

## How to Prepare a Critical Review

1) You need to find a paper related to the class. This can most easily be done by looking at Strobl and finding a citation for a figure then searching the citation index for related papers that have been recently published in a journal that UC has electronic archives for.

**<http://cite.ohiolink.edu/isi/CIW.cgi>**

2) You should select your paper carefully. You want a paper with some meat that is interesting and that you can understand, yet one which pertains to the class. You may spend 60% of your time in writing a critical review searching for the right paper.

3) You will need to read the paper several times. First to get a rough idea of what is going on. Then to develop your line of attack and praise for the paper. In other words you need to develop an opinion on the paper.

4) You will probably need to find related papers/books cited by the authors and other papers not cited by the authors. The latter can most easily be found by searching citation index again on the subject of the paper and following your line of reasoning in developing an opinion on the paper. For instance, if you think the work has already been done by another author you need to find evidence for this in the literature.

5) Once you have a background for what the author is saying you need to write your critical review.

i) You need to give the authors and title of the paper and summarize what, in your opinion, the authors have done in the paper. You probably will need to give a brief background on the field to which the paper pertains and describe how the paper impacts the field. This section should answer the question: What has been contributed to the literature by this paper? (This is generally a positive part of the critical review unless there is really nothing that the authors have contributed in which case you should probably find another paper.)

ii) You should list the positive points and believable conclusions from the paper. This list should be itemized and emphasize what has been contributed to the field by this paper and how important these contributions are to merit publication.

iii) You will need to determine the weaknesses in the paper based on the class, and what you have found from your background reading. This section should be composed of itemized points that are addressable by the author by number. Each point should be

distinct and concise with suggested routes for correction unless the paper is to be deemed invalid (the latter is a bad road to take).

iv) You need to summarize your feelings on the paper in a brief statement (1 to 2 paragraphs).

v) You need to make a final assessment that is meant to answer a series of questions.

- a) Is the paper readable and properly formatted so that it can be read?
- b) Is the data reproducible and do you believe the data?
- c) Is the analysis/theory correct?
- d) Is the approach scientifically logical?
- b) Does the paper make a contribution to the literature significant enough for it to be published?
- c) Has the author or another author already published substantially the same paper?
- d) Does the author need to reconsider some points and address your comments or would you allow publication of the paper as written?

Your answer to these questions should have a basis and arguments presented in the body of the critical review.

6) Your critical review must include copies of the article reviewed and copies of the references you use as a basis for your argument as well as the major references used by the author as a basis for his arguments. If a book is used included copies of the relevant pages and a copy of the title page of the book (year of publication, author, title, publisher, city of publication).