

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Course code	<i>GRAV032</i>
Course title	<i>Research Proposal</i>
Type of course	<i>Compulsory</i>
Stage of study	<i>Graduate</i>
Year of study	<i>2nd</i>
Semester	<i>Fall</i>
Number of credits / ECTS	<i>6 ECTS: 9 academic hours of seminars, 124 hours of self-study, 6 hours of consultations</i>
Coordinator	<i>Professor Dominyka Venciūtė, PhD dominyka.venciute@ism.lt</i>
Study form	<i>Full-time (consecutive / evening)</i>
Course prerequisites	<i>Research Methodology</i>

Course description:

This course guides students in preparing for their thesis-writing process by surveying various topics in the field of International Marketing. The three main foci are literature review, research methodology, and hypothesis development. First, by systematically highlighting the differences between an annotated bibliography and a literature review, we emphasize the link between existing literature and the research questions at hand. Second, by reviewing preliminary data, we assess data availability and the feasibility of the chosen research method. Third, by articulating hypotheses, we evaluate the proposed research design. The course spans the entire semester and concludes with a written Research Proposal and its defense.

Course objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Course learning outcomes (CLO)	Degree level learning objectives (see Annex)	Study methods	Assessment methods
CLO1. Identify gaps in the marketing literature and cultivate interest in topics relevant to students' career paths.	LO1.1, LO3.1, LO4.1	Seminars, self-study, consultations	Written thesis proposal, proposal defense
CLO2. Critically evaluate various research methods, particularly considering data availability.	LO1.1, LO2.1, LO3.2	Seminars, self-study, consultations	Written thesis proposal, proposal defense
CLO3. Formulate a series of hypotheses relevant to the research questions and develop the habit of continuously assessing the progress of one's own research.	LO1.1, LO3.2, LO4.1	Seminars, self-study, consultations	Written thesis proposal, proposal defense
CLO4. Strengthen communication skills, both in writing and presentation, to stimulate discussions in the field of international marketing.	LO6.1, LO6.2	Seminars, self-study, consultations	Written thesis proposal, proposal defense

The degree level learning objectives (LO) referred to in the table above are listed in the Annex to this syllabus; the numbering follows the competency goals and learning objectives of the Master of Business Management.

Course schedule:

Seminar	Topics	Classroom hours
September 18	- Research question formulation - Structure of the research proposal - Hypotheses vs. research questions	3
October 1	Topic pitches	3
October 14	- Updated topic pitches - Research design tips	3
December 14-15 (these dates are subject to change)	Thesis Proposal defense	--

Assessment methods:

Type	Self-study hours	Weight, %
Master Thesis Topic Registration	10	--
Written Master Thesis Proposal	100	40 %
Master Thesis Proposal Defense	14	60 %
Total	124	100 % (pass / non-pass)

- Master Thesis Topic Registration** refers to Appendix 1 of the Thesis Requirements, which lists a preliminary topic choice. The appointment of a thesis adviser will follow shortly after the submission of Appendix 1. Thereafter, students are entitled to periodic consultations with their appointed advisers.
 - The submission of the **Preliminary** Thesis Topic is **due September 18th**.
- Written Master Thesis Proposal** is a 3,500–4,000-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 part of the master's thesis after a successful defense. It must demonstrate the students' response to the three main foci of this course, i.e. literature review, research methodology, and hypotheses. The proposals are evaluated by their thesis advisers on a pass / non-pass basis.
 - The submission of the **preliminary** written Master Thesis Proposal draft is **due October 14th**.
 - The submission of the improved and final version of the Master Thesis Proposal is **due December 14th**. *Please note that this version of the Master Thesis Proposal will be defended and assessed by the thesis adviser.*

The suggested structure of the Master Thesis Proposal is the following:

- Thesis topic
- Thesis problem definition (including current state of knowledge about the problem (theoretical basis of research) and significance of the proposed study)
- Thesis goal and objectives (form may vary from declarative statement of intent, research question(s), or hypothesis formulation and must be congruent with the underlying conceptualization of the research problem)
- Research design (including justification of selected method(s) of research)
- Methods of data collection and analysis
- Sequence in which the intended research will be carried out.
- Bibliography (list of major references)

- Master Thesis Proposal Defense** is a 10-minute presentation to communicate the results of the review of the relevant literature as well as the hypotheses. The committee asks questions regarding the literature review, methodology, and hypotheses during the defense, and evaluates it on a pass / non-pass basis. The advisers are encouraged to attend the defense as observers but cannot contribute to the grading of the defense. Typically, the

proposal defense takes place at the end of the semester and fulfils the proposal defense requirement specified in the Thesis Requirements.

- The Master Thesis Proposal defense is planned for **December 14th and 15th (these dates are subject to change)**. The students are required to attend one full day of the defense.

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.

Retake:

The course is assessed on a pass / non-pass basis. If a student does not pass the course, they have the right to a retake in accordance with the study regulations of ISM University of Management and Economics. The retake consists of a second Master Thesis Proposal defense, which is organised on the basis of an updated written Master Thesis Proposal.

The student is expected to revise the written proposal in line with the feedback received from the committee and from the thesis adviser at the first defense, and to submit the updated version by the deadline announced together with the retake date. The retake defense follows the same format and the same assessment criteria as the first defense: a 10-minute presentation followed by questions from the committee on the literature review, research methodology and hypotheses, assessed on a pass / non-pass basis.

ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Competency goals and learning objectives for Master of Business Management

Programmes:

Global Leadership and Strategy

Innovation and Technology Management

International Marketing and Management

Competency Goal	Learning Objectives
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.	LO2.1. 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 define the business problem and develop innovative solutions . LO3.2. Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking in problem solving.
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.

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.	LO2.1. 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 and 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 .