



August 6, 2020

Re: Third Year Paper

Dear students,

The third-year paper requirement is an important part of the graduate program. You are expected to produce an original research paper, and the paper may serve as the starting point of your dissertation.

To ensure that our program is producing graduates of quality, I take the requirement seriously. Here I present a set of simple rules regarding the third-year paper requirement, to be implemented in the coming year.

1. You are required to send your finished paper to your committee members at least 2 weeks before the presentation date. Your committee members will refuse to approve any presentation until they see the finished paper.
2. Literature review, summary statistics or some vague ideas are not enough for a third-year paper. It has to be a complete piece of research that has a motivation, results, and some conclusions. It should be ready to be circulated as a working paper.
3. If your third-year paper is considered to be unsatisfactory by your committee, you fail to fulfill the requirement. You may arrange with your committee for a retake, but there is no guarantee. Since the third-year paper is part of the "normal progress" of the degree, there will be consequences on your financial support and your status as a graduate student in the program if you are not able to fulfill the requirement by the end of the Spring semester of your third year.

You are required to communicate with your committee members regularly to make sure that they know what you are working on. Do not wait until the last moment to put something together. If there is any serious problem in your research plan, it is always better to discover that earlier rather than later.

I hope these clearer rules will move us towards a better equilibrium: students produce better research and do better in the job market, and faculty members advise more effectively.

Sincerely,

*Invent the Future*



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