

MA non-thesis paper requirements

All Master's students have to complete a research paper in order to graduate. The paper usually develops from a term paper in one of the classes taken by a student. After the paper is completed, the advisor signs a cover-page form and a learning outcomes form (both provided by the student). The forms are then signed by the MA advisor and are submitted, along with the paper, to Bess. The papers are due about a month before the end of the semester when the student graduates.

The paper serves an important function. It is evidence to future employers and graduate committees that the student has analytical skills. This makes a substantial difference when the student applies to jobs or to doctoral programs. Therefore, for the benefit of the students, the papers have to pass certain standards. These are as follows:

1. The paper has to be organized as a regular working paper with a title page, abstract, and references, appendixes, figures and tables in the back. The various components have to be titled clearly.
2. The language should be polished.
3. The paper need not necessarily make a contribution to the literature but its objectives have to be clear. It should be placed in the context of other studies.
4. It would be great if the paper uses econometrics. Even simple OLS means that the student has done data collection, data management and has used statistical software to test a hypothesis. All of our students take econometrics classes and the paper is where they can show what they have learnt.

The students can do all of the above and it is not the advisors' responsibility to work with them on polishing the papers. The responsibility is to ensure that students comply with the standards.

All papers will be published on the MA program website and can be used for guidance by future students.