Term Paper Guidelines

The first and most important step in writing a term paper is to find an issue you would like to discuss at length. We have already discussed several international issues and institutions any of which may serve as a starting point for your term paper. The choice of a topic is up to you – find something that interests you. Once you have found a topic, start writing. Putting your thoughts on paper often helps to focus your argument.

Submission of topic
By Thursday, April 13th, you should submit a simple, 1-page write-up of your research topic. This submission should identify and motivate the question you will pursue (see 1. below). There are several goals to this part of the assignment:
   a. It gets you to put your thoughts on paper. As I stated above, this often helps you focus your argument.
   b. It allows me to give some feedback and suggestions where needed.
   c. It gets you working on the paper in a timely fashion. Papers written in the 11th hour are often found to be lacking.

Term Paper
Your term paper is due in class on Thursday, April 27th. You are welcome to present your assignment prior to this data, but under no circumstances will late assignments be accepted. There is no restriction on length. It should be as long as it has to be. If you are desperate for guidance: I can’t imagine a thorough paper proposal of less than 5 (double-spaced) pages.

What is a paper proposal?
A paper proposal is the first step in writing a paper. It should answer the following questions:
   1. The issue
      What is it?
      Why is it important?
   2. List the hypotheses to be examined
      That is, specifically state your question
   3. Discuss the relevant models
   4. Discuss the relevant literature
   5. Empirical strategy
      Data
      Econometric approach
   6. Expected finding (a priori expectations)

If the expected findings don’t show why the issue is important, rethink it.
If the empirical strategy doesn’t answer the hypothesis, rethink it.

This format should look familiar. It is very similar to the format of the literature you have been reading. A well scripted paper proposal amounts to about 40% of a masters thesis.
Plagiarism
Plagiarism is defined as ‘writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work’. Often, this is the result of simple laziness by the student rather than outright theft of material. In any case, any student found to have plagiarized material will receive a FAILING GRADE FOR THE ENTIRE CLASS. See http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml for a good discussion of plagiarism.

Grading
The topic selection will be assigned to one of two categories: Adequate (5 points) and Inadequate (0 points). This decision will be based, not upon the merits of the proposal, but on the quality of the work presented.

Your term paper will be assigned to one of three categories: Good (15 points), Adequate (10 points) and Inadequate (5 points). While this decision will be based on several factors, I will devote particular attention to the following:

- Does the author state purpose, problem or question to be considered?
- How does the author convince the reader that the paper is worth reading?
- Is empirical evidence provided to motivate the paper (if available)?
- Is the argument internally consistent? That is, does one point follow from another?
- Is the reviewed literature relevant to the topic at hand? Is the literature presented in a clear, concise fashion? Is a mosaic of the literature presented or is it simply listed?
- Are lecture materials integrated, if and when appropriate?
- Is the writing fundamentally sound (spelling, grammar REFERENCES).