

## Graduate Urban Economics, Spring 2024: Guidelines for Writing Outline (2-3 pages)

**Outline Due: 4/29/2024**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this outline is to write a fairly detailed description of your project so that I know what your research plan is and can therefore offer you more useful advice and help. At this stage in your project you should be able to write about your question (Introduction), the relevant literature (Literature), your data or expected data (Data) if it's an empirical paper, your theoretical approach (Theory) if it's a theory paper, and research difficulties (Issues). I won't expect you to have results from your analysis, although you should have an idea how you will do the analysis.

### **Outline (2-3 pages)**

- 1. Introduction:** Describe your main question and any additional questions you plan to investigate. Explain (briefly) why this question is important.
- 2. Literature Review:** Briefly summarize the papers you have read dealing with your topic. Explain the findings, any shortcomings of the papers, the similarities with your paper, and how your paper will be different.
- 3. Theory:** Is your empirical approach based on a model, either explicitly or implicitly? Explain the main implications of the theory and how it will guide your empirical work. If you are writing a theory paper you should describe your approach in detail in the analysis section.
- 4. Data:** Describe the data you have or plan to have. If you have the data already it would be good to report some summary statistics (years, number of observations, mean, standard deviation, and range of key variables).
- 5. Analysis:** Explain how you plan to analyze the data or the basic structure of your model, if it's a theory paper. If you have done some preliminary analysis already, describe what you have done and what you have found. Feel free to include any graphs or figures that will help me to understand the work you've done thus far.
- 6. Issues and Potential Problems:** Describe any issues or difficulties you are facing with your research. This will make it easier for me to give targeted advice.