GUIDELINES for PAPER

Topic Selection

You may select your own paper topic about economic discrimination or choose from the suggestions below. The purpose of the paper is to let you explore an area not covered in class, so you should not study labor market discrimination against women or African Americans in the U.S. (unless it is within a particular occupation or industry). If you select your own topic, check with me for topic approval. I recommend a quick literature search by EconLit (go to http://osulibrary.orst.edu/research.php/db.php and then go to E and choose EconLit) and OASIS to see if there are enough sources available to write an interesting and challenging paper before settling on a topic. Possible topics are:

- Discrimination Against a Particular Group, e.g., Hispanics, American Indians, the Disabled, the Aged, Jews, Homosexuals, etc.
- Economic Discrimination in Sports (or in a particular sport)
- Labor Market Discrimination in a Particular Occupation
- Statistical Discrimination in the Insurance Industry
- Economic Discrimination in Medical Care, Mortgage Lending or Other Sector
- Economic Discrimination Against Women or a Minority Group in a Foreign Country
- Discrimination Law Suits
- Racial Profiling
- Affirmative Action in College Admissions

Length and Format

The recommended length of the paper is 5 pages, double-spaced with 1” margins and 10-12 characters per inch typescript. Content, not length, is the criteria for grading. Do not waste time adjusting margins and changing typescript size to fit the length guidelines; these are guidelines, not requirements.

Each paper should contain an Introduction, Summary of the Literature, Analysis of the Literature, Conclusion, and Bibliography. All information from other sources must be cited (see http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/plag.htm for examples of acceptable borrowing and plagiarism). The Introduction should contain a statement of the central question to be addressed in the paper. (For example, if the topic is economic discrimination regarding sexual orientation, the question might be: is there wage discrimination against homosexuals in the U.S.? Or, is there discrimination against homosexuals in the housing market in the U.S.?) In the Literature Review, you will summarize the information in books and articles that is relevant to your topic.
In the Analysis of the Literature you assess whether or not the evidence in the literature is unbiased and valid. In the Conclusion, you summarize the paper and state your major findings about the central question. In the Bibliography, list all references by alphabetical order of the last name of the first author. If you do not know an appropriate style for citing references, check with the Writing Center or use the style from the American Economic Review. For internet sources, include the web address, and if possible the name of the author, title of the paper, date of the paper, and institutional association of the website, paper or author. If it is a government or university website, the information has more credibility than if it comes from an individual.

**Sources**

Three to 7 sources should be used. The more books utilized, the fewer sources are needed. The more short articles used, for example from the Wall Street Journal or Business Week, the greater number of sources are needed. Our library has a subscription which allows you Internet (FirstSearch) access of EconLit, which you can use to find academic journal articles from the economics literature on your topic. Journals most accessible to undergraduate students are: Journal of Economic Perspectives, Contemporary Economic Policy, American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings (this is the May issue of the American Economic Review), and Monthly Labor Review which are available in the library stacks. Most other journals are written for graduate students or economists with graduate degrees, but you can still understand the introduction, literature review, and conclusion and skip over the technical sections. A good place to start looking for sources is references listed in the two textbooks that relate to your topic.

**Grading Criteria for Papers**

I know that all of you can summarize books and articles from the popular press. The ability to ferret out academic material and extract information relevant to your question of interest requires greater effort and learning, and the ability to analyze carefully, objectively, and logically the material before you requires increasingly advanced skill. Consequently, grades will be higher for papers which utilize academic sources and analyze research materials relative to papers which summarize sources but do not think carefully about the materials and rely heavily on the popular press. Papers which reveal clarity of thought and presentation, learning beyond what is covered in class, and objective scrutiny of material on economic discrimination will be rewarded.

More specifically 3 criteria will be used, with equal weights, in assigning a grade: content, difficulty, and writing.

**Due Date:** Wednesday, December 3, 2003