A brief (10-15 pages) term paper will be expected from each student by Noon, Friday, May 8. The paper may take one of three forms:

- a theoretical note on some aspect of econometrics we have touched upon in class, an elaboration of one of the problems for example.

- an empirical note which explores the application of a technique we have considered on a “real” data set.

- a critical survey of recent developments in a relevant niche of the econometrics literature, the emphasis here should be on the word critical. You should try to offer some guidance on where the literature should go from here.

Writing papers is an essential part of what we “do” as professional economists. There is a “knack” to writing papers (compare Richard Lester’s 1965 movie “The Knack”). There are several guides to writing academic papers of various sorts. I particularly recommend the material collected for Don Knuth’s 1987 course at Stanford and available from http:
the papers in Paul Halmos collection *Selecta: Expository Writing*, and various entries linked to Terence Tao’s blog [http://terrytao.wordpress.com/](http://terrytao.wordpress.com/). You would also do well to begin to learn \LaTeX, or even better the literate programming tools embedded in Sweave that enable you to interweave text and R code to produce figures and tables. An introduction to these methods is provide in a recent paper that I’ve done with Achim Zeileis, and available from [http://www.econ.uiuc.edu/~roger/research/repro/](http://www.econ.uiuc.edu/~roger/research/repro/). As a final example of useful meta-econometric advice you might want to consult [http://www.bus.lsu.edu/hill/writing/abadir_magnus.pdf](http://www.bus.lsu.edu/hill/writing/abadir_magnus.pdf) which contains advice about econometric notation; most of it good.

While I don’t encourage *purely “monte carlo” papers*, some simulation *aspect* is encouraged. To avoid potential misunderstandings about paper topics, I would like all students to submit a 1-page “paper proposal by March 20. This is the last day of class before spring break. These proposals should contain at least three relevant references to literature and a brief sketch of what you propose to do in your paper. This year I am hoping to introduce more plausible term paper topics earlier in the semester than in prior years. Some suggestions for paper topics will appear (eventually) on the class web page, and the suggested text by Angrist and Pischke offers some other good suggestions.