

# **ECON 1541 Applied Techniques for Economists 2017/18**

## **Statistics Assignment Brief**

### **1. Assignment Description**

The assignment weights **50%** for this module and it is an **individual** piece of work. The main aims are to increase students understanding of the practical application of the statistical theories and models taught, main focuses of the assessment are gathering data, conducting proper statistical analyses and the presentation of economic data.

Students will be given access to the database of corresponding economic variables available on Blackboard and each student must select **one** topic from the following options and specifically targeting **one or a group of countries (no more than five)** to produce the statistical report. Note that it is not expected to use all of the data, you may want to focus on a particular time range / limited geographic areas depending on your individual research question. You may also gather extra data in order to aid your report if you wish to. The World Bank site (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>) and Bureau of Labor Statistics for US (<https://www.bls.gov/data/>) have a large variety of data that you could use.

- a) Employment/unemployment, wage and education in US
- b) Foreign direct investment and economic growth
- c) Energy consumption and climate change
- d) Trade and exchange rate

### **2. Requirements and Deadline**

**1000 words** (+/- 10%; not including title page, table of contents, table of figures, tables, figures, reference, appendix); be in size 11 Arial font, with 1.5 line spacing; I expect most students to use several graphs and tables, and these are included in the 8 pages limit.

Your report should be in **MS Word** format and be submitted via **Turnitin** on **Blackboard** and the due date will be **15<sup>th</sup> March (23:59 PM)**. You do not need to submit a hard copy, just an electronic copy via the Turnitin link that will be available on Blackboard. Your work should be returned by the end of week 28. Detailed feedback will be available and can be discussed with the tutors.

Note that the normal procedure for assignments will be followed in accordance with the university policies. More details in terms of referencing, plagiarism, late submission can be found in the module handbook.

### 3. Format Guide

Produce a report which should contain the following sections (**more indicative titles than strict limits**):

- **Introduction:** Stating what data you have collected, your research questions, how you are going to display the data and answer your research questions.
- **Background:** A brief description of what the data is, where you have collected it from, why the selected research questions / region(s) are important and other background/economic climate that you feel proper and necessary for explaining your research questions.
- **Statistical Analyses:** This section should analyze and discuss your data, for example (more a guide than a strict limit), descriptive statistics and what it represents, distributions, changes over time, comparisons across regions/countries, correlations, hypotheses testing, etc. This section should also describe what your questions are, represent the analyzing process and interpret the results in light of the proposed research questions.
- **Contributions:** Discuss who / what this information would be useful for and why.
- **Conclusion:** You should summaries what you have done, how you have done it and what your results suggest. You should also suggest whether there any limitations with your data and analysis and how you might improve your analysis.

**Extra Notes:** Be careful that any figures/tables you use are labelled appropriately and are correctly referred to in the text. The content should be clear, organized, with clear focuses, coherent presentation and logical progression of thought that are also placed in context.

### 4. Assessment Criteria

I will be looking for the following things when awarding marks for this assignment:

- A well-presented report, which clearly highlights the main results.

- A clear structure, with an introduction and a conclusion that summarizes the main findings.
- The ability to use the statistical techniques we have studied in this course to present and analyze data in a meaningful fashion.
- The ability to relate your statistical findings to some basic theory about the functioning of the economy and economic events in order to make sense of the statistics.

Note that an example of a good quality report of this type will be provided on Blackboard.

The general mark scheme for undergraduate work is as follows:

Mark Range	Criteria
<b>90-100%</b>	Indicates that no fault can be found with the work other than very minor errors, for example typographical, or perhaps failure to satisfy the most challenging and exacting demands of the assessment.
<b>80-89%</b>	Indicates a very high level of understanding evidenced by an ability to engage critically and analytically with source material. Likely to exhibit independent lines of argument. Only minor errors or omissions.
<b>70-79%</b>	Judged to be very good, yet not outstanding. May contain minor errors or omissions. A well-developed response showing clear knowledge and the ability to interpret and/or apply that knowledge.
<b>60-69%</b>	Indicates a sound understanding of basic points and principles but with some failure to express or to apply them properly. Hence the answer is essentially correct, has some errors or omissions, and is not seriously flawed.
<b>50-59%</b>	Indicates a more limited understanding of basic points and principles, with significant errors and omissions. These errors and omissions, however, do not cast doubt on the basic level of understanding.
<b>40-49%</b>	Indicates questionable understanding of basic points and principles yet sufficient to show that learning outcomes have been achieved at a rudimentary level.
<b>30-39%</b>	Indicates an answer that shows only weakly developed elements of understanding. The learning outcomes have been insufficiently realized.
<b>20-29%</b>	Very little knowledge has been demonstrated and the presentation shows little coherence of material or argument.
<b>0-19%</b>	Only isolated or no knowledge displayed.