

**NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Economics**

Changes to Graduate Student Procedures and Continuation Rules  
*Voted and Approved at a Department of Economics Faculty Meeting*  
*May 27, 2014*

ITEM 1: Procedural Change – Economics 501

Change:

“Students should generally register for Economics 501 on a pass/no credit (P/N) basis for the Fall and Spring Quarters of their third year.”

To (note that this definition now consolidates existing policies with only the sentence that is underlined representing a change in policy):

“Students should register for two quarters of Economics 501 on a pass/no credit (P/N) basis. Typically this is in the Fall and Spring Quarters of the third year. In each quarter, a pass grade for the quarter will be awarded by the Economics 501 instructor if:

- (a) a research paper is written and orally presented either in the Economics 501 seminar or in an approved alternative venue such as a regular seminar or an organized field “lunch.”
- (b) two faculty members sign the “Completion of an Economics 501 Paper” form ([Form GS2a](#)) signifying that the paper met the requirements for an Economics 501 research paper for the Ph.D. degree in Economics, and that they attended the presentation of the paper and affirm that it met required presentational standards. At least one of the faculty signing each form must hold a tenure-line appointment in the Economics Department (an exception to this condition is only permissible with prior written approval of the Director of Graduate Studies). The form must be received by the Graduate Program Assistant within two weeks of the presentation or by the Friday of exam week of that quarter, whichever is earlier.
- (c) the student had satisfactory attendance at the seminar.

Otherwise a fail grade will be awarded for that quarter. A total of two pass grades in Economics 501 is required for a student to satisfy the Department’s research paper requirement.

Effective Date:        Fall Quarter 2014.

## ITEM 2: Procedural Change – Dissertation Committees

Change:

“The committee must include no fewer than three individuals. At least two members of this committee, including the chair, must be members of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty. The chair of the committee is expected to hold a tenure-line appointment in the Economics Department, or have a voted courtesy appointment in the Economics Department. Faculty outside Economics holding courtesy appointments are: .  
...

To (new wording underlined):

“Rules on the composition of the committee are:

1. The committee must have three or more individuals.
2. At least two members of this committee, including the chair, must be members of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty.
3. The chair of the committee must hold a tenure-line appointment in the Economics Department or have a voted courtesy appointment in the Economics Department.
4. In the event that the committee chair holds a courtesy appointment, at least one other member of the committee must hold a tenure-line appointment in the Economics Department.

Exceptions to conditions 3 and 4 are only permissible with prior written approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Faculty outside Economics holding courtesy appointments are:”

Effective Date:           This will apply to all prospectus defenses on or after September 1, 2014.

### ITEM 3: Change to Current Continuation Rules – Time Limit for Prospectus

Currently the Department uses The Graduate School (TGS) default continuation rule that students must complete their prospectus by the end of their fourth year. Students who do not meet this requirement are placed on two-quarters of probation by TGS prior to exclusion. Effectively, the deadline becomes the end of Winter Quarter in the fifth year.

Departments can adopt stricter rules. The Economic Department's new rule is that:

“Students must have completed the taught course component of Ph.D. degree and had their prospectus (dissertation proposal) approved by their committee no later than the end of the Fall Quarter in their fourth year of study, which falls on the last date of the 13<sup>th</sup> quarter of study. Any student not meeting this milestone will be placed on probation. A student who fails to resume satisfactory academic standing after at most two quarters, which is the say the last date of the Spring Quarter in their fourth year of study (last date of the 15<sup>th</sup> quarter of study), will be excluded (dismissed) from the program and Northwestern University.”

Effective Date:           This will apply to students in the entering class of 2014 and subsequent years.

## ITEM 4: New Funding Requirement – Written Paper Required for Fifth Year Funding

Change:

### **“Fifth Year Students on the Job Market**

Students need to reaffirm that they will be on the job market by asking their dissertation committee chair to submit a form by July 31 certifying that a satisfactory draft of a job-market paper has been submitted. The form can be obtained from the Graduate Program Coordinator's office, or downloaded in PDF format.

The nature of the funding is a University Fellowship in the Fall and Winter Quarters, followed by a Teaching Assistantship in the Spring Quarter. If the student withdraws from the job market prior to the ASSA meetings, the Winter Quarter fellowship will be converted to a Teaching Assistantship.

### **Fifth Year Students Not on the Job Market**

In the event that there are still funds available after all of the qualified younger students and the job-market fifth year students have been funded, other fifth year students will be supported. To be eligible, the fifth year student must have completed the thesis prospectus (this is a Graduate School continuation requirement) and must be making good progress in his/her thesis. The dissertation committee chair must certify by July 31 that the student is making good progress. These students will perform Teaching Assistant duties in every quarter that they are funded.”

To:

### **Fifth Year Students**

Students will only be eligible for fifth year funding if their dissertation committee chair has certified by July 31 that the student has submitted a written paper sufficiently far in advance of the deadline for the faculty member to have comprehensively reviewed it, and can certify that it is of suitable quality to form at least one chapter of a dissertation. Co-authored papers are allowed, but can only be used by one student for purposes of paper certification. The form can be obtained from the Graduate Program Coordinator's office, or downloaded in PDF format:

“Certification by Dissertation Committee Chair for Funding of Fifth Year Students” (new form [GS4b](#))

Provided a satisfactory written paper is provided, the dissertation committee chair can indicate whether or not the student will be on the job market in their fifth year. If the student intends to be on the job market, the nature of the funding is a University Fellowship in the Fall and Winter Quarters, followed by a Teaching Assistantship in the

Spring Quarter. If the student withdraws from the job market prior to the ASSA meetings, the Winter Quarter fellowship will be converted to a Teaching Assistantship.

In the event that there are still funds available after all of the qualified students in years two through four and the job-market fifth year students have been funded, other fifth year students who have provided a satisfactory written paper will be supported. These students will perform Teaching Assistant duties in every quarter that they are funded.

If the student has not provided a written paper, or if the paper is not of sufficient quality to form at least one chapter of a dissertation, or if the student's dissertation committee chair certifies that the student is not making good progress on their dissertation, the student will not be eligible for any fifth year funding."

Effective Date: This will apply to students in the class of 2011 (current third year students) and subsequent years.

ITEM 5: New Continuation Rule – “Good Progress” on Dissertation

“Students in years 5 and above must be certified as making “good progress” on their dissertation by July 31 each year. Any student not meeting this milestone will be placed on probation. A student who fails to resume satisfactory academic standing after at most two quarters, which is the say the last date of the following Winter Quarter, will be excluded (dismissed) from the program and Northwestern University.”

The supporting text to this is:

“Students in year five and above can demonstrate making “good progress” by July 31 each year by (1) having already filed to receive their degree in the Summer Quarter, or (2) their advisor checks options A (student will be going on the job market in the coming year) or option B (student is not going on the job market but is making good progress) on the form “Certification of Good Progress By Dissertation Committee Chair for Students currently in Year 5 and Above” (new form [GS7](#)). A student whose advisor either checks option C (student is not making good progress) or does not submit the form will be regarded as not making good progress and will be placed on probation.

A student who is placed on probation will have until the last date of the following Winter Quarter to demonstrate to their Committee Chair that they have resumed satisfactory academic progress. The Committee Chair will inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing if and when satisfactory progress has resumed. A student who has not resumed satisfactory academic progress by the last day of the Winter Quarter will be excluded (dismissed) from the program and Northwestern University.”

Effective Date:           This will apply starting in the summer of 2015 for entry into the 2015-16 academic year.