of the provided datasets to provide insight and evaluate your own hypotheses about a topic that you find interesting.

You should demonstrate mastery of the approaches demonstrated in this course. Again, I will grade you using the frame of a prospective employer – so please show me why I should hire you.

Preparing a Research Note:

In general, your paper should take the following format:

Title Page

Be sure to give your paper an interesting title.

Abstract of Findings

Your abstract should not exceed 100 words.

The Paper / Report, Itself

Use sub-headings to note the following sections:

Introduction. The introduction should be approximately one or two paragraphs in length. You should outline the dataset, the key findings, why it matters, etc. It might be best to write this last.

Research Problem. Here you'll outline your hypotheses. I'd like for you to have **at least** two hypotheses / models. You'll want to explain why you believe them to be reasonable. Feel free to craft hypotheses that are interesting and novel but offer a justification for your choice. This section of your paper should be around a page in length.

Results + Methods:

First, you'll want to provide whatever descriptive variables that you believe are appropriate in order to help your readers understand your data. Here you'll survey of the dataset from a variety of perspectives. Please assume you are writing to a layperson. Thus, please explain each calculation, a basic sketch of the method you used and what it demonstrates.

Second, you'll want to provide the results to the statistical tests. You must include regression analysis as at least one of the test. Again, for each approach you use please explain the method as if you were submitting to a layperson. When appropriate, you may include tables and/or figures to support your discussion. Excluding tables and figures, this section of your paper should be around two pages in length (but, if you feel it needs to be longer in order to provide a sufficient description of your results, that's fine).

Discussion.

(1) Summarize your results – specifically, restate your hypotheses and whether they were supported or not supported.

(2) Make sense of your results. If your hypotheses were supported, why should anyone care? What are the implications? How does the result help us advance theory and/or practice? If your hypotheses were not supported, why could that be? What does it mean? This is your chance to “talk back” to your results and to put them into a context that will be useful and interesting to the readers. This should constitute the bulk of the Discussion section.

(3) Briefly note the limitations of your research (all research projects have limitations) – for instance, inadequacies in the data, lack of generalizability of results, etc. Also, explain why these limitations do not negate the overall value of the research (if the limitations do negate the overall value of the research, then you need to start over, because you shouldn’t undertake a project that you know to be worthless). This section should be at least two, but no more than three, full pages in length.

Conclusion. Tie it all together. What are your final thoughts on the topic and your findings? What should the reader remember and why does it matter? This should be one paragraph in length.

Appendix. Please include all code, clean model output, etc. that support your findings.