

**Guidelines for 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Research Paper**  
**UCSC Economics Department**  
Spring 2014

The 2<sup>nd</sup> year paper is an important requirement, and is a key milestone as you begin on your research career. While it is not expected that the paper should be publishable as is, it should be fully formulated and should look like a real paper.

Starting in the winter of your 2<sup>nd</sup> year, you receive 5 units of credit per term for working on this paper. Thus you are expected to start working on this well before the paper is due. This document contains a few guidelines for the paper.

1. What is the central question of your project? Motivate the topic: why is this an interesting question that merits more research? The paper should include a well-written introduction and a thorough literature review.
2. How is this paper different from previous work? You should be very specific as to how your idea relates to other work, and how it fills an important gap in the literature.
3. If you are constructing your own model, describe the key ingredients and assumptions of the model. Explain what you want the model to show. At a minimum, derive basic comparative statics.
4. If your project is empirical, explain the data in detail. Write out regression specifications. What econometric techniques are you using? Why? What are possible threats to inference? Describe and interpret your results in detail.
5. Make the paper and tables look nice. Consider using Latex. Make sure to edit the paper for grammar. Use spell check.

**Important dates**

- You must pick an advisor for the paper by the end of the winter quarter of your 2<sup>nd</sup> year. You will enroll with this advisor in the spring quarter.
- The paper is due on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Failing to meet this deadline will result in academic probation. You will receive an I on course work for the paper until it is accepted by an advisor.
- As you are working on the paper, think about how this might relate to your ideas for your oral defense. Many people use the 2<sup>nd</sup> year paper as the basis for their oral exam.