

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Course code	<i>GRAE030</i>
Course title	<i>Research Proposal</i>
Type of course	<i>Compulsory</i>
Level of course	<i>Graduate</i>
Year of study	<i>2nd</i>
Number of credits	<i>6 ECTS (12 contact hours + 8 consultation hours, 124 individual work hours)</i>
Lecturer	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pijus Krūminas</i>
Prerequisites	<i>none</i>
Teaching language	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE

This course guides students to prepare for their thesis writing process by surveying various topics in the field of Financial Economics. The three main foci are: literature review, research methodology, and hypotheses. All of these elements are key in developing a thesis. First, by systematically highlighting the differences between the annotated bibliography and the literature review, we emphasise the link between the existing literature and the research questions at hand. Second, by skimming through the preliminary data, we check the data availability and the feasibility of the chosen research method. Third, by articulating the hypotheses, we evaluate the proposed research design. The course begins with a discussion on research questions and research feasibility, then moves on to discussing the literature review process. It then lasts throughout the semester with consultations and concludes with the thesis proposal defence.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Identify a gap in the financial economics literature and cultivate interests in topics relevant to students' career paths.	LO1.1, LO3.1, LO4.1	Written proposal, proposal defence	Seminars, self-study, consultations
CLO2. Critically evaluate various research methods, especially given the data availability.	LO1.1, LO3.1, LO4.1	Written proposal, proposal defence	Seminars, self-study, consultations
CLO3. Formulate a series of hypotheses relevant to the given research questions and develop a habit to continuously assess the progress of own research.	LO1.1, LO3.1, LO4.1	Written proposal, proposal defence	Seminars, self-study, consultations
CLO4. Strengthen communication skills both in the written form as well as in presentation in order to stimulate discussions in the field of financial economics.	LO1.1, LO6.1, LO6.2	Written proposal, proposal defence	Seminars, self-study, consultations

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable

and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. With regard to remote learning, ISM remind students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

AI USE POLICY

The use of artificial intelligence tools in this course is governed by the regulations of ISM University of Management and Economics on academic integrity and on the use of artificial intelligence in studies and in the preparation of final theses. Students are expected to familiarise themselves with these documents and to comply with them at all times; where the instructions for a particular assignment set narrower limits, those instructions apply.

Within these limits, artificial intelligence may be used as a supporting tool for learning, but it cannot replace the student's own intellectual contribution. The definition of the research problem, the critical engagement with the literature, the methodological choices, the formulation of hypotheses and the argumentation presented in the Master Thesis Proposal and at its defense must be the student's own work. Any use of artificial intelligence tools must be disclosed in the manner required by the applicable ISM regulations, and all sources, data and references obtained or suggested with the help of such tools must be verified by the student.

Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality and academic integrity of the work they submit. Undisclosed or otherwise inappropriate use of artificial intelligence is treated as a breach of academic integrity and is subject to the procedures established by ISM University of Management and Economics.

Course Content

DATES	TOPIC	IN-CLASS HOURS	SUGGESTED READINGS
2026 09 07	Seminar: Hypotheses vs Research Questions: Assessing the Feasibility	4	-
2026 10 07	Seminar: Annotated Bibliography vs Literature Review	4	-
2026 11 05	Workshop: Developing research questions and Q&A	4	-
-	Consultations	8	-
		Total: 20 hours	
	PROPOSAL DEFENCE	-	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
<i>Individual Components 100%</i>	
Written proposal and proposal defence	100
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

The course is graded as pass/fail.

First, the topic will have to be registered. This refers to Appendix 1 of the Thesis Requirements. It lists a preliminary topic choice. The appointment of thesis adviser shall follow shortly after the submission of Appendix 1. Thereafter, students are entitled for periodical consultations from their appointed advisers.

Written proposal is a 4,500 – 5,500-word document highlighting the relevance of the chosen research question. It is

equivalent to the introduction and literature review chapters of the thesis and can be included as a part of master's thesis after a successful defence. It must demonstrate the students' reply to the three main foci of this course, i.e. literature review, research methodology, and hypotheses. The proposals are evaluated by their thesis advisors on the pass / non-pass basis. It covers 40% weight for the consideration of pass / fail.

Note: The proposal is checked for plagiarism.

Proposal defence is a 10-minute presentation and Q&A session to communicate the results of the survey on the relevant literature as well as the hypotheses. The committee asks questions regarding the literature review, methodology, and hypotheses during the defence, and evaluates on the pass / non-pass basis. The advisers may attend the defence as observers but cannot contribute to the grading of the defence. Proposal defence is also a requirement specified in the Thesis Requirements. It covers 60% weight for the consideration of pass / fail.

Date	Milestone	How to do it?	How to submit it?	Where to submit it?
1 st October	Topic registration	Register the topic of your Thesis on the eLearning platform	Electronic copy	http://elearning.ism.lt
2 nd December (by noon)	Submitting supervisor to	Send your research proposal to your supervisor	Electronic copy	E-mail your supervisor
16 th December (by noon)	Submitting eLearning on	Upload your research proposal to the eLearning system	Electronic copy	http://elearning.ism.lt
16-18 th December (specific dates and times TBC)	Proposal defence	Defend your research proposal with the committee	-	-

RETAKE POLICY

If a student does not pass the course, the second proposal defence will be organized in January, 2027 (date to be confirmed) based on the updated research proposal.

REQUIRED READINGS

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ADDITIONAL READINGS

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ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Competency goals and learning objectives for the Master of Social Science

Programmes:

Financial Economics

Competency Goal	Learning Objective
Students will demonstrate advanced disciplinary knowledge.	LO1.1. Students will demonstrate advanced discipline knowledge through the independent development of a Master's thesis, showing a deep understanding and appropriate application of theories, concepts, and methods relevant to their field of study.
Students will be digitally competent.	LO 2.1. Students will demonstrate digital agility competencies by selecting and applying appropriate tools, platforms or technologies, integrating digital insights into business decision-making, and adapting digital approaches in response to evolving project requirements and contextual changes.
Students will be critical thinkers	LO3.1. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions, limitations of previous research; evaluate managerial solution alternatives.
Students will be independent learners	LO4.1. Students will become independent learners and develop their own comprehension of scientific theories, models, and concepts
Students will be socially responsible leaders	LO5.1. Students will be able to evaluate past and current practices in their discipline from an ethical perspective .
Students will be effective communicators	LO6.1. Students will develop and deliver a coherent oral presentation
	LO6.2. Students will develop and deliver a coherent written research paper