A Note on Plagiarism
Since you are describing other people's work, thinking about the issue of plagiarism and how it can be avoided is very important. The Student Handbook offers some guidance. Please take the time to read the few paragraphs on this subject. For example, according to the Student Handbook "You must place in quotation marks . . any striking word or phrase, or any sequence of four or more words that communicates a meaning developed by the author of your source." (2000-2001 SU Student Handbook) Discussions on paraphrasing, general indebtedness, and improper use of background information are also included in the Handbook. Ignorance of what is plagiarism is not excuse for violating the honor code. I take plagiarism very seriously and penalties for violating the honor code will be severe.

Paper Description
This assignment will give you the opportunity to explore a topic in great depth. The topic is of your choosing and you should seek out an issue about which you care. All of you turned in appropriate topics, although some need to be narrowed and several of you need to think more about what you hope to accomplish in your research. If you are having difficulty with your topic, please stop in my office and we can discuss ideas.

Specifics
1. Research your topic. Find articles in scholarly journals that discuss this issue. Since this is an upper-level economics course, you must reference economic journals in your study. The best place to start is with EconLit, a database of articles published in economic journals. As you know, some economic articles can be extremely complex. However, even those with models and theories difficult to comprehend will offer useful information in the introduction, literature review, results, and concluding sections. Do NOT use Internet sources that would not be considered peer reviewed material. Exceptions to this would be working papers or online reports from well-established think-tanks (RAND, Urban Institute, Center for Policy Studies, Center for Research on Poverty, etc.), government agencies (HUD, CBO, BLS, etc.) or Federal Reserve Banks. You may add a few articles from the popular press, but do not rely entirely on the popular press for your sources. At this level of a course, I expect a rigorous analysis of the literature on your topic.

2. Clearly indicate the issues surrounding your topic. What is the concern? Why are people interested? Take these concepts and discuss whether government intervention is justified. What are the desired outcomes from this intervention? Discuss the program’s history, level of funding, and trends. Discuss the pros and cons of current policy. Discuss the pros and cons of proposed solutions. Offer your opinion, as a public economist and as a citizen, about what policy would be most effective. Throughout your paper you should rely on the tools of economics.

3. Most of your references should be empirical work. In your discussion of their findings, be sure to explain methodology, data, and important findings. You may find that introducing a table of results from other studies would be important in your study. I would like to see this. If you believe no empirical work in your area exists, see me.

4. You must properly cite all sources. If you have any questions regarding proper citation of articles or Internet sources, please let me know.

5. No strict length requirement exists. However, a rough guide would be 12-15 pages. I have plenty of reading material, please no 20+ page papers.

6. You will need to have a peer review the penultimate draft of your paper. Feel free to use the Writing Center.

Always feel free to discuss your paper with me at any point.
**Specifics on the Outline and Bibliography (March 29):**

**OUTLINE:**
Your outline should be your first shot at the layout of your paper. This is not to be considered the final version and you should make changes as your research proceeds. This is a work in progress. Do not, however, let this imply the outline is unimportant. A well-organized paper is crucial if you want to convey your thoughts in a coherent manner. A detailed outline is important in the organization phase of your writing. In your outline, add your paper description (edited as you learn more) and the list of questions you hope to answer.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**
You should have identified many articles on your topic. List the articles using an appropriate bibliographic style. At this point you should have read and taken notes on most of the articles you will use in your paper, however, feel free to list papers that look promising even if you have not had an opportunity to read them thoroughly.

**Presentations:**
Each person will present their research for 10 minutes. This will allow roughly 5 minutes for discussion. More detail on expectations regarding the presentation will come later.