

IV. SECOND YEAR PAPER

Each student must satisfactorily complete a Second Year Paper by the end of his or her fourth semester. Students must take the Second Year Paper Workshop (17.962) in the spring term of their second year in order to obtain credit for the paper.

The Second Year Paper is an article-length research paper of approximately 8,000 - 10,000 and no longer than 15,000 words that should, ideally, stem from a prior seminar paper. The source paper must be single-authored. Second Year Papers are supervised, read, and evaluated by two readers knowledgeable in the relevant field. The first reader is typically the faculty member for whom the paper was initially written; the second reader must be a faculty member or an instructor affiliated with the department. The Second Year Paper must be accepted by and orally defended to both readers.

This paper has three major objectives:

1. To provide an opportunity for advanced and original work on a problem of major interest to the student. The paper is normally in one of the student's two major areas of concentration.
2. To promote student-Faculty discussion of theoretical research issues, along with criticism of style and presentation as part of the training for doctoral thesis research.
3. To serve, along with general exams, as a means for the faculty to assess student progress and potential in the PhD program.