

Writing Assignment I: Research Proposal

Due Date: Thursday March 2nd.

A brief research proposal of 750 words or less is due in class on Thursday, March 2nd. This proposal should 1) present and motivate a focused historical research question; and 2) describe how historical data and economic concepts might be used to develop an answer.

Requirements:

- 1) 750 words or fewer.
- 2) Submit both a hard copy in class and an electronic copy in rich text format (.rtf) via email to czelusta@stanford.edu with jdr@econ.berkeley.edu in cc.
- 3) No late assignments will be accepted.

Goals:

- 1) To develop and motivate a clear, focused research question.
- 2) To explain succinctly why this question is important.
- 3) To propose a strategy for answering this question using historical data.

Guidelines:

All research answers questions. Finding a question that is simultaneously interesting, important, and potentially answerable is one of the most challenging and fun parts of the research process. To this end, you are encouraged to develop a question that is relatively narrow yet still intriguing to you as a researcher. In explaining why your question is important, you should assess its relevance to understanding the past and/or present (and perhaps to policy as well). At this stage, do not worry about data availability—simply state which data (if available) would be useful in addressing your question and how.

Your grade will be based on 1) the appropriateness of your question as a potential object of research; 2) the depth of the arguments used to support your motivation and research strategy; and 3) the clarity of your presentation.