

Second Year Paper

A. Process.

1. The second-year paper is a major requirement for the Ph.D. in Sociology. The paper should demonstrate competence in the areas listed below, but need not be of publishable quality. An excellent paper would be a viable project in development toward publication.
2. Students will typically design a second year paper topic, in consultation with an adviser, during the spring of their first year, collecting—or identifying—data during the first summer.
3. The second year paper is presented toward the end of the spring quarter. The written paper should be about the length of a journal article. Students will also make a formal oral presentation to the faculty.
4. The second year paper will be evaluated by three members of the faculty, including the student's adviser and two outside readers. Each reader will offer detailed comments, similar to a manuscript review for a journal, with suggestions for revision. Each reader will also judge whether the paper satisfies the requirements (outlined below) or whether major or minor revisions are necessary to pass.
5. The student may revise an inadequate 2nd year paper over the second summer. All members of the committee will judge whether major revisions have been successfully completed. The adviser alone will judge whether minor revisions have been successfully completed.

B. Criteria for Evaluation:

1. **Theory.**

The paper should be theoretically relevant in one or more of the following ways:

- a. The main argument or central concepts in the paper relate to some sociological theory;
- b. The paper tests some theory;
- c. The paper compares the utility of several models or approaches in explaining the social pattern under examination;
- d. Empirical patterns discussed in the paper are related to more general patterns, or to larger sociological questions.

2. **Review of Literature.**

The research described in the paper is related to some existing body of research; e.g., the paper disputes the findings of some past studies, or adds a new angle, or extends an old analysis to a new case.

3. **Evidence to Support Arguments.**

Appropriate methods are used to collect relevant evidence, and there is a clear and convincing discussion of how the evidence relates to the main arguments of the paper.

4. **Writing and Thinking.**

- a. The paper is well organized, communicates well, and follows the presentation style of relevant academic journals; and
- b. The paper has a clear question or set of issues, and analyzes them in a logical way.