**Paper Title: Possibly Followed by a Paper Subtitle**

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Today’s Date

Abstract: What you do in the paper in 100 words or less, written in a no-nonsense just-the-facts style.

Keywords: some hints as to what your paper is about

JEL codes: JEL codes (google it) for what your paper is about

**1. Introduction**

Start with a big picture hook: why is the topic you study important? The first paragraph should be about the importance of your research question, mentioning the names of the very-important-people who have worked on the topic.

The second paragraph says what you do, and why your analysis is “a contribution to the literature.” This does not need to be epic. For the replication assignment, you can say something like: we explore the robustness of Card and Krueger (1994)’s seminal results on the impact of minimum wage laws.

**2. Research Design and Data**

All applied micro papers have a section that talks about the setting or context where the study takes place and the sources of data used in the analysis. This is a must. The specific subsections will vary from paper to paper. All development papers need a section that explains to the reader that countries besides the United States exist, but keep it short – aim to tell the reader all the specific institutional or context-specific details that matter for your empirical analysis, and nothing beyond that. You are not writing a history or a travel guide. Err on the side of citing references to support your claims, even when they seem self-evident (to someone familiar with the context).

All empirical papers also need a section that clearly states the sources of data. If you are using publicly available data, this can just be a few sentences (you don’t need to describe widely used data sets that readers are likely to be familiar with). In particular, **don’t** list all the topics covered in a particular data set; you only need to describe what you are using the data for. Again, give the reader the detail they need to understand your analysis, but omit information that is not relevant to the specific research you are discussing in the paper.

Some sample subsections that might appear in your Research Design (or Experimental Design) section:

2.1 Study Context

2.2 Sample

2.3 Experimental Design (or Empirical Strategy)

2.4 Data

2.5 Sample Characteristics

**3. Results**

This is the most important section of your paper. It should typically start with a subsection where you describe your identification strategy (if you have not done so already) and your empirical specification. Then present your results. You can organize your results as you see fit, but they should be organized in some logical way so that the reader does not loose sight of your big-picture message.

**4. Conclusion**

The conclusion can be short. You don’t need to provide a detailed summary. In all likelihood, no one will ever read your conclusion – and if they do, they will be reading it immediately after reading the entire paper. Briefly summarize what you’ve done and the main takeaways in a few sentences or a paragraph. Then perhaps add a last paragraph that is a bit more speculative, linking your findings to broader literature and suggesting directions for future research.

**References**

The American Economic Association recommends the use of the Chicago Manual of Style Author-Date system. [They provide a bunch of examples](https://www.aeaweb.org/journals/policies/sample-references).

**Tables and Figures**

Tables and figures typically come at the end of the paper, though people disagree on this issue. Tables and figures should be numbered, and all should have notes so that you can read and interpret them without looking at the text of the paper.

Table 1: Summary Statistics

*Put table 1 here.*

Figure 1: A Map

*Put a map here.*

1. The authors thank Bert, Ernie, and Big Bird for helpful comments. All errors are our own. Corresponding author: Arabella A. First-Author (a1@williams.edu). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)