

How to provide written comments on a chapter

Draft: January 16, 2018

I would appreciate feedback and comments both in class and in writing. I would like our classes to be discussions rather than lectures.

And, I would like comments so I can improve each chapter.

What did you not understand? What did you understand? What do you think is wrong? Grammar and exposition? Organization within the chapter, or between Chapters? The topic? Etc.

The chapters are provided in pdf format.

While sending me written comments is not required, it is one way to partially fulfill the participation part of your grade, and it will be difficult to get a high participation grade if you never send comments.

If you have the capability to attach pdf ‘notes’ to the pdf draft of a chapter, that would be great, but I can take comments in any form, including hard copy.

If you would like to comment on a WORD version of a chapter, let me know and I will send you a copy.

If you are sending me an email with comments attached or embedded in your email, I need an easy way to keep track of which chapter you are commenting on, and your name so I can keep track of your contributions.

So, we need a naming convention for comments.

Do the following: in the subject line of your email put the name of the chapter followed by your last name and the date

For example, for chapter 1 you would put in the following subject line if your last name was Morey

“Econ4060Comments_ChapX_yourname_date”

For example, if Bob sent me comments on Chapter 3 on Feb 12th, the subject line would be Econ4060Comments_Chap3_Bob_021218

If the email has an attachment (e.g. a pdf file), give the attachment the same name.

The date is included so I know when you commented and on what version of the chapter.

If you prefer to give me a marked-up hard copy of a chapter that is fine, only make sure to write the naming convention at the top.

Thanks

If you would like to comment but want to do it anonymously, have a friend send me the email. In that case, of course, you won't get credit for your comments. In that case replace your name in the subject line and attachment with XXX or some such thing.

Feel free to comment on any of the following:

- Poor grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.
- Poor exposition
- Clarity of a section, paragraph or sentence
- Something you do not understand, explaining, if you can, why you do not understand.
- Arguments you disagree with or are not convinced by, and, if you can, why
- Examples that are not good examples, and if you can, explaining why
- Examples that are offensive, and why, or too many examples of a certain type.
- Assuming too much, or too little, prior knowledge on the part of the reader. If you say this note who you are thinking of as a typical reader.
- Pointing out material that is not to the point, so can be deleted.
- Pointing out too much or too little detail.
- Suggestions for shortening sentences, sections and chapters. I will likely have to cut a bunch and or move some stuff to online appendices.
- Poorly-worded sentences.
- Better ways to organize sections or chapters.
- No clue as to what I am trying to say.
- Etc.

Try to be gentle but precise

Of course your interest in a chapter and your inclination to comment on it will vary with the topics and what I say. It will also vary in terms of how much you know about the topic. For example, you will probably have more to say (at the end of the day) on a chapter if your essay is about a topic in that chapter, or if you mentored an essay at topic in a chapter.

Your essay is a comment on a topic in the book.

You can comment on a section of a chapter or even a single paragraph. You don't need to always provide comments on the whole chapter.

Thanks

Edward