

MACROECONOMICS

Critical Thinking Project Spring 2009

ISSUE: Should Congress have passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, a \$787 billion stimulus package?

In a nutshell: The stimulus bill was signed into law on February 17, 2009, and is meant to stimulate the U.S. economy as it experiences an economic downturn. The bill includes a variety of provisions for federal tax cuts, unemployment benefits and other social welfare programs, education, health care, infrastructure, and energy. Other non-economic recovery items are also included in the bill.

Step 1: Decide what you think and why you think it.

Put your position in writing. Try to figure out why you think what you think.

What evidence do you have to support your thoughts on the issue? Explain what you've seen or learned that supports your thinking. Opinions need to be based on evidence of some kind. Find at least two journal articles that support your position. Photocopy the articles, highlight important points that support your position, and submit with your paper.

What additional information do you need, or what questions do you want answered in order to substantiate your position?

Step 2: Seek other views and more evidence.

Look for opposing views on the topic as well as any evidence and reasoning behind those views. As you investigate, try to understand the position of not only those who share your views, but also those who disagree with you. Look at all the evidence. Find at least two journal articles that support this opposing viewpoint. Photocopy the articles, highlight important points that support the position, and submit with your paper.

Write about your findings both in favor of and against your position. Be sure to include the citations for your sources and attach your sources.

Step 3: Decide which view is most reasonable.

Compare the evidence for both viewpoints with the economic theories and principles we have been discussing in class. Measure your original view against the evidence you have collected to decide which view is most reasonable.

Has your view as stated in Step 1 changed after examining the evidence and reviewing the economic theories/principles? If needed, revise your original position as stated in Step 1. Explain any reasons for revising or not revising your original view.

Logistics:

Your paper should be at least two pages but not more than three pages long. You should divide the paper into three sections corresponding to the three steps of the critical thinking project. Use the default settings (1" or 1.25" margins and 10-12 font). Double space your paper. Use a separate page for citing your sources.

A great way to avoid plagiarizing (using the words/thoughts of another) is to take notes from each article and then begin writing in your own words.

You will be finding a great deal of information but will only be writing a maximum of three pages. You must think through your topic and write concisely to include the most important information for each step.

Use the Critical Thinking rubric as a guide; the rubric outlines the criteria for scoring your project.

