

## **CES MA Seminar 2013-2015**

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The MA Seminar runs in the Spring Semester (Year 1) and the Autumn Semester (Year 2) and is designed to help students to write their dissertation. The MA seminar focuses on developing the dissertation topic, methodology and research. Students are expected to present parts of their ongoing work. The MA seminar includes: in-class meeting, Responsio, Open Lectures, Protection of Intellectual Property Rights. Student must receive a pass mark for all parts of the MA seminar.

Possible topic areas for dissertations which will be discussed during meetings:

- Economics, International Economics
- European integration
- The EU relations with third states or their groups
- Different areas of EU policies and external relations
- Economic security and security
- External (international) aspects of internal strategies applied in countries

Generally the seminar is in the area of political economy, although this does not mean that participation in it requires any deep knowledge in economy (macro and micro) or econometrics. Participation in the seminar followed by preparation of the MA thesis requires the use of simple statistics, which can illustrate the problem which is chosen as the topic of the thesis. The basic knowledge in economics needed for preparing the thesis is presented during the seminar and via bilateral consultations (dependant on the chosen topics).

### **The topics covered during the meetings**

1. What is unique and what is universal in economic research? Does it make economic research more difficult or easier than in mathematics, chemistry, biology or political sciences? Are there some common elements in research conducted in economics, political sciences and international law? Should those sciences be considered as separate fields as far as research is concerned? If so why? The notion of science and methodology of science. Economy is not limited to econometric and mathematical models, which failed in predicting the latest downturn in the economy of 2008+. This fact has discredited most of the mathematical methods used. First a researcher needs to get well acquainted with facts which surround him, understand them and explain understanding sources and results of used stimuli, after that stage he can make decision either to move towards weighting and modeling things or just describing them. The role of imagination, fantasy, logic, connecting facts, drawing conclusions, etc.
2. What can economic research study? Relations between occurrences. Relations between stimulus and reactions. Classification of things and occurrences. Basic notions and principles of metrology. Sounds very scientific but means that one needs to know what makes the things go and what helps to find the sequencing in this process and evaluating the scale and scope of occurrences. Scale of measuring. Choice of the problem. Definition of the problem. Conceptual definitions. Operational definitions. Questions. Hypothesis. Theories. What is a theory and what is not? Types of theories. Models. Empirical research. Authors. Basic approach: state of art and what can be added? General approach for preparation of a study.

Elements common and different in specific approaches (social sciences, economics, applied sciences).

3. Role of the supervisor. Talking about the different role a supervisor can play in their work with the student. Choosing the topic. Designing the approach. Preparing the structure. Preparing the contents. (the passive supervisor – approving the topic chosen by the student, showing main hints as regards how to write and design the thesis, suggesting readings - when asked, active supervisor – giving the topic and submitting ideas how to approach the problem and what method and theories should be applied, often helping to find needed materials, data, documents).
4. Preparation of scientific research. Studies of the literature. How to make notes from the literature read. Scientific approach. Conceptual foundations of the research. Basic elements of the research. A model of policy implementation. Theory before research. Research before theory. Dependent and independent variables. Theoretical fallacy. Relations. Kind of relations.
5. Timing and organization of work divided into phases of writing the master thesis. Methods of collecting factual knowledge. The notion of research methods. Statistical research. Methods of choosing samples for research. Methods to observe facts. Experimental methods. Documentation. Questionnaires and interviews. Testing methods.
6. Components of economic texts (papers). Creation of economic notions. Methods and mistakes made in definitions. Sentences as elements of the text. Types of economic assumptions. Models in economic sciences. Methodical explanation of the facts. Explanation of the economic facts. Discussion and its role in preparing a scientific paper.
7. Structure of the thesis. Main questions. Proportions between theoretical and practical elements. Number of chapters. Connection between chapters. Role and contents of introduction and part which sums up the thesis. (What I like, what interests me, and what will keep my attention for a while as I need to spend number of hours studying the problem?)
8. Specific approach in economics. Model of drafting a study. How theoretical should it be? How strongly should it rely on practical issues? Proportions between the two approaches. Sources of information. Checking if the known theories are still applicable or they lost their importance caused by change in economics. Selection of corresponding theories.
9. Formulation of a hypothesis, questions. Requirements and approaches. observational methods. Survey research. Research designs: experiments. Measurement.
10. Sources which can be used. Direct and Indirect sources. How representative should a sample be. Can one test be used as a prove or just as an illustration?
11. How to construct a questionnaire? How many questions should it have? How to design those questions? How to work with the questionnaire? How to work with answers received? Planning evaluation of the questionnaire. Planning parallel steps. Time order.
12. Historic explanations. Confrontation with different opinions. Comparisons. Arguments used in discussion. Own opinion. How to find who is right and who is wrong and why? Discussion is essential and helps to make progress in any type of research.
13. Data preparations and analysis. Bibliographies, indexes, explanations, footnotes. Designs of charts, tables, used units, definition of periods concerned. Evaluation of the quality of the collected material. How to overcome gaps in information? Measurement. Sampling and sample design.

14. Qualitative methods. Secondary data analysis. Data processing and analysis.
15. The strategy of testing hypothesis. Errors. Parametric and nonparametric tests. Sampling distribution.
16. Writing research reports. Types of reports. Aim of the report. Documentation. Checking a written text. Style of writing. Sources of errors in economic texts. Types and sources of editorial mistakes. Improper economic statements. Ambiguous statements in economics. Incomplete statements.
17. Check-reading and prove-reading. Role of discussion over the chapter during the seminar. Hearing one's own version presented in public. Hearing remarks of the remaining participants of the seminar.

#### **Participating in this student should**

1. Learn to find the sources to prepare the thesis. Evaluate how good and representative they are.
2. Learn to find an interesting topic of research, forming the questions and hypothesis, which will play the role of a guide through the whole paper
3. Learn to design a study, make comparisons of different approaches and different states' economies characteristics, same as companies or branches
4. Learn how to be critical and demanding as far as the found information is concerned

#### **Intended Learning Outcomes**

Students:

EK1: has extended familiarity with terminology pertaining to economics and the rules governing the functioning of the common market (K\_W13++)

EK2: has extended information in the field of international economic relations as well as the integration of European markets (K\_W14++)

EK3: has an ability to search, gather and interpret data and information based on relevant sources; has the ability to evaluate the importance of sources (K\_U01+++)

EK4: has the ability to gain knowledge and research skills independently following the instruction given by course tutors and supervisors (K\_U04+++)

EK5: has the ability to form opinions and judgements that include reflection on and respect for (contrary) points of view deriving from other research and participants in the discussion (K\_U06++)

EK6: has the ability to conceive, design, implement and undertake research using appropriate methodologies (K\_U19+++)

EK7: can precisely determine his or her own goals, giving them different priorities (K\_K03+++)

All learning outcomes will be assessed based on the MA dissertation.

**The final outcome of the seminar lasting one semester is:**

1. Preparing the suspended plan of the thesis with questions and hypothesis
2. Collecting preliminary materials, data, literature
3. Study of basic literature. Making notes and files of the obtained information. Evaluating it and using it to write reports.
4. Obtaining knowledge of other sources than literature and how to deal with them at then stage of collecting information.

**Requirements**

1. The Jagiellonian University's regulations are that the deadline for the submission of the thesis through the electronic system of the Jagiellonian University is 30 September 2015. Before the submission of their thesis, students must obtain approval from their thesis supervisor.
2. Students of my MA seminar are required to send drafts of the whole thesis by 1 September 2015 the latest. The deadline for emailing to me the first full draft of a thesis is 15 September 2015. After emailing the first draft to me, I shall review it, comment upon it and return it to the student for corrections.  
I encourage students to send me the drafts of their theses well ahead of the above deadline for comments and approval. I might not comment upon or approve theses whose first drafts will be sent after 15 September.
3. The prerequisite for receiving a pass for the MA seminar is attendance. Students who miss 6 or more sessions (out of 10 in a semester) will not receive passes for the seminar. Students who are absent 3, 4 or 5 times (in a semester) will have to do a make-up assignment (e.g. write comments on the presentations from the given sessions).
4. The requirement of receiving a pass for the MA seminar is:
  - 2<sup>st</sup> semester of Year 1 – provisional title and outline of the dissertation, preceded by research of the literature (stage of so called advanced desk work).
  - 1<sup>nd</sup> semester of the second year – submission of one chapter (by the end of the re-sit exam period).
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year submission of the whole thesisPlease make all submissions to the CES office.

**Literature which can be helpful:**

1. T. Worstall, Science fiction and fantasy to learn Economics from,  
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2013/05/12/science-fiction-and-fantasy-to-learn-economics-from/>
2. Is Economics a science?  
<http://www.econlib.org/library/Topics/College/iseconomicscience.html>
3. D. Powers, How to write an Economic Paper? (PowerPoint)
4. Ch. Frankfurt-Nachmias, D. Nachmias, Research Methods in the Social Sciences. Hodder Arnold. 2006, p. 600.