

## **Guidelines and Score Sheet for 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Research Paper UCSC Economics Department**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> year paper is an important requirement and a starting point of your research career. You should think of this work as a relevant building block for what will be your oral defense in your 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

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 project well before the paper is due. This document contains a few guidelines for the paper and deadlines; it also contains the score sheet your advisor will use to evaluate your work.

The purpose of the score sheet is three-fold: 1. to guide you when you are preparing this paper; 2. to provide you with feedback and to help you work towards your next step (oral exam); and 3. to provide faculty a way to evaluate individual student work and to collect cohort data at the same time for program-level assessment.

### **Guidelines**

1. What is the central question of your project? Motivate the topic: why is this an interesting question that merits more research? The project should include a clear 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. By the end of the spring quarter, you should have a detailed outline for the paper and discuss it with your adviser. If you are planning to write a theoretical paper it could help if you show your advisor a simple example of the idea you have in mind. If your work is empirical and you are planning to use proprietary or restricted-use data or to collect your own data, it is important that you and your adviser agree on a plan that accounts for potential delays in your access to the data for reasons beyond your control. If you are using readily accessible data, you should show your advisor a set of relevant descriptive statistics and motivating facts.
4. Your second year paper is a starting point of an academic paper. As such, you must follow the formatting standards and structure of academic papers. This includes using uniform and clearly legible font (type and size) throughout all the paper, tables and graphs should be clearly and consistently labeled and include notes, favor the active voice when writing, among others. Consider using Latex. Make sure to edit the paper for grammar. Use spell check.

### **Important Dates**

1. Beginning at least in the winter quarter of your second year, meet with various faculty members to discuss potential research projects and start preparing an outline to show your advisor.
2. You must pick an advisor for the paper by the end of the spring quarter of your 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Note that picking an advisor implies scheduling a meeting to present your project's outline. Faculty members can request changes to your outline and additional work before committing to being your advisor. You should account for this when scheduling this meeting.

You need to complete the 2nd Year Field Paper Authorization and send to the grad coordinator account ([econ\\_grad\\_coor@ucsc.edu](mailto:econ_grad_coor@ucsc.edu)) by **June 15<sup>th</sup>**.

3. **The paper is due on August 31<sup>st</sup>**. Failing to meet this deadline will result in academic probation. You will receive an incomplete on course work for the paper until it is accepted by an advisor.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Paper Score Sheet**

**Student Name:**

**2<sup>nd</sup> year paper advisor:**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>Pass with Reservations</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>High Pass</b>
<b>Intellectual merit of proposed research question</b>	The research question is <u>not clearly</u> formulated to contribute to existing literature; OR it is <u>not complex</u> enough for graduate level. <input type="checkbox"/>	The research question has potential to make a contribution to the existing literature but needs <u>more specification</u> . <input type="checkbox"/>	The research question is <u>well-defined</u> AND has potential to contribute to the existing literature. <input type="checkbox"/>	The research question is <u>well-defined</u> AND has <u>clear potential</u> to make <u>substantial</u> contribution to the existing literature. <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Command and connection to the literature</b>	Does not include most of relevant work; OR incorrectly describes the relevant work; OR does not place their question in the literature they cited. <input type="checkbox"/>	Primarily cites relevant research without discussing its relevance; OR provides very limited references to relevant literature; OR is not clear about how their question adds to the literature. <input type="checkbox"/>	Includes a <u>sufficient</u> number of relevant works, AND clearly describes relevant existing research and how their question adds to the literature. <input type="checkbox"/>	Includes a <u>good</u> selection of relevant works, AND clearly describes relevant existing research and how their question adds to the literature. <input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>Feasibility of proposed research</b></p>	<p>No relevant examples, OR the theoretical model is not appropriate to address the question (e.g. the mechanism that drives variation in the model is not related to the research question, the model is not clearly connected to the question at hand), OR no dataset explicitly described, OR not clear if dataset can be obtained, OR no efforts to examine readily accessible data. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes <u>limited</u> or <u>unclear</u> examples or description of data sources and/or analyses so that it is <u>hard to be sure</u> about their project's feasibility OR unclear description about the underlying mechanisms in a model or how to calibrate it. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes <u>sufficient</u> examples or description of data sources and/or analyses to demonstrate their project's feasibility. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes a <u>good number</u> of examples or theoretical results or a dataset with some results to demonstrate their project's feasibility. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Clarity of writing</b></p>	<p>Needs extensive revisions. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Needs improvement in the paragraph organization, grammatical structure, or use of academic language/terms. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>For the most part, it is logically presented, using appropriate terms. May have occasional errors, typos, or unclear sentences. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Each part is logically presented, using appropriate terms, and is grammatically well written. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Understanding of research methods and limitations</b></p>	<p>Does not include a description of how the question is answered. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes a vague description of how the question is answered, OR a weak understanding of the method's strengths and weaknesses. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes a description of how the question is answered, AND some understanding of the method's strengths and weaknesses. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Includes a fully coherent description of how the question is answered, AND a sophisticated understanding of the method's strengths and weaknesses. <input type="checkbox"/></p>

The overall grade depends on the first three criteria.

The last two aspects of evaluation (clarity of writing and understanding of research methods and limitations) is for student feedback only.

**Overall grade**    1.  High Pass    2.  Pass    3.  Pass with Reservations    4.  Fail