This assignment is due in class no later than Thursday, November 5th.

Secondary Data Analysis
Utilizing at least 4 different on-line or print secondary data sources, prepare a three-page, suitably formatted memo that describes the economy of Webster County, Iowa.

Your memo should include such topics as labor force, unemployment, average worker earning levels or wage rates, income, occupations, retail sales, and major employers or industries. Analyze multiple years of data where trends are useful to help describe the economy. A brief summary of the characteristics of the county’s population or recent population change should be included.

You may include a few tables, charts, or other graphics to help illustrate your memo, but limit them to no more than 4.

The audience for the memo is the Board of Directors of the Cerro Gordo County Economic Development Commission. You want them to understand the region’s basic demographic and economic characteristics. Be sure to cite your data sources, either below your tables or graphs or at the end of your report. When you cite data sources, indicate the name of the agency from which the data were obtained, not the web site address.

Please hand in a printed copy.

Below is a list of web sites that might be helpful to you. Remember, you are looking for data about Cerro Gordo County, Iowa.

www.iowadatacenter.org – the state of Iowa’s official government data web site.
www.iowaworkforce.org – the Iowa Department of Workforce Development – go to “Online Services” and select “Labor Market Information” or some other topic that might interest you.
http://www.recap.iastate.edu/retail/ – this link will take you to the ISU retail trade analysis program for an assessment of trade characteristics in Cerro Gordo County.
www.bea.gov – the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Go to “State and Local Personal Income” and then under “Local Area annual estimates” select “Interactive tables ….” There you can drill-down for data about income and jobs in Cerro Gordo County. This site is useful because it has multiple year data.
http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html -- American Factfinder. This site gives information from the past two censuses, plus information from the new American Communities Survey.
http://censtats.census.gov/cbpmnaic/cbpmnaic.shtml -- County Business Patterns. From the American Factfinder site above, or from this address you can find out about the industrial structure like employees, establishments (number of business firms), etc., for industries in Cerro Gordo County or any other county in the U.S.

You will be graded on the overall memo, your effective use and interpretation of the secondary data, your clarity of language, the organization of the memo, and the scope of research and effort that are evident in your work.