

Tips On Writing Term Papers

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1. Always give a title to your term paper. A good title helps a lot!
2. Try to do something new though it is difficult. I usually give high grades to those papers even if they are not well written.
3. Always think of the readers when writing the papers. Say, you spend a great deal of effort identifying a time series model for a real macroeconomic variable. Then, ask yourself the question: how can I convince the readers that this is a good model? Out-of-sample forecasting comparison with the common models, say random walk model, is usually a good idea. Design and state clearly the forecasting framework (rolling estimation).
4. Write the first paragraph very carefully. Explicitly state the purpose of your paper. Why is it important? State your methods and summarize the main results in the next few paragraphs. Emphasize the contributions of your paper.
5. Be precise about the data source, variable definitions and sampling period.
6. Watch for the linkage between the theoretical and empirical models.
7. Present your empirical or simulation results succinctly. Explain them very carefully. For applied papers, this is the main contribution of your paper.
8. Always draw time series graphs for the variables investigated in your table unless you have good reasons not to do so.
9. Always perform diagnostic checking for the residuals of your time series and regression models.
10. Do not let your paper be flooded with tables. If there are a lot, combine them into as fewest tables as possible and put them in appendix.
11. Abstract helps! Use some established beautiful format for your paper and make it look like a very good one.
12. Always run the spelling and grammar check before finishing your paper.

Writing Tips for Ph.D. Students written by John Cochrane is very helpful. It is available at

http://faculty.chicagosgb.edu/john.cochrane/research/Papers/phd_paper_writing.pdf