David Romer's Rules for Making It Through Graduate School and Finishing Your Dissertation

"Out in Five"

- Don't clutter up your life with other activities; just write.
- Don't carry out a thorough and comprehensive search of the literature; just write.
- Don't attempt to make sure that every page you write shows the full extent of your professional skills; just write.
- Don't write a well-organized, well-integrated, unified dissertation; just write.
- Don't think profound thoughts that shake the intellectual foundations of the discipline; just write.
- If you don't have a paper started by the spring of your third year, be alarmed.
- If you don't have a paper largely drafted by the fall of your fourth year, panic.
- Have three new ideas a week while you are getting started.
- Don't try to game the profession, work on what interests you.
- Good papers in economics have three characteristics:
  - A viewpoint.
  - A lever.
  - A result.