



COURSE DESCRIPTION

1. Information about the programme

1.1 Institution of higher education	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi
1.2 Faculty	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
1.3 Department	Department of Finance, Money and Public Administration
1.4 Field of study	Finance
1.5 Level	Master
1.6 Study programme/ Qualification	Finance and Risk Management

2. Information about the course

2.1 Course name			Master's Thesis Preparation: Ethics and Academic Integrity, Internship, Writing and Defense				
2.2 Course coordinator			Silviu Ursu (Conf. dr.), Alin Andrieș (Prof. dr.)				
2.3 Seminar coordinator			Silviu Ursu (Conf. dr.), Alin Andrieș (Prof. dr.)				
2.4 Year of study	2	2.5 Semester	4	2.6 Type of assessment	EVP	2.7 Course status	C

* C – Compulsory / E – Elective

3. Total estimated time (hours allotted to teaching activities per semester)

3.1 Number of hours per week	4	of which: 3.2 lecture	1	3.3 seminar/lab	3
3.4 Number of hours in the curriculum	48	of which: 3.5 lecture	12	3.6 seminar/lab	36
Time distribution					hrs
Study of the textbook, coursebook, bibliography and lecture notes					36
Additional research in the library, online and on the field					296
Preparation of seminars/labs, homework, projects, portfolios and essays					56
Tutorials					14
Assessment					-
Other activities.....					-
3.7 Total number of self-study hours					402
3.8 Total number of hours per semester					450
3.9 Number of credits					18

4. Prerequisites (if applicable)

4.1 Curriculum-based	Research Methods in Finance (recommended)
4.2 Competence-based	-

5. Conditions (if applicable)

5.1 For lectures	▪ Attendance is strongly encouraged.
5.2 For seminars / labs	▪ Attendance is strongly encouraged.





6. Specific competencies

Professional competencies	<p>C1. Analysis of the theoretical and practical aspects of financial markets, models, instruments that are used in the management of risks.</p> <p>C2. Adequate use of mathematical and statistical concepts, methods and techniques in assessing risks and performing independent research in finance.</p> <p>C3. Evaluation of the main risk factors for organizations and financial systems.</p> <p>C4. Implementing effective financial management and reporting within the business environment to ensure value creation.</p> <p>C5. Ensuring effective and appropriate governance and management of risk within an organization, in the context of an overall ethical framework.</p>
Transversal competencies	<p>CT1. Application of the professional ethical norms and values in decision-making and undertaking of complex professional tasks, independently or within a team.</p> <p>CT2. Human resources planning within a group or organization, in the context of awareness of own responsibility for professional outcomes.</p> <p>CT3. Assuming the need for continuous development to create prerequisites for career progression and adapt own professional and managerial competencies to the economic dynamics.</p>

7. Course objectives (provided by the specific competencies grid)

7.1. Main objective	This course aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of conducting academic research, through coaching and support of master students in the process of writing their empirical thesis in the field of finance or risk management. Special topics are allocated for discussing academic ethics and academic integrity.
7.2. Specific objectives	<p>On completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identify an ethical problem;▪ Solve ethical and integrity issues in practical situations;▪ Avoid ethical misconduct while performing research;▪ Write a thesis proposal, including a research question focused at expanding the existing body of knowledge in finance or risk management on the topic of choice.▪ Perform a literature survey.▪ Collect and critically analyze a dataset fitting to answer the research question.▪ Choose and implement the methodology necessary to answer the research question.▪ Write a research report.▪ Reflect on own research achievement.▪ Critically evaluate the limitations and practical implications of the research findings in relation to the research question and perform robustness checks if necessary and/or possible.

8. Content

Module 1. Master's Thesis Preparation: Ethics and Academic Integrity			
8.1	Lectures	Teaching methods	Observations (hours & readings)
1.	Introduction to Ethics: Values, Standards, Practices	Interactive lecture	2hrs
2.	Theoretical and Applied Ethics: Ethical Dilemmas	Interactive lecture	2hrs
3.	Conducting Research and Professional Ethics	Interactive lecture	2hrs





4.	Data Collection, Management and Sharing	Interactive lecture	2hrs
5.	Tackling, Discouraging and Detecting Plagiarism	Interactive lecture	2hrs
6.	Intellectual Property and Conflict of Interest	Interactive lecture	1hrs
7.	Institutionalizing Ethics: Honesty and Honour Codes	Interactive lecture	1hrs

Bibliography

Typically, many of the textbooks and materials used in courses of research methodology in economics and social sciences are useful here.

The following resources approach conducting research in economics and finance and writing a thesis from a practical standpoint and offers suggestions on what to do and what not to do.

- Calabrese, R, and Roberts, B., 2004. *Self-interest and scholarly publication: the dilemma of researchers, reviewers, and editors*, International Journal of Educational Management, vol. 18 no. 6;
- Proctor, M (2006), *Deterring Plagiarism: Some Strategies*, University of Toronto, available at <https://writing.utoronto.ca/teaching-resources/deterring-plagiarism/> [accessed August 2018];
- McCabe, D. L., & Trevino, L. K., 2002. *Honesty and Honour Codes*. Academe, 88 (1), 37-41;
- Bertram Gallant, Tricia, & Drinan, Patrick, 2006. *Institutionalizing academic integrity: administrator perceptions and institutional actions*. NASPA Journal, 43 (4), 61-81.
- Cochrane, J. *Writing Tips for Ph.D. Students*, 2005, available at [https://faculty.chicagobooth.edu/john.cochrane/research/papers/phd_paper_writing.pdf]

Other readings such as journal papers, press articles, textbook excerpts etc. will be provided periodically throughout the course via FEAA eLearning platform, e-mail or handed-out during the meeting.

Module 2. Master's Thesis Preparation: Internship, Writing and Defense

8.2	Seminars / Labs	Teaching methods	Observations (hours & readings)
1.	General Introduction	Small group discussion, Brainstorming	2hrs
2.	Pitching Research	Small group discussion	2hrs
3.	Literature Review	Small group discussion, Students individual presentations, Random calling	8hrs
4.	Hypothesis, Data, and Descriptive Statistics	Small group discussion, Students individual presentations, Random calling	8hrs
5.	Methodology	Small group discussion, Students individual presentations, Random calling	6hrs
6.	Results and Analysis	Small group discussion	6hrs
7.	Final Draft and Peer Review	Small group discussion, Students individual presentations, Random calling	4hrs



**Bibliography**

The following resources approach conducting research in economics and finance and writing a thesis from a practical standpoint and offers suggestions on what to do and what not to do.

- Cochrane, J. *Writing Tips for Ph.D. Students*, 2005, available at [https://faculty.chicagobooth.edu/john.cochrane/research/papers/phd_paper_writing.pdf]
- Dam, L. *Suggested Structure and Structuring of an Empirical Master's Thesis in Finance*, available at [<https://www.rug.nl/feb/organization/scientific-departments/eef/education-eef/lammertjan.pdf>]
- Faff, Robert W., *Pitching Research®* (2014). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2462059> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2462059>
- Nikolov, P. *Writing Tips for Economics Research Papers*, 2013, available at [<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~pnikolov/resources/writingtips.pdf>]

9. Corroboration of the course content with the expectations of community representatives, professional associations and representative employers from the programme's related field

This course provides students with the core knowledge, skills, and abilities that are generally accepted and applied by finance and risk management professionals throughout the world.

The content is correlated to that of the *Master's Thesis Finance* course taught at the University of Groningen in the *MSc Finance* programme of the Faculty of Economics and Business and is continuously updated based on the feedback of students and alumni.

Moreover, this is a student-centered course that follows the best practices of learning and teaching in graduate education through the adoption of a variety of active-learning instructional methods.

10. Assessment

Type of activity	10.1 Assessment criteria (based on the course learning objectives)	10.2 Assessment methods	10.3 Weight in final grade (%)
Module 1. Master's Thesis Preparation: Ethics and Academic Integrity			
10.4 Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Depth of description of the ethical values, standards, practices.▪ Clarity of explanation of various ethical issues while conducting research▪ Depth of description of the concept of plagiarism.	Written test (multiple-choice, true-false and open questions; case study discussion)	30%
Module 2. Master's Thesis Preparation: Internship, Writing and Defense			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quality of thesis proposal▪ Originality of research question focused at expanding the existing body of knowledge in finance or risk management on the topic of choice	Research pitch (Faff's "3-2-1" Pitching Template)	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quality of a literature survey, including the information on the research idea, data, methodology, results, limits, improvement	Literature review (summary table or concept map)	10%





10.5 Seminar/ Labs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Accuracy of data collection and research hypotheses formulation▪ Quality of analysis of dataset fitting to answer the research question and hypotheses.	Hypotheses, data and descriptive statistics	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Accuracy of choosing the methodology necessary to answer the research question.▪ Quality of implementing the research methodology.	Research methodology	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quality of writing a research report.▪ Clarity of reflection on own research achievement.▪ Depth of critical evaluation of the limitations and practical implications of the research findings in relation to the research question.▪ Accuracy of robustness checks performed when necessary and/or possible.	Final draft of the thesis	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Clarity of speech and ideas and quality of argument, introduction and conclusion in the presentation of the thesis draft.	Thesis presentation	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quality of critical reflection on research achievement in peer reviewed theses.	Peer review	10%
	10.6 Minimum performance standard		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A minimum passing grade of 5, computed as $F = 0.3 \times T + 0.1 \times RP + 0.1 \times LR + 0.1 \times HD + 0.1 \times RM + 0.1 \times TD + 0.1 \times TP + 0.1 \times PR$, where F – final grade, T- written test, RP – research pitch grade, LR – literature review grade, HD – hypotheses and data grade, RM – research methodology grade, TD – thesis draft grade, TP – thesis presentation grade, PR – peer review grade.			

Date
22.09.2021

Course Coordinator
Conf. dr. Silviu URSU

Seminar Coordinator
Conf. dr. Silviu URSU

Prof. dr. Alin ANDRIEȘ

Prof. dr. Alin ANDRIEȘ

Date of approval
24.09.2021

Head of Department
Prof. dr. Ovidiu STOICA

