

Instructions for the essay

Your course assignment is to write a critical essay based on all the following: lectures by Roberto Evaristo, course material (articles) and other scientific articles that you should search for. In addition, if you have experiences e.g., on working in a distributed project you can compare your experiences to the literature and lectures.

The contents of an essay

To your essay you should choose 3-4 of the main topics presented during the lectures. On each topic you should present some of the most important or interesting themes discussed during the lectures and in the literature. You should critically compare what different authors present and give also your own justified comments and opinions. On each topic you can also try to identify issues that are especially problematic for distributed projects, important to remember when managing distributed projects or topics that would need further research. If possible you can include also your own experiences, even though the literature should play the major role in this essay. On each topic (3-4 topics) you should find, besides the articles offered by the course (required readings and additional readings), two or more scientific articles that you reference to. You can search for those articles from the electronic databases of HUT library (www.lib.tkk.fi).

The length of the essay should be 5000-6000 words written with line spacing of 1,5. This will make approximately 15 pages.

Searching literature

Remember, that even the most powerful general search engines on the Internet do NOT access the scientific literature. Instead you should search the scientific literature databases found e.g. from the HUT library. The challenge using these databases is of course figuring out the right

keywords to use to get exactly what you want. A good way to begin is to find one article on the subject and search for more references in the reference list. You can then follow up with other techniques such as to go back in time (What came before?), to go forward in time (What has come since?), and searches with more detailed keywords. For example, you can start with references in the course material.

Writing

The students are expected to be able to find relevant literature, analyze it, and report the findings according to basic scientific principles.

When writing, you must remember to credit and document the sources you are using. Direct quotations should be used sparingly. The author should first understand the subject presented by the source and then describe it in his/her own words. One guideline can be quoting only one sentence directly at a time. Even this is true only if

- the source manages to present the essential idea especially concisely and to the point
- the quotation is controversial and the author wishes to avoid any misrepresentations

The author should pay special attention to the way the information is presented. Each context should show whether the information in question is

- based on a literary source (the source must be given as a citation)
- research result based on empirical data collected by the author
- based on experiences of the author
- deduction of the author
- assumption of the author
- guess of the author

Only generally known and fully verified matters may be presented without reference or grounds. If such a matter is verified in literature, a reference concerning the matter must be given.

If a statement is presented without references or grounds, it may be incorrectly interpreted as a guess or assumption of the author.

The author is encouraged to present personal thoughts, information, assumptions, and guesses whenever possible. However, if personal thoughts, information, assumptions, or guesses are presented, they must be clearly identified for example by stating "even though no exact information was available, it seems likely that..." or "In my opinion...".

Guesses and assumptions without grounds will greatly reduce the value of the research. However, well-grounded assumptions and guesses may greatly increase the value of the research. New ideas and insights will always increase the value of the research.

There are several styles for both references and citations. For references you should include an alphabetically ordered list of the works you have cited in your essay. This list should begin on a separate page headed REFERENCES in the end of your essay.

Alphabetize the references by the last name of the author (the first author) or the editor, or by the name of the corporate author or periodical if there is no individual author or editor. Several works by an identical author (or group of authors) are ordered by year of publication, with the earliest listed first.

Giving proper credit to the sources of original ideas and previous work is an important aspect of good scholarship. Inappropriate or inaccurate citations do not do justice to the authors cited and can be misleading to readers. For citations the style you should use (Harvard style) is described below. Especially note that the IEEE-style (number in brackets) should not be used, since it is very difficult for the reader to follow. Below, a commonly used indication of references is described.

Citations should be made in the text by enclosing the cited authors' names and the year of the work cited in parentheses. E.g.,

Several studies (Adams, 1974; Brown & Hales, 1975, 1980; Collins, 1976a, 1976b) support this conclusion.

Also note that two or more works by the same author (or by an identical group of authors) published in the same year are distinguished by "a," "b," etc., added after the year.

Citations to the source of a direct quotation must give a page number or numbers; these follow the date of publication and are separated from it by a colon. Example:

Adams has said that writing a book is "a long and arduous task" (1974: 3).

Also cite page numbers when you paraphrase or summarize specific arguments or findings of authors.

If a work has two authors, give both names every time the work is cited in the text. Example:

Few field studies use random assignment (Franz & Schmidt, 1976).

If a work has more than two authors, use the name of the first author and "et al." Example:

Few field studies use random assignment (Sapienza et al., 1995).
(first citation)

Deadlines

The deadline for returning a complete draft is 24.5. at 16.00. By that you are expected to write a complete paper and the course personnel will give you feedback based on that delivery. The deadline for a final paper is 16.6. at 16.00. These deadline are strict, late deliveries will be automatically rejected. The course staff can give guidance if asked also before the deadlines. We recommend you to start writing as early as possible. Return your essay by email in pdf format to Maria.Paasivaara@tkk.fi.