

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Geography

GEOG 3100
United States and Canada: Cities, Economies, and Sustainability
Dr. Murray Rice

Research Report: Expectations

The following is a basic summary of what I expect you to include in your group term project for this class.

- **TITLE PAGE**

The report should have an interesting title that indicates the report topic. “Report for GEOG 3100” is not an interesting title, and it does not give any clue as to what the report might be about. To make the title interesting, think about what might make someone want to read your report – what would make someone care about your topic? Try to include some key words in your title that would be important in defining what your project is all about, and even help someone think they might be interested in reading your paper.

- **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

This is a simple listing (with page numbers) of the major sections of the report (e.g. introduction, data sources, results, discussion and conclusion, literature cited).

- **ABSTRACT (to be e-mailed separately)**

The abstract should summarize the topic, central question, key findings, and conclusions. It should be approximately 200 words in length. Note that this abstract is due separately from the rest of the paper, and should be e-mailed to rice@unt.edu (the rest of the paper should be submitted in paper form to me in class as usual). See the course syllabus for all due dates.

- INTRODUCTION

This section should acquaint the reader with your topic: what are you writing about, and why should your reader be interested in it? Another thing to consider is that I am asking that you write your paper from a “problem” orientation: don’t just set out to summarize a pile of information, do something with that information to say something interesting about an issue related to the region or place you are interested in. This section should give a clear indication of what issue you are studying and what you are attempting to do with that issue in the paper (your “objectives for the paper”). In total, the introduction should give a very clear and specific outline of what you are trying to accomplish in your paper. This section should be approximately 200 words in length.

- DATA SOURCES

This section is a review of the key sources you found relating to your project topic. I expect you to do a thorough search of articles from the popular media and other data sources (people, government sources, etc.) you may have access to. Discuss any limitations or issues relating to the information sources you are using: what might be some biases associated with any of your sources (e.g. if using information from a tourist bureau, think of any ways in which such a source might downplay some issues while highlighting others). This section should be approximately 200 words in length.

- RESULTS

Outline your findings. Make sure this section focuses on the original objectives you defined in your introduction. Present your results in as clear and interesting a way as you can possibly manage. Invest time and space to do this well. This section should be approximately 600-800 words in length.

- DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section will discuss the meaning and significance of your results. Refer back specifically to your original objectives as well as to your findings, and discuss what your results mean for the region or situation you are studying. This section needs to be a strong point of your work. This section should be approximately 200 words in length.

- LITERATURE CITED

List at the end of your report only those materials you used in the paper. List your references in a format consistent with the papers linked on the research page on my website (see here: <http://www.murrayrice.com/research.html>). This list should be approximately a page in length (so, perhaps 10-15 references listed).

- OVERALL

Overall, the length of the total paper should be approximately 1200-1400 words, not including the title page, table of contents, abstract, and “literature cited” sections defined above. This total also does not include any maps, tables, or charts (which I recommend you include: geography isn’t only about maps and interesting graphics, but they sure help). Lastly, the paper should be double-spaced with one-inch margins on all pages.