

Research Seminar for ICEF BSc students

Abstract

The main goal of the course is to assist students in developing skills required for providing independent research and writing descent term/diploma papers in particular. A particular attention is given to problems of designing a good research question and presenting results obtained. Within the course students are required to participate as speakers in special sessions (particularly, pre-defense sessions).

The course is intended for 4th-year undergraduate students of the International College of Economics and Finance. The course is compulsory. BSc students of years from 1 to 3 can participate in seminars as well.

The course is taught in English.

Prerequisites

A good command of English is required.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The learning objectives of the course are the following:

- Developing skills in designing a good (feasible, interesting, novel, relevant) research question;
- Students' introduction to modern research and techniques in the area of Economics and finance;
- Improving skills in searching and processing information. This includes academic literature search technologies, working with various electronic databases , HSE electronic library resources etc.;
- Developing skills in working with data (collection, analysis, visualization) via different statistical packages;
- Developing academic writing skills (including correct formatting of the paper and citing);
- Mastering skills in presenting obtained results and participating in scientific discussions;
- Stimulating communication between students and teachers to support healthy scientific environment.

The student should be able to apply professional knowledge and skills acquired while studying the course in practical areas, including academic research, work in financial institutions, industry, state governance.

Methods of Instruction

The following methods and forms of study are used in the course:

- Lectures
- Practical classes, also in computer class
- Consultations of the teacher
- Self-study in computer class (working with data)
- Self-study with literature
- Presentation of the results (compulsory for the 4th year students)

Grading System and Knowledge Assessment

In order to get an 'Excellent' grade student has to present the topic of his work and its draft on the pre-defense seminar and attend at least two different pre-defense seminars.

The course is graded according to the 10-point scale. 50 % of grade is student's presentation at the pre-defense session, other 50 % is his attendance of the pre-defense sessions. Student's presentation is necessary for grade 'Satisfactory' and higher.

Student's presentation should last no more than 10 minutes + 10 minutes for work discussion.

Other research events (seminars and lectures different from pre-defense sessions) are recommended for attendance, however they are not mandatory and do not have contribution to the final grade.

Those fourth year students who participated in the annual student ARP mini-conference (see V) get the full credit for the presentation part of the grade. Thus, to get the 'Excellent' grade they have to attend sufficient number of sessions.

Sample materials for knowledge assessment are available in ICEF Information system at <https://icef-info.hse.ru>.

Reading

a. Required

- 1) Varian, Hal. (2000). How to write a research paper in your spare time. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley
- 2) Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., and J.M. Williams. (2016). The Craft of Research. 4th Edition. The University of Chicago Press.

- 3) Thomson, W. (2011). A Guide for the Young Economist. 2nd Edition. MIT Press.
- 4) Angrist, J.D. and J.-S. Pischke. (2009). Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion. Princeton University Press.
- 5) W. Lawrence Neuman (2006). Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 6th edition. Allyn & Bacon
- 6) Guidelines on writing term and diploma papers of ICEF HSE BSc students, ICEF, edition-2017

b. Optional

Presentation slides and additional literature suggested by Professors

Special Equipment and Software Support

For presentations rooms with screen and projector should be used.

Software: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel)

Course plan

Among other activities this plan includes lectures and events providing within ICEF Advanced Research Program (ARP). These events are obligatory for members of ARP and elective (however, recommended) for other BSc students.

Additionally, in February ARP provides annual student mini-conference. Within the conference all fourth year BSc and second year MSc students are invited to apply for presentation of their work in progress for the thesis. Third year BSc and first year MSc students are invited to apply for presentation of their research ideas as well. All students are invited to attend. For fourth year BSc students, presenting at the event counts as pre-defense.

1. Series of lectures “ICEF Dialogues”. The purpose of it is to expose students to real financial and economic issues and problems from an early stage, and approaches to solve them. The mechanism is through a non-technical seminar given by faculty on a recent or ongoing research project. (ARP)
2. Working with different Data sources: HSE e-library, citation databases
3. Working with different Data sources: RLMS, Bloomberg
4. Working with statistical software (ARP)
5. Methods of economic research (theory, empirics, experiment)
6. Presentation skills
7. Presenting topic of diploma paper (motivation and goals of research) and obtained results (pre-defense)