

# ECO 407- Writing Assignment

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## Introduction

### 5 Steps to Writing a Good Essay

Carve out time

Read and understand

Form your argument

Write

Revise

### Citation

### Format

### More on Resources

# Overview

## 1. Required Output

- ▶ Critical Discussion of: “The promise of fiscal money” by Yanis Varoufakis
- ▶ Length: 800-1000 words
- ▶ Due: October 5th, 2017

## 2. Term Paper

- ▶ Essay on a specific topic assigned by Professor Indart
- ▶ We will discuss this assignment later in the term

# Writing resources at your disposal

1. The course website:

<https://www.economics.utoronto.ca/gindart/eco407.htm>

- ▶ see “General Writing Instructions”, “Grading Rubric”, “Academic Integrity”, “Beware of Plagiarism”, “How not to Plagiarize”, “Paraphrase and Summary”
- ▶ **Read them carefully**

2. UofT Writing Centre:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>

- ▶ Can help you at all stages of your assignment from outline to full draft
- ▶ Do not hesitate to use the writing centre if you need help!!!
  - ▶ Great resource for all writing assignments

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# 5 Steps to Writing a Good Essay

1. Carve out time to work on the assignment
2. Read & understand
3. Form your argument
4. Write
5. Revise

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## Carve out time

- **Plan:** Estimate how long you will need to complete the work & make a realistic schedule!
- Start work on the project early enough to be able to resolve any issues you may run into.
  - ▶ e.g. Complete your research before the last office hour so you can attend in case you have questions about the material.
- Leave enough time to sleep on and edit your work with a clear head.



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## Read & understand

- Read assigned article through once without taking notes
- Read again and take notes on main points author is making
  - ▶ Identify the author's thesis & supporting arguments
  - ▶ Don't copy paste; re-write the main arguments in your own words! (understand the main point!!!)
  - ▶ If you don't understand something attend Prof. Indart's office hour (do not hesitate to ask for help)

## Read & understand

- **Understand the context:** deepen your understanding by reading 'around' the assigned article
  - ▶ Look up references used in the article
  - ▶ Search for similar articles on [www.project-syndicate.org](http://www.project-syndicate.org) or other sites
  - ▶ Search author's name online (type author's name in Google) and find other articles he/she has written or that refer to the article in question (<https://scholar.google.ca/>)

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## Form your argument- Think critically

- What do you think about what you just read?
  - ▶ Where do you agree with the author & why?
  - ▶ Where are you skeptical of the author's arguments & why?
- Try to connect what you are reading with what you have learned in this course and other economics courses
  - ▶ Is the rationale convincing? What assumptions is the author making and are they justified?
  - ▶ Do they contradict or support economic models that you have learned in the past?
  - ▶ Does the author provide solid empirical evidence for his/her claims?

## Form your argument- Be clear

- Write down your thesis statement:
- This is a one (max two) sentence summary of your **main argument** which you will state in your introduction (generally towards the end)
  - ▶ e.g. “While I agree with the author that ..., I am less convinced by her claim that ... and will argue that...”
- Write down your main supporting arguments
  - ▶ For 1000 words, formulate at least 2 supporting arguments
  - ▶ Write a one sentence summary of each of your arguments (which you may include in the actual essay as e.g. paragraph openers)

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# Write- General

## BEFORE YOU START WRITING:

- Outline, outline, outline!
  - ▶ It will help you immensely to organize your own thoughts
  - ▶ Separation of tasks: essay organization, writing (grammar, connectors, style)
  - ▶ Once you have your outline and your thesis statement, it's easy to write an introduction!
- Decide what audience you are writing for
  - ▶ For the critical review and term paper, the audience is the general reading population: who has some understanding of basic economic concepts but not detailed economic knowledge.



## Write- Introduction

- Provide context for your essay in one sentence
- Context for critical analysis can be simply a reference and summary of the assigned reading
- Briefly summarize what you consider to be the main point(s) of the article(s)
- If there are many, focus on the one(s) that you will analyze in the assignment
- Give your thesis statement
- Keep it short (ideally: one paragraph)

## Write- Body

- Put separate ideas into separate paragraphs
- Open new paragraphs with a summary of the argument to be presented
- Provide sources for any content that is not originally yours (see handout on How not to plagiarize)
- Cite immediately to avoid plagiarizing accidentally
- Use simple and clear language and get to the point

# Write- Conclusion

Summarize your arguments:

- Give a quick summary of your main arguments
- Don't be afraid to repeat information
- Restate your **thesis statement!**
- Do not introduce new information: conclusion should summarize what you have shown and \*how\* you have shown it
- Again, keep it short and concise: one paragraph

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# Revise

- Leave yourself time to read through your own work and self-edit!
- Things to look out for while editing:
  - ▶ Run-on sentences and long paragraphs
  - ▶ Awkward/abrupt transitions between paragraphs
  - ▶ Repetition
  - ▶ Grammar, typos and awkward phrasing
- Run spell check
- Use the UofT Writing Centre to help you edit your work  
<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science> or ask a friend to read over your essay

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- **PLAGIARISM:** Representing someone else's ideas, writing or other intellectual property as your own
  - ▶ Very easy for graders to spot plagiarism: you have to submit your essays to Turnitin.com
  - ▶ Make sure to visit Beware of Plagiarism! on the course website
  - ▶ You must cite your source within the main text AND list the full source in your bibliography (e.g. in-text citation using APA format: (Krugman, 2012) or (Krugman, 2012, pp. 345-346))
- Choose a citation style, e.g. APA or MLA and stick to it (see Standard Documentation Format under Critical Review on course website)

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# Format

How to format your assignment:

- Your assignment should be typed, double spaced and have a font size of at least 12 points
- Put the word count of your assignment in parentheses at the end (you can use word count in Microsoft Word for this). For example (1000 words)
- The title page should have your full name, student id number and the class information (i.e. ECO 407, Fall 2017)
- The assignment should be either a Word document

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<https://www.economics.utoronto.ca/gindart/eco407.htm>
  - ▶ General Writing Instructions
  - ▶ Grading Rubric (important to check routinely throughout the project)
- GOOD LUCK!!!