

National Research University - Higher School of Economics

Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs

Course Syllabus and Description

Research Workshop

“Contemporary Issues in International Business”

Master of International Business Program

38.04.02 Management

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Research Workshop

“Contemporary Issues in International Business”

THIS COURSE IS AVAILABLE TO MIB STUDENTS ONLY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course syllabus sets minimal requirements for student's knowledge and skills and determines the content and forms of study and performance evaluation.

The course syllabus is designed and suitable for faculty teaching this course, teaching assistants and students studying at the Master of International Business Program, Degree code 38.04.02 "Management".

The syllabus is developed according to:

- the standard educational requirements of the Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education «National Research University «Higher School of Economics» (HSE) for the Degree code 38.04.02 "Management";
- the University working curriculum of the Degree code 38.04.02 "Management", Master of International Business Program.

Helping students acquire analytical, research and practical skills is an essential and integral part of the Master of International Business Program. Apart from having students develop the competencies necessary for their professional life, this seminar will facilitate the process of master thesis preparation and increase the quality of the master thesis. The Scientific and research seminar is the ultimate form of instruction for this kind of academic work. From the very beginning it is aimed at the master thesis preparation. The intermediary stage of thesis preparation takes form of the final course paper at the end of the first year of study. The course paper is a very important step in the preparation of a master thesis and usually represents a part of the thesis.

Course type: compulsory

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The main goal of the research seminar is to help students develop the research and analytical skills. These skills gradually evolve and consolidate during the process of choosing the topic for and writing the master thesis; the seminar also gives students a chance to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies to solve practical problems involving a substantial amount of research and data analysis. Other goals of the seminar include teaching students how to handle large amounts of data in the contemporary information space, to define a problem, form hypotheses and to find and defend the solution to the problem.

Main goals of the Research Workshop:

1. Professional guidance for students in choosing the area and the topic of their research (taught in the MIB classes and specialized lectures given by supervisor of the Seminar and other instructors).

2. Instruction on the academic work, including how to prepare for and conduct research and how to write academic papers (taught in the first stage of the Seminar).
3. Development of skills in the area of information analytics, information search and library culture using modern technology (taught in the first stage of the Seminar).
4. Teaching correct approaches to information search and analysis technologies: collecting, processing and analyzing statistical and empirical data (taught in the first and second stages of the Seminar).
5. Organization of brain-storming sessions and situation analysis (taught in the second stage of the Seminar).
6. Discussion of students' projects and research papers (taught throughout the Seminar).
7. Introduction to the specifics of leading academic discussions (expert discussions) and presenting research and information analysis results (taught throughout the Seminar).
8. Presenting research outcome in the form of reports, analytical notes and summaries, expert recommendations, articles and short papers written following the latest standards (taught throughout the Seminar).

To achieve these goals the research and analytical work becomes a constant and systematic element of the learning process and familiarizes students with the academic and expert society.

COURSE PLAN AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

The Research Workshop lasts throughout the whole tuition period and includes 2 stages: learning and preparation (modules 1-4 of the first year of study) and thesis writing (modules 1-4 of the second year of study). During the whole study period the Seminar includes classroom hours following the approved schedule and students' individual work.

Stage 1 –Learning and preparation stage

In the first year of study the seminar begins with topic-specific lectures and master-classes (clinics) given by the University instructors and by the guest practitioners who share their research experience, outline the procedures of organizing research projects and share some results. Therefore the emphasis is on the demonstration of real research and analytical activity. The purpose of this stage of the seminar is to study the methods of academic research and the practical application of research tools.

During modules 1-2 of the first year of study the students:

- a) take the “Information and Library Culture” course where they learn to work with electronic information resources and databases, especially with the media resources of the HSE electronic library. The course reviews a wide range of information sources containing statistics, analytical data in the area of international business; students also learn how to correctly form an information query using the Internet search engines.
- b) become familiar with general research methodology, including the following topics:
 - Definition and structure of academic research.
The following is covered: research relevancy and research problem, scientific hypothesis and methods of its validation, purpose of study, study goals. Students are offered a list of topics to discuss, work on and write reports on. As a result students should understand the essence of scientific research and learn the above mentioned methods and concepts.
 - Contents, stages, methods and tools of conducting a research project.
The research project is the backbone of the master thesis. The goal of the seminar at this point is to methodologically discuss the significant points of the

research project as a form of scientific work, to define the stages of the project development, the criteria of writing and defending the project report. Special attention will be given to the selection of specific academic and analytical literature and the preparation of the written overview of the problem. The focus will also be on the research part itself, such as learning different aspects of the international business environment, plant inspections, interviewing specialists etc. when analyzing the existing research material special attention will be given to theoretical approaches and the examples of empirical research examples. In the seminar students should review and discuss different versions of thesis structuring, contents and separate parts of the master thesis.

- Modern technology used in information search and analysis and its application in the process of researching, collecting, processing and analyzing statistical and empirical data.
- Scientific aspects of the master thesis.
The quality of the master thesis depends largely upon the student's idea of what scientific novelty is. Novelty can take many forms which will be discussed in the seminar.

In modules 3-4 of the first year of study students take the "Introduction to quantitative methods" course. In this class student learn research methodology and different analytical methods used in data analysis in international business. In addition, students conduct individual field studies and classroom studies on the chosen subjects offered by the supervisor of the seminar and other instructors.

This course provides an overview of the statistical methods used in economic and business research. The focus is on teaching the skills necessary to perform simple analysis and interpret results. The methods are explained in an intuitive fashion, giving students an understanding of the tools without going into the mathematical theory behind them. At the conclusion of the course, students should understand how these tools are employed and what information can be gained from them.

"Introduction to quantitative methods" Course Schedule

Week 1: Basic Statistics

- Variables
- Descriptive statistics
- Correlation
- Difference of Means
- Sources of Data

Week 2: Linear Regression

- The OLS model
- Running regressions in Stata
- Interpreting results
- Correcting problems

Week 3: Advanced Regression Techniques

- Binary Variables, Logistic Regression
- Panel Data
- Time Series Data
- Presenting Statistics

Week 4:

- Review of core concepts
- The cutting edge: where business intelligence methods are heading
- Projects, present your results in small groups

The learning and preparation stage of the seminar aims at helping students to acquire all the necessary knowledge and skills to write a course paper at the end of the first academic year (which is the introduction to the master thesis). Preparation of the course paper follows this timeline:

- module 2 – choosing the academic supervisor and the topic of the course paper. Making an outline of the course paper.
- module 3 – preparing the course paper annotation that should not exceed 5 standard pages and discussing it at the project seminar.
- module 4 – preparation of the course paper and presentation of the rough draft. Discussion of the initial draft of the course paper at the seminar. During the final two seminar sessions students present their course papers to the class and the supervisor of the seminar, which enables them to receive the initial assessment of their course paper.

When writing and discussing the course paper the students pick the topic and define the structure of their future master thesis. By the end of the first month of the second year of study students should have found their academic supervisor and completed the outline of the master thesis.

Stage 2 – thesis

The schedule for thesis preparation in modules 1-2 of the second year of study is as follows:

- first month of module 1 – students chose the topic of the master thesis and the academic supervisor.
- end of module 1 – detailed plan of the master thesis.
- module 2 – students prepare a brief of the master thesis of no more than 10 standard pages.

The stages/schedule of thesis preparation for modules 3-4 of the second year of study is as follows:

- first month of module 3 – discussion of the outline and brief of the master thesis during the project seminar
- module 3 – collection and initial analysis of data
- module 4 – presentation of the rough draft of the master thesis; discussion and editing of the rough draft during the seminar; preparation of the final draft of the master thesis and thesis defense.

At this stage the academic supervisors participate in the seminar meetings.

Breakdown of topics and hours in the first year of study

№	Topic	Hours total	Contact Hours			Homework
			Lectures	Semi-nars	Total	
1	Information and Library Culture	30	16		16	14
2	General research methodology	60	20	20	40	20

3	Introduction to quantitative methods	50	16	14	30	20
2	Preparation of the course paper	94		58	58	36
Overall total:		234	52	92	144	90

Breakdown of topics and hours in the second year of study

№	Topic	Hours total	Contact Hours			Homework
			Lectures	Semi-nars	Total	
1	Preparation of the master thesis	324		144	144	180
Overall total:		324		144	144	180

GRADING SYSTEM

The class will meet once a week for 4 hours.

Students will be required to attend every class. Given the accelerated nature of the course, missing a single class will negatively affect their understanding of the material and the grade.

Grading

The final grade for the Research Workshop consists of the grades for:

- 1) report papers reflecting the current progress of course paper and thesis preparation
- 2) student presentations
- 3) student participation in discussion sessions
- 4) “Information and Library Culture” course
- 5) “Introduction to Quantitative Methods” course

The grade for this course will be based on the completion of a final project. Students must write a 3 page report on the topic of their choosing or selected from the examples given in class. In the final class, students will form small groups and present their research to their group.

- 6) attendance

In the **first** year of study students should complete and present the following 3 academic works:

- course paper annotation (module 3)
- academic source review – short paper (module 4)
- course paper for initial assessment and final assessment (module 4)

In the **second** year of study students should complete and present the following 3 academic works:

- detailed outline and brief of the master thesis (module 3)
- report on the empirical research (module 3)

- master thesis for initial assessment (module 4) and defense (module 4).

These pieces of academic work should be the result of students' individual research work conducted under the guidance of a supervisor. On the basis of their research students prepare presentations which they later give during the seminar meetings and which are evaluated and influence the weighted average grade for each semester.

Forms of control:

Deliverables and weights of grades in the final grade:			
	Stages of the seminar		
	stage 1 modules 1-2	stage 1 modules 3-4	stage 3 Preparation and approbation of master thesis
attendance	20%	20%	20%
student participation in discussions and presentations	20%	20%	20%
"Information and library culture" course grade	30%		
course paper outline	30%		
"Introduction to quantitative methods" course grade		30%	
course paper annotation		10%	
short paper		10%	
initial evaluation of course paper		10%	
business consulting project completion report			
outline and brief of master thesis			20%
report on empirical research			20%
initial evaluation of master thesis			20%
	Final grade is a weighted average with a maximum 10 points. <i>Grade differentiation criteria:</i> from 8 to 10 – excellent; from 6 to 7 – good; from 4 to 5 – satisfactory; 3 and below – unsatisfactory.	Final grade is a weighted average with a maximum 10 points. <i>Grade differentiation criteria:</i> from 8 to 10 – excellent; from 6 to 7 – good; from 4 to 5 – satisfactory; 3 and below – unsatisfactory.	Final grade is a weighted average with a maximum 10 points. <i>Grade differentiation criteria:</i> from 8 to 10 – excellent; from 6 to 7 – good; from 4 to 5 – satisfactory; 3 and below – unsatisfactory.

In case a student gets an unsatisfactory final mark for the Research Workshop, the retake is held in the form of Commission. The Commission without the presence of the student is possible.

Supervision of the Research Workshop

Head of the Master of International Business Program is the supervisor of the Research Workshop. The supervisor coordinates and manages the seminar activities, as well as recruits the leading instructors and company specialists to participate in the seminar.