

College of Business Ph.D. Student Research Excellence Award 2020 –

Ms. Siwen Fu



I am Siwen Fu, currently a fifth-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Accountancy. I am honored to receive this research excellence award.

I want to express gratitude to those who have helped me to develop research skills throughout my Ph.D. journey. In particular, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Jeong Bon Kim. He is knowledgeable and, willing to share, and always provides me with new insights. I also feel fortunate to have worked with three other members of the faculty: Professor Liandong Zhang, Dr. Liu Zheng, and Dr. Ke Wang. I also want to extend my gratitude to my co-supervisor, Dr. Wen Chen. With help from these people, I have gained a deeper understanding of what high-quality research is and how to translate innovative ideas into presentable, interesting, and mature papers.

Next, I would like to share my thoughts about research.

First, I think that working papers or newly published papers by pioneer researchers can give you clues when searching for new feasible ideas. In this way, you can find potential interesting topics or eye-catching variables. These manuscripts also demonstrate the data explicitly, allowing you to follow the instructions and examine the empirical aspects.

Second, when generating an idea, ask yourself three important questions. 1) What is the hypothesis? 2) How do I implement the empirical aspects? 3) What is the exact contribution of this idea? In my experience, it is important to avoid spending too much time on interesting topics that lack appropriate data. If you have answered these three questions satisfactorily, you can then try to find related papers. Pay attention to whether a cited paper is in a top journal and/or welcomed by pioneer researchers in the field. Your final position strongly depends on the cited papers' publication levels.

Third, present your working paper at international conferences. CityU provides a list of world-class conferences. For UGC-funded students, the university can support part of the expenses once Chow Yei Ching School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has accepted your conference grant application. I strongly recommend Ph.D. students to take these opportunities and submit their working papers to a conference once they have come out. Another advantage of presenting a paper at a conference is that you can incorporate useful comments from audience members. Moreover, it will force you to think about your ideas in a logical way I you have to present the work at a conference/seminar.

Fourth, set long-term goals. It is common for a Ph.D. student to become frustrated after setbacks, such as challenging judgments on a paper from other people, imperfect empirical results, and publication rejection. In these cases, a practical way to mitigate the stress is to think twice about your aim and what you can potentially achieve. After finishing all of the compulsory courses, a Ph.D. student needs to finish a thesis and pass the oral defense to gain the degree. Then, to obtain a decent job in academia, a student also needs to demonstrate the ability to publish in leading journals. From my experience, if a Ph.D. student receives guidance from faculty members, a lot of time can be saved to achieve a good outcome. Furthermore, for students who target the overseas market, it is important to speak fluent English. After you have decided on your final goal and know what is required to achieve it, you can start to prepare yourself.

Finally, you should also review papers from other disciplines. Accounting research overlaps with other fields, such as management, information systems, and finance. When I was in the third year of my studies, I chose an elective course called Machine Learning in Business, which introduced the Python programming language. I felt that this would be useful in my future research. In subsequent job interviews, some professors were interested in this course. Selecting this course can therefore further differentiate you from other candidates.

It is my pleasure to share my thoughts about my research. Receiving this scholarship is definitely a huge encouragement to me. The CityU Ph.D. program connects students with highly ranked faculty and sharpens students' research capabilities in preparation for an impactful academic future. Hence, I believe that the placements achieved by CityU graduates will continue to improve.