



RICE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

DOCTORAL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2024-2025

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## Introduction

This handbook specifies the departmental rules and regulations that govern the Ph.D. Program in Economics at Rice University. In addition to being in agreement with the rules and regulations stated in this departmental handbook, students must also be in agreement with the [General Announcements](#) and the [Code of Conduct](#).

If there is conflicting information, university-wide regulations take precedence over department-wide regulations, and department-wide regulations take precedence over research group-wide regulations.

When in doubt, students should seek help first at the departmental level, in the order of faculty advisor(s), Graduate coordinator, Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), and/or Department Chair. If necessary, students may seek help and advice from the central administration level, e.g., the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The doctoral degree offered by the Economics Department is a research degree. The purpose of all courses and exams is to supply students with the necessary knowledge and tools for independent research.

The Ph.D. program is designed to enable students to complete all requirements within **five** years. If this goal cannot be met, students may remain in the program; however financial support in the 6<sup>th</sup> year is **not** guaranteed. No funding is available from the department for the 7<sup>th</sup> year and beyond.

A Master's Degree in Economics is only offered along the way to the Ph.D. degree. The requirements are at the end of this handbook.

## Program Requirements

### Overview

Candidates for the Ph.D. Degree in Economics at Rice University must:

1. Complete the 1<sup>st</sup>-year curriculum (six core + one supplement courses).
2. Complete Econ 504 and field courses from one major field and one minor field.
3. Enroll in Econ 800 (Graduate Research) throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent years.
4. Enroll in departmental research workshops (Econ 593/594) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
5. Complete and present a 3<sup>rd</sup>-year paper (3YP) by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
6. Defend a dissertation proposal no later than the spring semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year.
7. Complete and defend a Ph.D. dissertation (*with at least two chapters*).
8. Enroll in Econ 700 for Department Service when applicable (e.g., working as teaching assistants during the academic year)

A candidate is expected to complete at least four years of full-time study in residence at Rice University.

### (Yearly) Requirements

#### First year:

1. Pass math and state camps in the summer before the 1<sup>st</sup> year.
2. Complete all courses in the 1<sup>st</sup>-year core curriculum.
3. Take one supplemental course (e.g. Math 321) that is approved by the DGS.

#### Second year:

1. Enroll in Econ 504 (Computational Economics) and Ph.D.-level field courses.\*
2. Enroll in departmental research workshops (Econ 593 and 594).
3. Enroll in Econ 800 under the supervision of a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year faculty mentor; work on 2<sup>nd</sup>-year research project(s) under faculty guidance.
4. Choose a 3<sup>rd</sup>-year paper (3YP) advisor; submit a 3YP proposal.

#### Third year:

1. Enroll in departmental research workshops.
2. Enroll in Econ 800 under the supervision of a 3YP advisor; complete 3YP and present it in a department seminar or conference.
3. Select a dissertation committee which includes a chair (a.k.a. thesis advisor), and at least two other faculty members.

#### Fourth year:

1. Enroll in Econ 800 under the supervision of the thesis advisor.
2. Defend Ph.D. dissertation (thesis) proposal through public presentation (open to all faculty and graduate students).
3. Enroll in Econ 596 (Research Seminar) for feedback on dissertation progress.\*

**Fifth year (and beyond):**

1. Complete the Ph.D. thesis under the supervision of thesis advisor(s).
2. Enroll in Econ 800 and Econ 596.\*
3. Petition for Ph.D. candidacy.
4. Pass the oral examination in defense of the doctoral thesis.

\* If either Econ 504 or Econ 596 is not available in a particular academic year, then students may take them in a subsequent year.

**SAMPLE PROGRESSION TABLE**

Year	Semester	Coursework Requirement	Workshop, Service & Thesis Work	Expected Output	Dept. Criteria for Good Standing	Important Dates to Know/Check
0	August before the 1st year	Math and Stat Camp			Pass grade	Math/Stat Camp In-person Lectures; exams
1	Fall	ECON 501, 502, 510; Math 321 or substitute	ECON 700 (Department service)	remain in academic good standing (all semesters)	B- or better grades in all 1st-year courses	course registration (all semesters)
	Spring	ECON 505, 508, 511	ECON 700			
	Summer		ECON 800 (Graduate Research)		"S" grade for ECON 800	
2	Fall	ECON 504 2-3 Elective (field) courses	ECON 700; ECON 800; ECON 593 (One Section)	work on 2nd-year research projects; choose 3rd-year paper (3YP) advisor; submit 3rd-year paper proposal	Pass for ECON 593; "S" for ECON 700/800	choose 3YP advisor by the first Friday in May; 3rd Yr paper proposal due by first Friday of August; Send to the Graduate Coordinator (GC) and copy 3YP advisor
	Spring	3-4 Elective (field) courses	ECON 700; ECON 800; ECON 594 (One Section)		Pass for ECON 594; "S" for ECON 700/800	
	Summer		ECON 800		"S" for ECON 800	
3	Fall	elective courses (if necessary)	ECON 700; ECON 800; ECON 593 (One Section)	complete 3rd-year paper; present 3rd-yr paper at a dept conference; select chair of dissertation committee	"S" for ECON 700/800	present 3YP in a dept conference in Spring; submit a draft and slides to GC one week before conference; submit final draft of 3YP to GC by second Friday in June; select thesis chair before fall semester in 4th year
	Spring	elective courses (if necessary)	ECON 700; ECON 800; ECON 594 (One Section)		"S" for ECON 700/800	
	Summer		ECON 800		"S" for ECON 800	
4	Fall		ECON 700; ECON 596; ECON 800	form dissertation committee; defend dissertation proposal	"S" for ECON 700/800	Form dissertation committee before spring in 4th yr; share dissertation prospectus with dissertation committee
	Spring		ECON 700; ECON 596; ECON 800		"S" for ECON 700/800	defend dissertation proposal by 2nd Friday in March; defense open to public, and announced 30 days in advance; submit slides to GC one week before the defense; Submit petition for Ph.D. candidacy
	Summer		ECON 800		"S" grade for ECON 800	Meet with thesis advisor to finalize job market/graduation plans
5+	Fall		ECON 700, ECON 596, ECON 800	complete dissertation work; job market search	"S" for ECON 700/800	department mock job talks in October; meet deadlines for job applications
	Spring		ECON 700, ECON 596, ECON 800		"S" for ECON 700/800	complete university paper work for graduation and degree conferral
<p><b>University and department rules governing thesis defense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oral examinations for the doctoral degree (a.k.a. thesis defense) must be registered and publicly announced at least 14 days in advance;</li> <li>2. Dissertation has to be sent to all members of the thesis committee at least one month before the scheduled defense;</li> <li>3. Following instructions (including deadlines for thesis submission) at: <a href="https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/#text">https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/#text</a></li> </ol>						
<p><b>Further Notes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summer beyond 5th yr may need ECON 800 enrollment to maintain visa status (if not already graduated);</li> <li>2. University rules for academic probation and dismissal: <a href="https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#text">https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#text</a></li> <li>2. When in doubt, consult grad school policies at: <a href="https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/#text">https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/#text</a>;</li> </ol>						

## Specific Academic Tasks (with Deadlines/Milestones)

### First-year curriculum:

1. All incoming Ph.D. students are required to take and pass two camps (mathematics and statistics) in the summer before matriculation. A student who fails to pass either one of these camps is marked as “not in good standing (NGS)”. This NGS status needs to be resolved -- by obtaining a “Pass” grade through make-up work, in consultation with camp instructor(s) and the DGS -- by the end of the following Fall semester. Otherwise, the student will either be dismissed, or take an academic leave (to build a stronger math and statistics background).
2. The first-year curriculum consists of seven mandatory courses. These include six core courses -- Microeconomics I (Econ 501), Macroeconomics (Econ 502), Econometrics I (Econ 510) in the fall, and Microeconomics II (Econ 508), Financial Economics (Econ 505), Econometrics II (Econ 511) in the spring -- and a supplemental methodological course, such as Math 321 (Real Analysis) or other graduate-level math or statistics courses. Students need to obtain an approval from DGS before enrolling in the supplemental course of their choice.
3. Students with “B-” (or better) grades for all six core courses automatically progress to the 2nd year in good standing. Students with a “C+” (or worse) grade for any of the six core courses are required to take a qualifying exam in that field (micro, macro or econometrics) by the first week of August before the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Passing the qualifying exam reinstates the student in good standing for the 2nd year.

If a student fails the qualifying exam, then he/she may progress to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a *probationary* status. The student is then required to: (i) retake the class for which he/she got a “C+” (or worse) grade, and (ii) work on a field project with his/her 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor of Econ 800 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

To be reinstated to a good standing at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the student needs to get a course grade of “B-” (or better) in (i), and obtain an "S" (satisfactory) grade in both semesters for (ii). Otherwise, the student will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program.

### Second-year field courses and project(s):

1. Students are required to take and obtain passing grades in six Ph.D.-level field courses in addition to Econ 504 (Computational Economics). These six courses cannot include research workshops such as Econ 593/594 or Econ 596, and must concentrate on a major and a minor field requirement. Students should contact their 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentors prior to each semester to discuss a plan for course enrollment and field declaration.
2. Definition of Research Fields: Economic Theory; Macroeconomics; Financial Economics; Energy Economics; Empirical Micro (Development, Labor, Industrial Organization, Political Economy); Econometrics and Statistics. Other definitions of

fields are possible, but need to be discussed and approved by the 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

4. By default, students are expected to complete all field courses by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. A general rule is that 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students may enroll in, or audit, additional field courses only if it covers essential tools for his/her dissertation work. Enrollment or audition needs to be approved by the student's 3YP advisor and the DGS.
5. The field courses are offered by the Economics Department or the finance Ph.D. program at the Jones School of Business. PhD-level courses from other departments may count towards the field course requirement only if they are approved by the 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor or the 3YP advisor, and the DGS. A master-level course may count towards the field requirement only if it is cross-listed as a PhD-level course.
6. In both semesters in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, students must enroll in Econ 800 under the supervision of a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor, and work on a research project. This research project may involve the student's independent, original idea, or an idea handed over by the mentor. The mentor assigns an Econ 800 grade (S/U) based on the student's performance in the research project.
7. Per university rules, students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.67 for all core and field courses to remain in the program.

### **Department Research Workshops**

1. The Economics Department offers three seminar workshops (Theory, Macro & Finance, and Econometrics/Empirical Micro). Students must enroll in one of the workshops in every semester in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Students must enroll in workshops closest to their research interests (dissertation topics).
2. Regular attendance to at least one workshop after the first year is an important component of the dissertation work. Enrollment in a workshop entails attending (mostly weekly) seminars. Students are encouraged to meet with relevant faculty members to discuss the seminar materials that are related to their own research.

### **ECON 800 (Graduate Research):**

Starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, all students must enroll in ECON 800 in each semester for the rest of the Ph.D. program. Prior to each semester, students must contact the faculty member whose ECON 800 section they plan to enroll in; no student should enroll in ECON 800 without confirmation from that faculty member.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, students must enroll under the supervision of their 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentors. The objective of ECON 800 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year is to offer faculty guidance and help students kick off original research; this also initiates regular interaction between faculty and students. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, students must enroll under the supervision of their 3<sup>rd</sup>-year paper (3YP)

advisors. Starting from the 4<sup>th</sup> year, a student must enroll under the supervision of her/his thesis advisor throughout the rest of the Ph.D. program. The purpose of ECON 800 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent years is to assist students in the dissertation process. The goal is to help students write an independent and original research that is of sufficient quality to merit publication in an academic economics journal.

Students must meet regularly with ECON 800 faculty supervisors; the frequency and format of these meetings are determined by the supervisors. At the end of each semester, students **must** submit a report to ECON 800 supervisors (and the Graduate Coordinator for record). The report should detail the progress made during that semester, including the research topics pursued, the names of faculty members they interacted with, description of results obtained, and discussion of roadblocks if no new results are obtained.

In each semester, the faculty supervisors assign ECON 800 grades on S/U basis. The Graduate Committee in the department will use progress reports to make award decisions and choose funding priorities in subsequent years.

Receiving “U” for ECON 800 results in an official “Probation” status. In such cases, the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the Registrar Office will be notified. **Students receiving “U” for two semesters will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program.**

Faculty supervisors (2nd-year mentors, or 3YP/thesis advisors) have discretion over the exact number of credit hours in ECON 800 in each semester. University rules require the total number of credit hours in a semester be bounded between 9 and 18. The maximum credit hours for ECON 800 per semester is 12. Further university guidelines on the choice of credit hours can be found at: [https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/credit\\_hours](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/credit_hours)

Registration in ECON 800 under faculty supervision in the summer semesters is required in the 2nd and subsequent years. If a student is working full-time in the summer as a teaching or research assistant under the supervision of an economics faculty, then her/his ECON 800 grades are based on TA/RA performance. Otherwise, the ECON 800 grades are based on dissertation progress as evaluated by the supervising faculty. Students working full-time outside the department in the summer need to notify the faculty supervisor and DGS, so that this full-time commitment is properly taken in account while evaluating dissertation progress over the summer.

### **Third-year paper (3YP):**

Students must complete a research paper and present it in a public seminar or conference organized by the department in the spring semester of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. The students must initiate the research idea independently with some guidance from faculty members. The 3YP should have the potential to become a chapter in the doctoral dissertation.



Timeline for the 3YP process:

1. Choose a 3YP advisor by the first Friday in May in the spring semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. This must be formalized in written forms (e.g. email communication from a faculty member) and reported to the Graduate Coordinator.
2. Submit a 3YP proposal by the first Friday in August before the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. (See Guidelines for 3YP proposal below.) The 3YP proposal must be approved and signed by the 3YP advisor, and sent to the Graduate Coordinator for record. Otherwise, the student will be put on a probationary status.
3. Present a 3YP in a public seminar or conference organized by the department in the second half of the spring semester in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Students must provide a written draft and slides at least one week before the schedule date.
4. Submit a final draft of 3YP by the second Friday in June after the spring semester of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

Grading of 3YP:

1. The final draft of the 3YP will be graded by two faculty members (not including 3YP advisor). It will be graded on (P)ass/(F)ail scale by the first Friday in August before the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> year.
2. If both grades are “P”, then the 3YP advisor will forward and discuss faculty feedback to the student. If one of the two grades is “F”, the Grad Committee, the faculty graders, and the 3YP advisor will meet and decide whether to put the student on a probationary status or dismiss the student directly from the Ph.D. program.  
**The department reserves the right to suspend future financial aid for students on a probationary status due to an “F” grade for 3YP.**

Guidelines for 3YP proposal:

- (a) Define and motivate research question(s).
- (b) Summarize the related literature and explain the intended contribution.
- (c) For a proposal aimed at methodological/theoretical contributions, specify a model and methodology (and be explicit with required assumptions). Explain the novelty and the challenge. Explain why the research plan is feasible and provide preliminary results (the latter is optional).
- (d) For a proposal aimed at empirical contributions, specify your data source(s) and explain an empirical strategy, i.e., sources of identification, estimation methods, and designs of counterfactual/policy simulations if applicable. Explain why the model and the data allow you to address the question defined above, and provide preliminary results (the latter is optional).
- (e) Empirical proposals need to be tied to specific data source(s). If access to the data is not secured, then at least present some knowledge of the data structure and its fields. Explain why access to the data is feasible in due course. If you already have access to the data, provide exploratory analysis of the data, e.g., report some relevant patterns motivating your research question.
- (f) The 3YP proposal should include contingency plans, i.e., how to proceed if the steps proposed above do not work out, e.g., collect new data, simplify the model, add more assumptions, etc.

- (g) A general principle is that the proposal must provide evidence that the student is familiar with the literature and has thought carefully about the value of the research question, the challenges involved, and its feasibility.
- (h) A suggested length of the proposal is 10 pages (single-space, 12pt fonts, A4 page).

Specific instructions from 3YP advisors take precedence over these guidelines.

## Dissertation Process:

### 1. The Dissertation Committee:

The Dissertation Committee should consist of (at least):

- A chair from the Economics Department (a.k.a. thesis advisor)
- A second member from the Economics Department
- An outside member from another department who is not jointly affiliated with the Economics Department.

The dissertation committee should consist of at least three economists, i.e., faculty from the economics department, or faculty outside the department doing academic research in the fields of economics. (Most jobs in economics require three reference letters from economists.)

The student must take the initiative to ask a faculty member to chair his or her dissertation committee. While doing so, a student must propose a thesis topic or an original piece of work, which could be developed into a thesis, for the review and approval of the (prospective) chair. A dissertation committee can only be formed based on the mutual consent between the student and the faculty members involved.

A student must select the chair of the dissertation committee before the fall semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, and the full committee before the spring semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year. These decisions must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for proper record. Failure to meet these deadlines results in a probationary status.

### 2. The Dissertation Proposal:

For the dissertation proposal, a student is expected to submit a substantial piece of original research that can form the core of, and is possible to develop into, a complete dissertation.

#### Guidelines for the Dissertation Proposal:

The dissertation proposal should (ideally) consist of a preliminary draft of all dissertation chapters. At the very minimum, the proposal should do the following:

- (a) Include the title of the dissertation and component chapters; identify dissertation committee members.

- (b) For each chapter, define and motivate research question(s), summarize the related literature, and explain the contribution.
- (c) If the topic of a chapter is methodological, specify the model and assumptions, and provide preliminary results.
- (d) If the topic of a chapter is empirical, specify data source(s), explain the empirical strategy, and provide preliminary results.
- (e) A proposed chapter on empirical topics must be linked to specific data source(s). Access to the data should be secured and there should be exploratory analysis of the data. Otherwise, the proposal must specify a feasible timeline for data acquisition.
- (f) Suggested length of the dissertation proposal: 15-20 pages for the main chapter (a.k.a. the job market paper), and 5-10 pages for the other chapters.

The proposal must be approved by the thesis advisor and defended through a *public* seminar open to all faculty and graduate students by the second Friday in March of the spring semester in the 4<sup>th</sup> year. The seminar is 90-min long, with emphasis on the idea of a main chapter (a.k.a. job market paper), plus an open Q&A session at the end.

Students must announce the date of the proposal defense at least 30 days before the scheduled date and submit the proposal to the Graduate Coordinator. At least 10 days before the defense, students must circulate the proposal (by email and hard copies in the copy room) to all department faculty members and graduate students.

The thesis advisor assigns a “(P)ass/(F)ail” grade to the dissertation proposal after the public seminar, taking into account feedback from other attendants and faculty members. If a student fails to obtain “P” for the dissertation proposal, he/she will be put on a probationary status, and **the department reserves the right to withdraw further financial aid for subsequent years.**

### 3. Ph.D. Candidacy:

Advancing to Ph.D. candidacy requires:

- i. Satisfactory performance in required coursework
- ii. Satisfactory completion and presentation of the 3<sup>rd</sup>-year paper
- iii. Satisfactory completion of ECON 800 and ECON 596 in each semester required
- iv. Satisfactory defense and advisor approval of the dissertation proposal

Rice University requires that the petition for Ph.D. candidacy must be completed by the end of October for December degree conferral, and the end of February for May degree conferral. The University also requires that doctoral students must be approved for Ph.D. candidacy before the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> semester of enrollment at Rice University. Students failing to meet this requirement are subject to the rules of academic probation discussed later.

Students with extenuating circumstances may petition the University Graduate Council for an extension or be exempt from this rule. Students who do not meet this deadline and do

not receive an extension to their time to candidacy are subject to immediate dismissal by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

#### 4. Oral Examination in Defense of Thesis:

A student, in consultation with her/his dissertation committee chair, may schedule the final oral exam when the dissertation is substantially complete. The oral exam may result in a requirement of extensive rewriting of the dissertation. Therefore, it is recommended that the student schedule it several weeks prior to the commencement to permit time for necessary revision. The deadline for the oral examination is the last day of classes in the spring semester.

It is the responsibility of the student to keep all members of the committee informed about dissertation progress. In order to give them sufficient time to prepare for the defense, the student must give members of the committee a copy of a sufficient version of the dissertation no less than one month before the date of the defense. An additional copy must be given to the Graduate Coordinator at least one week before the defense. This copy will be made available to members of the faculty and students who may wish to attend the defense. The time, date and place of the defense must be posted and announced in Rice News prior to the defense. Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator at least 15 days prior to the defense for this requirement to be satisfied

The thesis defense is open to all members of the University community. In the thesis defense, the candidate presents their thesis and is then questioned by the committee. The result is then announced. A student may be asked to revise or alter some parts of the dissertation; the committee may recommend that the candidate retake the oral exam if the needed revisions are substantial.

The Economics Department follows all policies set by the University regarding Ph.D. Candidacy, oral examination, and dissertation submission. Students are strongly advised to check with the University General Announcement and be aware of the rules.

#### 5. Job Market Timelines:

A student should aim at completing his or her dissertation within three years of full-time commitment. Thus, along with the first two years of coursework, the Ph.D. program should take no more than five years.

A student who graduates from the Ph.D. program in five years is by default on the job market in the fall semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year. These students need to have a substantial part of the dissertation, including the job market paper, completed by October of the 5<sup>th</sup> year. The department schedules mandatory job market talks in October for all Ph.D. candidates who intend to graduate during that academic year.

The department recognizes that on certain occasions it is difficult for a student in good standing to complete the program within five years. In such cases, a student may remain

for a sixth year. Financial aid for 6<sup>th</sup> year students is not guaranteed and, at best, offered at a reduced amount.

In almost all cases, seven years is the absolute limit for the Ph.D. program. A student who is far behind schedule will be given a formal warning and put on probationary status. Failure to complete satisfactory dissertation work by the end of 7<sup>th</sup> year may result in dismissal from the program.

## Faculty Advising

Throughout the Ph.D. program, faculty advising is available to students as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Faculty Supervisor</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Year:	Director of Graduate Studies (by default)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year:	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year faculty mentor (assisted by DGS)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year:	3YP advisor
4 <sup>th</sup> Year and Beyond:	Chair of dissertation committee (a.k.a. Thesis Advisor)

Students are encouraged to contact faculty members in the summer before the 2<sup>nd</sup> year to formalize a mentor-mentee arrangement based on mutual consent. In the absence of such an arrangement, the department will take the initiative to match students with faculty mentors for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year based on usual factors such as student preferences and faculty research interests.

Students must select their 3YP advisors and thesis advisors, based on mutual consent, before the deadlines specified in the sections of *Third-year Paper (3YP)* and *Dissertation Process*. Students must inform the DGS and the Graduate Coordinator of their choices of 3YP advisors by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. A formal thesis advisor form must be filled by the beginning of the fall semester in the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor, the 3YP advisor, and the Dissertation Committee Chair for a student need *not* be the same faculty member. That is, a faculty serving as a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year mentor for a student does *not* automatically become the 3YP advisor, and likewise a 3YP advisor is not the Dissertation Committee Chair by default.

Students may choose different faculty members to fill these supervisor roles as they progress through the program. However, it should be noted that regular, consistent faculty guidance is key to a student's success in the program. Therefore, both faculty and students are strongly advised to plan ahead and try to keep the advisor-advisee relation efficient whenever possible.

## Financial Aid and Department Service

Students must enroll in a minimum of six hours of ECON 800 during the summer to remain on the university payroll.

### Continuation of financial support:

1. *Students joining the doctoral program with funding from Rice University:* Financial awards are generally renewed so that students are funded up to the end of their fifth year. Renewal is contingent upon adequate performance: A GPA of 2.67 (B-) or higher, satisfactory progress under ECON 800, passing the third-year paper requirement, defending dissertation proposal, etc. Renewal is also conditional on university budget constraints.
2. *Students joining the doctoral program without funding from Rice University:* In some cases the Department has been able to arrange support for such students; this is based on their scholarly performance and contingent upon the departmental resources. Support is then given on a year-to-year basis.

### Travel reimbursements:

1. Students in their 3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent years are eligible for travel reimbursements.
2. The department only offers travel reimbursements to students who present at selective academic conferences or seminars, upon DGS approval.
3. Reimbursement covers conference registration fees and costs for transportation (e.g., flights, trains, buses, shuttles, Uber/Lyft) and accommodation (e.g. hotel, Air BnB).
4. The department reimburses \$750 per person per trip in each academic year and 30% of the overage. For example, if the total expense is \$1150, we cover  $\$750 + 0.3 * (\$1150 - \$750) = \$870$ .
5. The maximum reimbursement for each individual Ph.D. student is capped at \$1500 per academic year.
6. To be eligible for reimbursement, the doctoral student must be admitted for presentation at a selective academic conference (presenting own work at a poster session is also fine).

### Departmental service:

All students with Rice University fellowships or scholarships are required to perform departmental service. In the first year, students are typically assigned to grade for an undergraduate class. This work is not to exceed 10 hours per week.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent years, students are required to perform 20 hours/week of departmental service. The Director of Graduate Studies determines the faculty supervisors to whom the students are assigned for department service. The faculty supervisor(s) assign the student's grade for the departmental service course, ECON 700. Students who receive 9-month fellowships are required to be in Houston and available for departmental services between August 16<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup>. Exceptions require the approval of both the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's advisor. In each semester in which students perform departmental service, they need to register for the departmental service course ECON 700. Students must meet their faculty supervisors as early as possible before the semester starts and regularly during the semester to ensure there is a mutual understanding of the job responsibilities.

## Outside Employment and Leave of Absence Policies

1. Department stipends are delivered throughout 9 months each academic year. Students receiving full stipends are not allowed to accept other regular employment (paid jobs with a work load of >10 hours/week) outside the department during this period.
2. Full-time students not receiving stipends can seek paid employment up to 20 hours per week (in or outside the department) during the academic year. Students must inform and consult with the Department Chair or the Director of Graduate Studies before undertaking any outside employment.
3. Students may seek external (off-campus) internship opportunities during the remaining 3 months in the summer between academic years. International students who work for an off-campus internship in the summer (as part of thesis/dissertation requirement) need to obtain a CPT authorization. Further information can be found at: <https://oiss.rice.edu/cpt>
4. A leave of absence for one or more semesters will be granted for valid reasons to students in academic good standing. Leave must be requested well in advance of the semester in question. Upon return, the University charges a reactivation fee.
5. Non-registration, without an approved leave of absence, is considered withdrawal from the program. Such students will not be re-admitted without re-application and recommendation by the department, as well as the approval of the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. A re-admission fee is charged.

Further information about financial aid and on-/off-campus employment can be found at: <https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/student-services-organizations/financial-aid/>

## Probationary Status

1. A student is considered to be on probationary status if any of the following applies:
  - a. The student's GPA for a semester is below 2.67
  - b. The student receives at least two C+ (or lower) grades in 1<sup>st</sup>-year core courses
  - c. The student fails to meet deadlines in 3rd-year paper (3YP) or dissertation process, or fails to pass 3YP or dissertation requirements.
  - d. The student receives a grade of unsatisfactory (U) in ECON 800 (Graduate Research) or ECON 700 (Departmental Service).
  - e. The student has not achieved candidacy by the end of the 4th year.

Students are permitted only **one** semester of probationary status. Automatic dismissal by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies occurs whenever a student is put on probation for a second time.

2. Students with exceptional circumstances may petition the Graduate Committee in the Economics Department for a waiver of probationary status.

## Petitions, Appeals, Grievances and Problem Resolutions

Students are advised to download and read the guidelines set by the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies regarding dismissal, petitions, appeals, grievances and problem resolution. These can be obtained from the web page: <http://graduate.rice.edu/dismissals/>.

In accordance with these guidelines, petitions, appeals, grievances and problems for which it is appropriate in the first instance to be handled at the departmental level will be submitted to the department's Graduate Committee for review. If the case involves a student advised by one or more of the committee members, then they will recuse themselves from this particular case and be replaced for that purpose by other members of the departmental faculty selected in consultation with the Department Chair.

The committee will conduct an investigation of the circumstances, and reach a decision regarding the case. Their written report to the Department Chair will describe the circumstances, the decision, and the rationale for the decision. The Department Chair (or the Dean) will convey the final decision to the student and include the committee report. (Redaction from the report is allowed to protect the privacy of other students.)

## Title IX

Rice University encourages any student who has experienced an incident of sexual, relationship, or other interpersonal violence, harassment or gender discrimination to seek support. There are many options available both on and off campus for all graduate students, regardless of whether the perpetrator was a fellow student, a staff or faculty member, or someone not affiliated with the university.

Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees are required by Title IX to disclose all incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. The therapists at the Rice Counseling Center and the doctors at Student Health Services are confidential, meaning that Rice University will not be informed about the incident if a student discloses to one of these Rice University staff members. Rice University prioritizes student privacy and safety, and only shares disclosed information on a need-to-know basis.

If you need assistance or would like to talk to someone, please call Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center, which includes Title IX Support: **3311/(713) 348-3311**



## Health Service and Counseling

Students have access to the Student Health Services (<https://health.rice.edu/>), and Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center (<https://wellbeing.rice.edu/>). Detailed information on the care and services each provide is available from these centers. An overview can be found in the General Announcement:

<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/student-services-organizations/health-counseling-wellbeing/>

## Master's Degree

A Master's Degree in Economics is only offered along the way to the Ph.D. In order to obtain Master's Degree in Economics, a student must complete the first-year core courses with a GPA higher than 2.5, and six field courses with a GPA higher than 2.5. They must also complete ECON 700 with a satisfactory (S) grade in the last two semesters before graduation.

A Master's Degree in Statistics is available to the students when the original doctoral thesis and defense is related to statistics. The degree awarded in statistics is a non-thesis Master's. Further information regarding the degree requirements is available from the Statistics Department.