

## **Guidelines for the Seminar Research Methods II**

This seminar is for students of the MA Development Economics and International Studies (DEIS). Students submit and present their assignments. Topics vary from year to year. There is an emphasis on both methods and applications.

### **1. Aim of the seminar**

The seminar extends and deepens the coverage of research methods that are useful for empirical studies in development economics. It provides students with skills to critically survey and evaluate the empirical evidence of published papers and books. In addition, it will equip and familiarise students with research methods that are frequently used in quantitative studies. Students will learn how to review the relevant literature comprehensively and critically. In particular, they should identify the strengths and weaknesses of empirical studies. The skills acquired in this course will be useful for other seminars of the MA DEIS and, especially, for the research conducted for the MA thesis.

### **2. Prerequisites**

Since the seminar builds on the quantitative techniques that are the subject matter of Research Methods I it is strongly recommended that students take the course Research Methods I before enrolling on Research Methods II.

### **3. Assignment**

The assignment should be about 15 pages long. If two (three) students co-write an assignment it should be about 20 (25) pages long.

The following rules should be followed:

- An abstract is not required.
- The Introduction should not include an overview of the paper.
- Do not repeat contents from other courses/modules, like unit-root tests from Research Methods I.
- Use uniform notation throughout the paper. Use the same font (regular, italics or bold) for symbols in the text and in formulae. All authors of an assignment are responsible for uniform notation.
- Equations should be numbered.
- Never copy tables into your assignment. Use a uniform format of tables and include only essential information in the table.
- Refer to and explain every number in your tables.
- Your paper is subdivided into sections, not chapters.
- When an assignment has two or more authors, the table of contents must indicate which author wrote what part of the paper. All authors of an assignment are jointly responsible for the adequacy of the list of references.

- Style of writing: Do not use colloquialisms like “what’s”, use “what is” instead.
- Lists of figures, tables or abbreviations are not required.
- Students are strongly encouraged to include their own empirical analysis in the assignment.

The assignment should have the following structure:

- Front page
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Main body of text
- Conclusions
- Appendix (if necessary for additional tables, figures or derivations of formulae; all tables and figures that are referred to in the main text must be included in the main text)
- List of references

The front page must include the following information:

- University, faculty
- Title of the seminar (Research Methods II)
- Semester (usually summer term)
- Title of the paper (assignment, do not change the title of the assignment)
- Day of submission
- Name of supervisor (Prof. Juergen Kaehler PhD)
- Name of student(s)
- Matriculation number of student (s)
- Address, e-mail address and phone number of student(s)

### 3.1 Page Layout

Please observe the following rules:

- Margins: left 2.3 cm, right 4 cm, upper 3 cm, lower 3.3 cm
- Main text: 1.5 line spacing, font size 11pt Arial, Cambria or Calibri or, alternatively, 12pt Times New Roman
- Footnotes: single spacing, font size 10pt
- Use justified text and make sure to switch on hyphenation.
- Page numbering: Pages should be numbered starting with 1 on the first page of your introduction.

Please observe the following rules **for references**

References from internet sources of organisations should include the name of the organisation and the title of the document: *e.g.*

World Bank (2015): Commission on Global Poverty: Share Your Ideas on Measuring Extreme Poverty; <http://strikingpoverty.worldbank.org/conversations/commission-global-poverty-share-your-ideas-measuring-extreme-poverty>

Include the current year in the reference. Date of access of internet sources is not required.

Do not quote references that are available on the internet as:

Ashraf, Quamrul; Galor, Oded (2010): The Out of Africa Hypothesis, Human Genetic Diversity and Comparative Economic Development. Available online at [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Economics/Papers/2010/2010-7\\_paper.pdf](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Economics/Papers/2010/2010-7_paper.pdf)

but as:

Ashraf, Quamrul; Galor, Oded (2010): The Out of Africa Hypothesis, Human Genetic Diversity and Comparative Economic Development, NBER Working Paper 17216

### **3.2 Literature search and list of references**

A comprehensive search of the relevant literature and a critical survey of it are of great importance for the quality of the assignment. In general, articles in periodicals (e.g. Financial Times or The Economist) do not satisfy standards of academic rigor and should not be used as references. All references that are cited in the text of the assignments must also appear in the list of references and, conversely, all references that are included in the list of references must be included in the text, too. An adequate list of references is usually about 1 to 1½ pages long.

### **3.3 Submission of assignments**

The deadline for submission of assignments is two weeks before the assignment is to be presented in the seminar. The assignment must be submitted as a hard copy and in electronic form no later than 5pm on the due day. Printed copies should be handed in to me or put in my pigeonhole (mail in-box) in Mrs Lohmaier's office.

**Late submission of assignments** will not be accepted; they will be regarded as a non-submission and graded as a fail. Students can get a new topic and can submit a new assignment by the end of the semester (end of September).

### **3.4 Failed (but submitted) assignments**

An assignment that is marked with less than 30 points is a fail. Students might be asked to present in the seminar and to resubmit the written assignment before the end of the semester. If they contributed to a joined paper, the resubmitted paper must cover the whole topic, i.e. not only the part of the topic that they covered in the first submission. If students who jointly submitted an assignment failed, they may resubmit a joint paper on the same topic.

### **3.5 Feedback on assignment**

I will give detailed written and oral feedback on the assignment one week after submission during my office hour (Tuesday, 4-5 pm). The written comments will be included in the hard copy of the assignment. This copy will be handed back to the students but it must be returned to me after the presentation. It is not unusual that I suggest major revisions for the presentation of the assignment in the seminar. Students are not expected to submit a revised version of their assignment but sometimes, when the list of references is grossly inadequate, a revised version of the list of references has to be submitted.

#### **4. Presentation**

A power-point (or some other presentation software) file should be used for the presentation. Electronic copies of the assignments and presentation files will be made available to all seminar participants on StudOn. Presentation files do not have to be submitted prior to the presentation but a handout of the presentation slides should be provided to me. Presentations should not be longer than *60 minutes* so that there is sufficient time for questions and discussion. Sometimes a presentation can be a bit longer than 60 minutes but the absolute maximum is 75 minutes. The presentation should not be read out. During the presentation, questions for clarification can be asked but the issues raised in the assignment or the presentation will be discussed after the presentation.

#### **5. Bonus points**

Students can improve their marks with bonus points that they can get for actively participating in the seminar.

#### **6. Plagiarism**

Students should write all sentences of their assignments in their own words and must not plagiarise. Direct quotes must be put in inverted commas (quotation marks) and must be fully referenced. Direct quotes should be kept to a minimum since they cannot be regarded as the student's own work. All papers will be checked for plagiarism. An assignment that contains a substantial amount of plagiarism will be graded as a fail. It will be regarded as plagiarism, and in fact as a rather evil form of plagiarism, if only a few words or the word order are changed in a sentence.

*Example:*

*Original:* Furthermore, the model is used to determine the default probabilities in six emerging market countries.

*Plagiarism:* The model is also used to find the default probabilities in some emerging market countries.

#### **7. Attendance**

Attendance is compulsory. A record of attendance will be kept. Students may only be absent, for whatever reason, twice.

## 8. Grading

After the presentation, students will receive an evaluation of their assignment and presentation in the form of a table that details the evaluation criteria and the points attained. The following table shows its format:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Points</b>
<i>Use of bibliography, citation and references</i>	5		
<i>Formal aspects of the assignment</i>			
● Use of language (grammar and spelling)	5		
● Clarity of tables, graphs and text	5		
<i>Content of the assignment</i>			
● Relevance of theoretical/empirical aspects	20		
● Presentation and interpretation of results	20		
● Critical reflection and/or empirical analysis	5		
<i>Handout</i>	5		
<i>Presentation</i>	15		
<i>Questions and answers</i>	10		
<b>Total score</b>	<b>90</b>		

The overall mark is calculated as a weighted average: Written assignment  $\frac{2}{3}$  and presentation  $\frac{1}{3}$ . With bonus points the overall mark can be higher than 90.

### *Grading Scale*

<i>Points (mark)</i>	<i>Grade</i>
85-90 or above*	1.0
81-84	1.3
76-80	1.7
72-75	2.0
67-71	2.3
63-66	2.7
58-62	3.0
54-57	3.3
49-53	3.7
45-48	4.0
0-44	Fail

\* including bonus points

## 9. Failed seminars

Failed seminars can be retaken twice.

## 10. Master thesis

I do hope that you show enthusiasm about the topic of your assignment. If you received a good or very good mark for your assignment it is a good idea to consider this or a similar topic for your master thesis. I am happy to discuss this option with you.

## **11. Additional guidelines**

Additional guidelines of our institute for writing a seminar paper are available at:  
[https://www.economics.phil.fau.de/files/2016/03/Infoblatt\\_Masterarbeiten.pdf](https://www.economics.phil.fau.de/files/2016/03/Infoblatt_Masterarbeiten.pdf)