

# Second Year Paper

---

## Overview:

Students are required to engage in an independent research project during the second year of their program. Students must identify a two person committee (first and second readers) to supervise their research project. After identifying a topic and the advisor, the student must submit a one- to two-page proposal to be approved by the advisor. The research paper should be a written piece of original empirical research. The research may be done jointly with faculty; however, the student must make clear and significant contributions to all phases of the project. The aim is to create a paper that can potentially be published in a high-quality research journal. [See the Appendix for faculty expectations regarding the second year paper.](#)

## Timeline and Process:

Topic selection should take place during the summer semester of the first year of the program. At this time, students should select a two person committee to oversee the entire process. The core idea, proposed conceptual development and proposed methodology must be approved by the student's selected committee. The committee members may or may not be part of the student's program committee (or eventual dissertation committee). Students are expected to work on conceptual development and data collection during the summer of the first year and fall of the second year, with final writing taking place during the spring semester of the second year. The committee should advise the student of the importance of following IRB protocol throughout the stages of data collection and analysis. Ideally, the length of the final manuscript will be between 30 and 50 pages. The nature of the manuscript should closely parallel the form of a manuscript submitted to one of the field's professional journals (e.g., Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, etc.).

The final due date for the second year paper is the first Friday in April by 5:00 P.M. (CDT) during the second semester of the second year. This is a "hard" due date, and any exception for submission beyond the due date must be approved by the student's second year paper committee at least 30 days prior to the deadline. Failure to submit the second year paper by the required due date will be grounds for dismissal from the doctoral program. Doctoral students may submit the second year paper before the April deadline. [See the Appendix for faculty expectations regarding the second year paper.](#)

## Oral Presentation:

In addition to the written document, students are required to prepare an oral presentation of the second year project. The paper will be formally presented to the department at a time that is conducive to faculty attendance. The oral presentation must be accomplished on or before the last Friday in April of the spring semester of the student's second year. The main focus of the presentation will be upon the work conducted in association with the second year paper. However, each student, in collaboration with his/her committee, is also required to designate a specific research area of interest before the presentation. The designated research area should encompass domains that are clearly and logically tied to the primary field of inquiry within the second year paper. As such, a student's knowledge may be tested in relation to appropriate alternative theoretical perspectives that may inform/affect the phenomenon of interest, with questions not being limited to only the specific model being investigated. [See the Appendix for faculty expectations regarding the second year presentation and oral examination.](#)

## Evaluation:

Both the written manuscript and oral presentation will be open for evaluation from all faculty. The written and oral components will be evaluated as a whole, with no committee/faculty feedback being provided between the submission of the second year paper and the date of presentation. Each faculty member who chooses to vote will cast a vote of either "pass" or "fail" based upon an overall evaluation of both components. The opinion of the majority of the voting faculty will represent the student's overall evaluation of pass or fail. A "pass" requires a majority of the voting faculty approving the student (i.e., a tie will result in a "fail"). If the student is judged to have failed the second year paper, the faculty will determine whether the student will be asked to conduct a major revision of the current topic, or to select a new topic and begin the process again. In either scenario, the initial attempt will be recorded as a "fail." In the case of a major revision, the revised paper will be due no earlier than the last Friday of September of the fall semester of the student's third year. The revised paper must again be formally presented, with faculty evaluation of both the revised manuscript and oral presentation taking place. If the student is required to select a new topic, the student will be asked to begin the second year paper process again during the summer of the second year and fall of the third year, with a final due date for the written paper of the first Friday in April the following spring semester (beginning the process anew may include the selection of a new committee, at the student's discretion). A failing score on the second attempt, whether as a revision of the initial topic or as a new topic, will result in dismissal from the doctoral program.