

February 19, 2015

ASSIGNMENT PROMPT FOR SECOND STUDY REPORT

For your second report, we have in mind another essay which is still general and informative but is now focused on providing the reader with *an analysis of your issue from the "economic perspective."* It would make sense to utilize your previous informative discourse as the organizational template for this report on "the economics of the issue," but this does not have to be a strict mandate. In other words, the key elements which you identified concerning the topic in the earlier report might now be given an economics spin or interpretation. Your goal in the second report is to use economic thinking, and perhaps economic methodology and tools, to help the reader understand the issue. An excellent report will demonstrate the author's command over the basics of the economic perspective, and will do so by an insightful application of that perspective to the main aspects and dimensions of your group's issue/topic. Please use economics to help make sense of those complexities, elaborations, and important distinctions which your first report highlighted regarding your issue.

As with virtually all nonfiction writing, strong organization and structure of presentation are important, but with the second report these considerations are not as vital as the goal of using the social science viewpoint of economics to yield to the reader a cogent, logical, and persuasive interpretation of the issue. If your earlier report had framed the most basic questions regarding your issue, your second report will demonstrate how economics can provide the answers. These analytical insights may not, of course, be ultimate solutions. Further, since you and your readers may recognize that these are complex and profound issues, economic analysis may provide only partial understanding. A good report will also at least make mention of the limits of the economic perspective regarding your topic.

Assume that your audience is interested in your topic, more so than a mere random consumer of a general news report; either they have read your earlier report, or they have followed the issue with above average curiosity so that they have a good idea of the basics already. Also, in your work take into account that some of your readers will have a broad sympathy with the "economics perspective," i.e. they are predisposed to think like an economist and see this approach as the correct way to get a better handle on the issue. However, in addition, as you write persuasively, assume that a significant minority your readership is not at all ideologically impressed with the "economic point of view," and tend to regard economists and their approach to a subject as distinctly wrong-headed and quite possibly dangerous to society's ever finding a successful and equitable stance on this issue. An excellent second report will then show, in some degree, awareness about the potential variation in political and ideological inclinations of the readers.

Your Second Group Study Report should be approximately a 4-12 page typed work. My personal preference is for 1.15-spaced lines in a 11- or 12- font, with 1-inch margins. This report is formally, a "research paper," and should contain a minimum of three distinct external references which will have in-text coordinate reference to specific page numbers by the technique of footnotes or endnotes. Each source should have complete bibliographical citation in a bibliography at the end of the paper. One of your sources can be Seabright. This report is due in my office (210 West House) or via email, no later than 2pm Friday March 13, 2015. No late work will be accepted.

Enjoy!