

12. *Writing Introductions, Conclusions, and Abstracts*

SUGGESTED COURSE EXTENSIONS

A. Reviewing

1. Find a journal article about an application of multivariate analysis to a topic in your field. Critique it for the following, using the guidelines in chapters 3 and 12 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*:
 - a. A clear introduction of the main substantive issues or questions to be investigated
 - b. A review of the previous literature to identify theories and existing evidence on that topic
 - c. A discussion and conclusions section that summarizes numeric findings and relates them back to the research question and to previous studies
 - d. Consideration of causality and substantive significance of findings in the conclusions
2. Critique the abstract, keywords, and title to the article using the guidelines in chapter 12 and the instructions for authors for a leading journal in your field. Revise them to correct any problems you identify.

B. Writing

Note: If you are writing a paper on a new multivariate analysis, complete these questions. If you have already written a draft of your paper, complete section C instead.

1. Write an introductory section for your paper following the guidelines in chapter 12 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*.
2. Write the discussion and conclusions section of your paper, including
 - a. summaries of major numeric findings rather than repetition of detailed numbers from the results;
 - b. discussion of causality, statistical significance, and substantive significance of findings; see guidelines in chapter 3;

- c. explanation of how your findings relate to initial hypotheses and to findings of other studies.
3. Write an abstract for your paper following the guidelines in chapter 12 and the instructions for a journal in your field.
4. Investigate which online databases list the leading journals in your field. Write keywords to satisfy the criteria for that database, following the guidelines in chapter 12 and the instructions for that database.
5. Write a title for your paper
 - a. worded as a statement;
 - b. worded as a rhetorical question.

C. Revising

1. Critique the introductory section of a paper you have written previously, using the criteria in question A.1. Rewrite it to rectify any problems you have identified.
2. Critique the discussion and conclusions section of that paper using the criteria listed under question B.2. Rewrite it to rectify any problems you have identified.
3. Repeat question A.2 for your paper.
4. Exchange initial and revised drafts of the materials in questions C.1 through C.3 with someone writing about a different topic or data. Peer-edit each other's work and revise according to the feedback you receive.