

Essay Instructions - OBIDAM Course

Erik Perjons



Essay

- The essay should summarize and/or analyze a topic covered in the OBIDAM course, and apply it on an existing or non-existing organization.
- Examples of topics are:
 - What characterizes a data-driven public organization?
 - How to implement Hadoop – a step-by-step method
 - Language technologies in health care – how can they be applied
 - Success factors for open data implementations



The process



First step: Find a topic

- Find a topic and literature related to the topic
- Tip! Use Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.se/>) to find research papers/articles (click on the pdf in the right part of the pages and download)
- Log in to the SU library (<http://www.sub.su.se>) to find additional papers/articles, for example published by Springer Link, Emerald
- Check research journals



Second step: Send in a Choice of Topic 1(2)

- Send in a Choice of Topic for the Essay – this is a mandatory step – **check deadline!!**
- The Choice of Topic should include the following:
 1. Description of the background to the problem (around 1-2 sentences)
 2. Description of the problem that the essay address (max 1 sentence)
 3. Description of the goal/research question of the essay (max 1 sentence)



Second step: Send in a Choice of Topic 2(2)

- This Choice of Topic from the student will not be graded, but you will receive within 3-4 days:
 - an pass or fail by the teacher, and
 - a comment



Third step: Finalize the essay

- Use the template
- Read the literature
- Write and finalize the essay
- Check grading criteria – and refine the essay
- Send the essay in for grading



Max number of words

- The essay should be between **6 and 14 pages**
- **Important: Max number of words: 4 500** (excluding, that is, not counting, abstract and reference list)
- If your essay exceeds 4 500 word, the essay will be send back to you, and you need to delete some text in the essay until you do not exceed the 4 500 words limit, and then you need to re-submit the essay (Note, this will not impact the grading)



Essay - overall ideas

- **The essay should have a theoretical part** where concepts from research literature are introduced. The essay should be based on at least three research papers/articles - which should be referenced in the essay
- **The essay should also have a practical part** where the concepts in the theoretical part are applied on an existing or non-existing organization
- The essay **should include a part where the student describe how to transform the essay to a research contribution**



Grading Criteria 1(3)

	E	D	C	B	A
Abstract	Exists.	Exists.	Should include problem statement, the research question or goal, and the result or conclusion.	Should include problem statement, the research question or goal, and the result or conclusion.	Should include problem statement, the research question or goal, and the result or conclusion.
Problem	Exists.	Exists.	Clearly stated and justified in literature and/or own experiences.	Clearly stated and justified in literature and/or own experiences.	Clearly stated and justified in literature and/or own experiences.
Research question (or goal) and Conclusion	Exists, and somewhat answered in conclusion.	Exists, and somewhat answered in conclusion.	Clearly stated and clearly answered in conclusion.	Clearly stated and clearly answered, including an interesting discussion and/or reflection about the answer.	Clearly stated and clearly answered, including an interesting and innovative discussion and/or reflection about the answer.
Research method applied	Briefly described.	Briefly described.	Briefly described.	Briefly described.	Briefly described.
Structure	Acceptable.	Acceptable.	Good.	Well-structured.	Well-structured.
Discussion/ Argumentation	Acceptable.	Relevant	Relevant.	Good. The arguments are convincing.	Deep (i.e., arguments are based on additional arguments).



Grading Criteria 2(3)

	E	D	C	B	A
Theoretical base/ Concepts	Described.	Described.	Described and well-defined.	Described, well-defined and discussed.	Described, well-defined and discussed.
Concepts applied on an existing or non-existing org	Exists	Exists.	Clearly done.	Clearly done, and in an interesting way.	Clearly done, and in an interesting, and innovative way.
Description of how to transfer essay to research contribution	Briefly described.	Briefly described.	Suggest and argue for research strategy and research methods to be applied	Suggest and argue for research strategy and research methods to be applied	Suggest and argue in an original/innovative/deep way for research strategy and research methods to be applied
Future research	Exist	Exist	Some interesting future research presented	Interesting and well-argued future research presented	Interesting, well-argued and innovative future research presented.



Grading Criteria 3(3)

	E	D	C	B	A
Originality	Shows few examples of original thinking.	Shows few examples of original thinking.	Shows some examples of original thinking.	Shows some examples of original thinking.	Shows several examples of original thinking.
Language	Text is readable.	Text is readable.	Text quality is good (i.e., easy to read).	Text quality is good. Language is adapted to the genre.	Text quality is very good. Language is adapted to the genre.
References	References are used in a relevant way.	References are used in a relevant way.	References are used in a relevant way.	References are used in a relevant way – and explicitly discussed.	References are used in a relevant way – and explicitly discussed.



Grading criteria in detail



Abstract

- The abstract should summarize the content of the essay, and should include the problem statement, the research question or goal, and the result or conclusion



Problem 1(2)

- The essay start with a **short background** that will provide a general context to the problem
- The problem should be **stated in one sentence – that is the problem statement**
- **Start the problem statement/sentence with “The problem addressed in this essay is...”**, so it is obvious for the reader what the problem is



Problem 2 (2)

- The problem statement should also be discussed, that is, elaborated around, in order to justify the problem.
- That is, **the problem should - for the higher grades - be justified**. The problem can be **justified in literature, or in your own experiences from an organization**.
- If the problem is justified in literature, describe in which way and refer to the literature
- If the problem is justify in your own experiences/practice from an organization, discribe this experience/practice in detail



Research question (or goal) 1(2)

- The research question should be **stated in one sentence – and in form of a question**
- Start expressing the research question in the following way: **“The research question to be answered in this essay is: ...”**
- The research question can be **replaced by a goal statement**
- If you use a goal statement instead, start expressing the goal statement in the following way: **“The goal of this essay is to ...”**



Research question (or goal) 2(2)

- **The research question should be repeated in the conclusion and be answered, and - for the higher grades – the answer should be discussed and reflected upon**
- If you have a goal statement instead of a research question, you need to repeat the goal in the conclusion, describe the achievement of the goal, and – for higher grades – the goal achievement should be discussed and reflected upon



Research method applied

- Describe the method you have used
- **This is not an important part of the essay,** so this can be done in a paragraph or more
- The method could be described using simple words - you do not need to refer to or state research strategy or research method used – but, of course, you could



Structure

- The structure should be logical both when it comes to the relationships between different chapters/sections and the relationships between different paragraphs within the chapters/sections
- For example, it should make sense why a certain paragraph is followed by another
- You can test this by reading the first sentence of each paragraph, and, thereby, check that there is a logical flow between the paragraphs



Discussion/Argumentation

- You should base most of your arguments on literature – that is, you should refer to literature in the essay
- Reflection is great – but it should be clear when it is your reflections, and when you base the statements on literature
- Depth in argumentation is achieved when there are additional arguments supporting a certain argument used



Concepts/Theoretical base

- This part of the essay presents the theoretical base and concepts – and it is based on literature, which should be clearly referenced
- For example, if your essay is about “Language technologies in health care – how can they be applied”, this part specify different types of language technologies and different ways to implement them, based on literature
- Major concepts should be defined



Application of theoretical base 1(2)

- This part of the essay is the practical part and presents how the theoretical base/concepts is/are applied on an existing or non-existing organization
- For example, if your essay is about *“Language technologies in health care – how can they be applied”* this part describes how you apply the different language technologies - presented in the theoretical part – on an existing or non-existing health care organization



Application of theoretical base 2(2)

- You need to shortly describe the existing or non-existing organization – and make it clear if you use an existing or non-existing organization. An existing one can be one from your own experience or one found in literature
- You also need to present the application of the theoretical base/concepts
- Finally, you need to discuss/reflect over the application, for exemple, discuss its major contribution and/or some interesting aspects of the applications



How to make the essay to a research contribution 1(2)

- You need to describe what you need to do in order to develop the essay into a research contribution, for example, to a master thesis or research paper
- For example, what activities need to be carried out and what additional data/information do you need collect and what do you need to analyze



How to make the essay to a research contribution 2(2)

- For lower grades, this can be done briefly, in 2-3 paragraphs
- For higher graded, you need suggest and argue for research strategy and research methods to be applied



Conclusion and Future research

- You need to conclude your essay
- Repeat the research question and answer it – or if you use a goal – repeat the goal statement and describe how you achieved the goal
- Discuss and/or reflection about the answer – for higher grades
- Suggest future research



Originality

- To receive higher grade you need show examples of original thinking, that is, some own ideas/reflection, for example in the conclusion, in discussions/reflections, or in the practical application part of the essay



Language 1(2)

- The language should be easy to read
- The first (or second) sentence of each paragraph should summarize the major idea of the paragraph – the rest of the sentences in the paragraph elaborate around/argue for the major idea



Language 2(2)

- By reading the first sentence in each paragraph, it should be possible to understand the major ideas and flow of logic
- A good rule is: Only one idea in each paragraph
- Use short sentences – although best is to mix short and longer sentences



References

- The essay should be based on at least three research papers/articles - which should be referenced in the essay
- More precisely, you need to use at least three research papers/articles not presented as course literature
- However, you could, of course, also include use papers/articles presented in the course as part of your references
- Present a reference list in the end of the essay



Template

- There is a Essay template in MS Word and pdf that should be used.
- If you do not use MS Word, you should still use the sections' names from the Essay template in your essay



Essay rules regarding deadlines and grading (see Daisy)



Essay – two things to hand in

There are two things that need to be handed in before the deadlines:

- 1) The Choice of Topics for the Essay (see deadline in ilearn2)
- 2) The Essay (see deadline in ilearn2)



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

Depending on the **student's hand in status** of the **choice of topic** for the essay and the **essay**, the following situations (a-e) can occur:

a) The student submits the **choice of topic** and the **essay within the deadlines**, and **receives a pass grade between A-E**. Then this grade is the grade for the Essay.

...continuation next slide ...



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

b) The student submits the **choice of topic** and the **essay within the deadlines**, and receives the **fail grade FX**. Then the student shall choose to carry out **Option A or Option B** detailed below.

c) The student submits the **choice of topic** and the **essay within the deadlines**, and receives the **fail grade F**. Then the student must carry out **Option A** detailed below.

...continuation next slide ...



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

d) The student submits the **choice of topic within deadline**, but **not the essay within deadline** (comparable with receiving fail grade F). Then the student must carry out **Option A** detailed below.

e) **OBS! VERY IMPORTANT.** The student **does not submit the choice of topic within its specific deadline.** Then the student cannot complete the essay part of the course this time, and must **reassign to the next time the course is held**, and carry out the essay according to the rules valid then and there.



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

Option A - For grade A-E (or F) - two steps:

A1: The student submits **a new choice of topic according** to instructions that will be given in the course webpage, **with a new hard deadline for submission**). This new topic is subject for approval by the correcting teacher and **must be different enough from the first topic submitted by the student.**

A2: The student then **submits the essay** on the new topic in A1 according to instructions that will be given in the course webpage, **with a new hard deadline for submission.**



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

Option B - For grade E (or F) - two steps:

B1: The student continues with the essay about the **same choice of topic** submitted within its deadline during the ordinary course period (**i.e. no new choice of topic submission**). The student **reworks the essay in accordance with the FX comments** given by the correcting teacher.

B2: The student then **submits the reworked essay** according to instructions that will be given in the course webpage, **with a new hard deadline for submission.**



Essay rules - deadlines and grading

Should the student **fail to pass the essay examination even after performing the chosen option (A or B)**, then the student will have to **reassign to the next time the course is held**, and redo the essay, with a new topic, according to the rules posted then and there.

