Assignment Design Example 1: BMBA 230 Economics

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I use a written assignment that is broken up into three stages, each one feeding into the following stage. In this way, I see the student’s writing and approach from the beginning and can be involved in helping them shape their assignment.

Since this is done in three stages, any plagiarism would have to be “reversed engineered” which may well imply more work than doing it the correct way around. I also use a strict word-count limit for the final written assignment of 1200 words.

The topic for this assignment is also chosen based on the student’s interests, so the combination of their interest, and the staged nature along with my involvement at each stage (providing feedback, alternative sources, technical clarifications, and helping shape the question to be narrow enough to be done in 1200 words, no easy task), I think makes simply downloading a piece from the Internet less workable and therefore less likely.

I do occasionally have students ask to change their topic just prior to the final stage being due – and my answer is always that this is possible, but they would have to begin again, producing each of the first two stages in the context of the ‘new’ topic. Most often, students choose to remain with their original topic.

BMBA 230 Assignment 4-1 | Application of Economic Understanding – Abstract

Individual assignment
Grade: 10% of final grade
Length: no more than 250 words
Due date: 11:55 pm, Sunday of week 5
Submit: using the submission upload tool at the bottom of this page

Your application of economics will be a relatively brief written assignment that applies economic reasoning, concepts, and approaches in an area of economics or on a topic of specific interest to you. This application’s focus may come from either microeconomics or macroeconomics. Students are encouraged to consult with the course facilitator for suggestions or to help narrow the focus and to ensure they are on the right track.

The written assignment is intended to provide students with the opportunity to explore and apply economic theory in an area or topic of their own choice. This might be a topic that relates to the industry in which you work or a topic that you are interested in and want to learn more of the economics behind it. Topics could come from domestic public policy – provincial or federal – or international – debt issues in Greece, for instance – or economics of health issues, environmental issues, energy issues, or transportation infrastructure. It could be written in the style of a ‘letter to the editor’ or an ‘op-ed’ piece – if you haven’t heard this term before, it refers to those columns or relatively short articles presented on the newspaper page opposite to the editorials and letters page – commonly found in

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newspapers regarding current issues, or as an explanation of current policy within an economic framework.

You will complete your written assignment in three stages: an abstract, an annotated bibliography and the final paper. These instructions are for the abstract.

**Stage One: You will write a brief abstract.**

Your abstract will indicate the question or issue that you intend to explore and briefly explain your intended approach and process. The purpose of the abstract is to get you started. As such, it is not intended, nor is likely to be in any sense a ‘finished’ piece. Rather, it lays out an expression of interest and provides you with some guidelines and expectations you might follow. In considering the abstract, you should answer these five questions.

- What idea, issue, question, or topic are you interested in?
- Why does this idea, issue, question or topic interest you?
- How will the use of economics help your exploration?
- Where will you look for information about this interest?
- What are your expectations regarding the answer or outcome of this exploration?

The evaluation of the abstract for the written assignment will be based on the learner answering each of these five questions.

The feedback you receive on this abstract should help you narrow your focus, confirm your process, and, most importantly, help you integrate economics into your finished Written Assignment. This abstract can also form the ‘outline’ for the final written article – so time and care taken in its preparation can pay dividends later on. Where practical, text written for the abstract can also be re-used in the final written assignment.

Your abstract will be a maximum of 250 words. The abstract does not have to be in the style of a paragraph. You may approach it as a series of brief statements or phrases relating to each of the five ‘questions’ given above. Any abstract submitted that is greater than 250 words will be returned for additional editing.

Your abstract must be submitted using the submission tool at the bottom of this page, in either Microsoft Word (.doc) format (preferred) or Rich Text format (.rtf). Any alternatives to these formats should be discussed with the instructor prior to submission.

The abstract is due at 11:55 pm on Sunday at the end of Week 5 and will count for 10% of the final grade.

**BMBA 230 Assignment 4-2 | Application of Economic Understanding – Annotated Bibliography**

Individual assignment

Grade: 15% of final grade

Length: no more than 750 words
Due date: 11:55 pm, Sunday of week 8
Submit: using the submission upload tool at the bottom of this page

Your application of economics will be a relatively brief written assignment that applies economic reasoning, concepts, and approaches in an area of economics or on a topic of specific interest to you.

The written assignment is intended to provide students with the opportunity to explore and apply economic theory in an area or topic of their own choice. This might be a topic that relates to the industry in which you work or a topic that you are interested in and want to learn more of the economics behind it. Topics could come from domestic public policy – provincial or federal – or international – debt issues in Greece, for instance – or economics of health issues, environmental issues, energy issues, or transportation infrastructure. It could be written in the style of a ‘letter to the editor’ or an ‘op-ed’ piece – if you haven’t heard this term before, it refers to those columns or relatively short articles presented on the newspaper page opposite to the editorials and letters page – commonly found in newspapers regarding current issues, or as an explanation of current policy within an economic framework.

You will complete your written assignment in three stages: an abstract, an annotated bibliography and the final paper. These instructions are for the annotated bibliography.

**Stage Two: You will write a brief annotated bibliography.**

Your annotated bibliography will be a list of 5 references, other than the text, and include a brief summary of the contribution to your topic or issue of interest that each provide. These references or sources may be other texts, books, magazines, newspapers, professional journals, or online articles or websites. The source citation should follow the University of Victoria Continuing Studies standard or the American Psychology Association, APA style.

APA bibliographic style information and guidelines can be found at:
- [http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/apa_ho.html](http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/apa_ho.html) or

Each of your references or sources will be described in a maximum of 150 words. Remember that the final written assignment is a maximum of 1200 words, of which the annotated bibliography may form much of the body, so focus on being concise here. The evaluation and feedback of the annotated bibliography will be based on the relevance and quality of the references and the relevance of your annotation in integrating the source information into the idea, issue, question, or topic indicated for the final written assignment. This annotated bibliography also begins to ‘fill in’ the outline begun with the abstract for the final written article – so time and care taken in its preparation can pay dividends later on. Where practical, text written for the annotated bibliography can also be re-used in the final written assignment.
If you are using websites as part of your bibliographic resources, here are a few other sites that you may find useful in evaluating a website as a source.

- http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/webeval.html
- http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html

The annotated bibliography will be a maximum of 750 words. The annotated bibliography does not have to be in the style of a paragraph. You may approach it as a series of brief statements or phrases relating to each of the five ‘questions’ given above. Any annotated bibliography submitted that is greater than 750 words will be returned for additional editing.

Your annotated bibliography must be submitted to the instructor using the submission tool at the bottom of this page in either Microsoft Word (.doc) format (preferred) or Rich Text format (.rtf). Any alternatives to these formats should be discussed with the instructor prior to submission.

The annotated bibliography is due at 11:55 pm on Sunday at the end of week 8 and will count for 15% of the final grade.

**BMBA 230 Assignment 4-3 | Application of Economic Understanding – Final Paper**

Individual assignment
Grade: 25% of final grade
Length: no more than 1200 words
Due date: 11:55 pm, Sunday of week 12
Submit: using the submission upload tool at the bottom of this page

Your application of economics will be a relatively brief written assignment that applies economic reasoning, concepts, and approaches in an area of economics or on a topic of specific interest to you.

The written assignment is intended to provide students with the opportunity to explore and apply economic theory in an area or topic of their own choice. This might be a topic that relates to the industry in which you work or a topic that you are interested in and want to learn more of the economics behind it. Topics could come from domestic public policy – provincial or federal – or international – debt issues in Greece, for instance – or economics of health issues, environmental issues, energy issues, or transportation infrastructure. It could be written in the style of a ‘letter to the editor’ or an ‘op-ed’ piece – if you haven’t heard this term before, it refers to those columns or relatively short articles presented on the newspaper page opposite to the editorials and letters page – commonly found in newspapers regarding current issues, or as an explanation of current policy within an economic framework.
You will complete your written assignment in three stages: an abstract, an annotated bibliography and the final paper. These instructions are for the final paper.

**Stage Three: Your final finished written assignment.**

This is the culmination of the application of economics process. It will be written in appropriate academic style with correct citations in the body of the work and references included at the end of the written assignment in the appropriate format (see Assignment 5 – annotated bibliography for ‘help with citation’ websites). The maximum number of words allowed for this assignment does not include the title page, illustrations or any appendices attached, or the references included at the end of the paper.

The finished paper will contain an introduction (this may be drawn from the abstract submitted as the first step and amended to include comments and changes in the development process), a body that includes discussion, explanation, and substantiation of your perspective (this may be drawn from the annotated bibliography submitted as the second step), and a conclusion that clearly sets out your learning as a result of this assignment.

The written assignment should also include a title page and a list of references (listed under the heading ‘References’) and presented following the American Psychology Association, APA style. Neither the title page nor the references will be included in the total word count.

If you want to include any graphs or tables as part of the final written assignment, these should be presented in appendices that follow the references section. These appendices will also not be included in the total word count of the written assignment.

The written assignment will be a maximum of 1200 words. Any written assignment submitted that is greater than 1200 words – not including the title page, references, appendices, or illustrations – will be returned for additional editing. The evaluation of the final written assignment will include:

- clarity of the written argument
- treatment of your idea, issue, question or topic
- integration of economic analysis and evidence of economic thinking in the final written assignment – this would be equivalent of level ‘5’ in Greenlaw and DeLoach (2003)

Your final paper must be submitted to the instructor using the submission tool at the bottom of this page in either Microsoft Word (.doc) format (preferred) or Rich Text format (.rtf). Any alternatives to these formats should be discussed with the instructor prior to submission.

The final written assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday at the end of week 12 and will count for 25% of the final grade.