

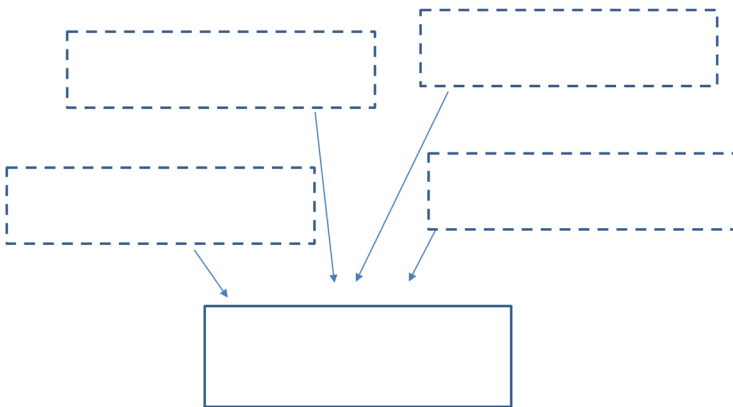
This note pertains to the In-Class Literature Review Worksheet

For economics and business economics majors, they write an empirical research paper for their capstone course within a semester and present their paper to the faculty. Due to the time constraint and the technicality of some economics paper (i.e., math proofs), the in-class exercise was created to help the students to:

1. Frame their thoughts about the topic of interest,
2. Critically read the literature,
3. Determine how they may contribute to the existing literature.

There are two parts of the literature review worksheet:

A. Organizing the Literature Search



The students are asked to add their topic of interest (e.g., recidivism, academic achievement, World Cup hosting, etc.) in the solid box. Students add factors that have a direct relationship/correlation with their topic in the dashed boxes (aka “buckets”). The buckets help the students to visualize the one-directional relationship between the factors and their topic of interest. Additionally, it assists in explaining that discussions in the literature review is by factors and not by each paper. For example, buckets for recidivism could be demographics, state policies, reform programs, etc.

In critically reviewing the literature, the students are asked to focus on the economic concepts that explain the relationship between a factor and their topic. Namely, they do not necessarily need to understand the math proofs nor write their own math proofs, rather, they are to consider the direction of the relationship and to explain why those relationships exist in the direction they expect. As they read the literature, they are to 1) recognize the “usual suspects,” which are factors that are considered by nearly all the papers, and 2) consider any factor(s) that may be relevant but either excluded in the literature or has been applied but not to their specific area of interest/timeframe/location/etc. The latter part helps to determine their contribution to the literature.

The second part of the exercise helps the students to visually map the relationship between the theoretical concepts in the literature review and their empirical framework. The bold box is their dependent variable while each factor is loosely considered as an independent variable. Part B helps the students to quantify the factors for the empirical analysis.

B. Main Article(s)

Dependent Variable:

Independent Variable 1:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept:

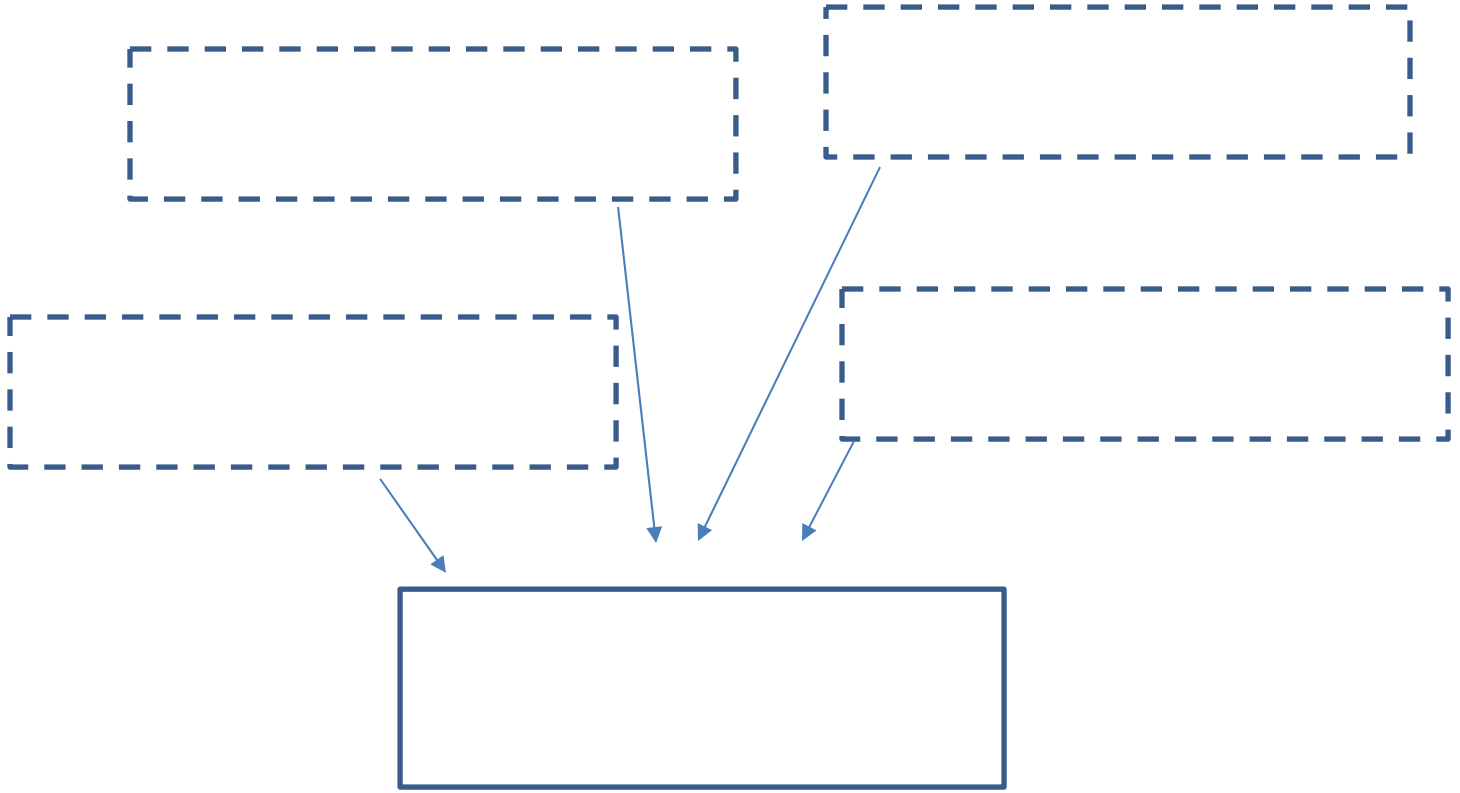
Independent Variable 2:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept:

Independent Variable 3:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept:

A. Organizing the Literature Search



B. Main Article(s)

Dependent Variable:

Independent Variable 1:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept:

Independent Variable 2:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept:

Independent Variable 3:

- Expected relationship:
- Economic concept: