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# Thesis Advising (I and II)

**Professors:** Gert Cornelissen, Mircea Epure, George Chondrakis, Jordi Quoidbach, Susana Domingo, Elena Yorda

**Office hours:** by appointment

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## Course Description

Your Master Thesis is a significant component of your formative and productive activities at the Barcelona School of Management. You can choose between the format of an academic paper or a business plan, and your aim is to produce a document that meets high quality standards, and that you can be proud of. It should serve both your intellectual development and your professional career.

For those with the ambition to pursue an academic track towards a PhD, this is an opportunity to signal your interest and talent in contributing to academic knowledge. For us in the faculty team, it is an opportunity to interact with you in a more personal manner, and collaborate in the development of our shared knowledge. For you, it is an opportunity to explore and deepen your content knowledge of an area of your interest, and to learn a novel set of methodologies.

Successfully completing all activities described below, and depositing the master thesis timely earns you 8 ECTS credits.

## Objectives

The aim of the “Thesis Advising” sessions is to accompany you during the process of Thesis elaboration. Various professors are involved in these courses, and will develop a space and a time to help you:

- ⇒ Clarify your genuine intellectual interest,
- ⇒ Learn how to produce a high-quality document piece that demonstrates this interest,
- ⇒ Amplify the knowledge of your specialized area which takes into account academic research in the field,
- ⇒ Invest in learning a methodology that can be useful for the development and sharing of other interests,
- ⇒ Learn how to translate data analysis into conclusions regarding your research question,
- ⇒ Connect with UPF and BSM faculty beyond class attendance,
- ⇒ Achieve a sense of intellectual accomplishment.

No grading is specifically attached to the course (beyond your Thesis itself).

The course takes place over the whole academic year and provides the environment to work according to the following structure:

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## Methodology

### 1st Term:

**Research thesis:** You analyze your interests, in order to choose a topic of your interest. You identify a research topic and attend the thesis advising sessions. You establish a collaboration with a thesis supervisor and get initial feedback. You develop a research question and a conceptual model. You get initial feedback from their supervisors and write a proposal.

**Business plan:** You choose the product or service that you plan to introduce in the market. You define which consumer need it serves, and you analyze the potential market (volume). You send this proposal by December 9 to [susana.domingo@upf.edu](mailto:susana.domingo@upf.edu), who will assign a supervisor.

### 2nd Term:

**Research thesis:** You refine their research question and the conceptual model. You write an introduction and theoretical framework. You collect data or prepare data collection.

**Business plan:** You take the course “business plan”, and “how to start your own company” and continue developing your thesis based on instructions by Susana Domingo.

### 3rd Term:

**Research thesis:** you collect and analyze data. Based on the analysis, you derive valid conclusions, and formulate managerial implications. You finish writing up the thesis and improve their writing based on feedback from supervisor.

**Business plan:** you complete your business plan with relevant data and analyses.

The course combines classes, one-to-one coaching and seminars. It does not substitute for the work of the Thesis Supervisor. The role of the supervisor is to help you develop the intellectual contents of the thesis. The group meetings in the Mastering your Thesis course are limited to guiding and supporting the production of the Thesis.

## **Evaluation criteria**

The master thesis appeals to the student's ability to independently analyze and synthesize a problem at an academic level. A number of dimensions of this work are taken into account when grading:

1. Development of the research proposal: motivation, key objectives of the thesis and planning
2. Development of the results: theoretical positioning, scientific quality, critical reflection and relevance.
3. Presentation of the research results: reasoning, scientific format, oral presentation and dialogue.
4. General attitude and motivation: analytical skills, attitude of conscientiousness and motivation to learn, cooperation with everyone involved.

## **Determination of final grades**

The grades are determined by the evaluation committee. The final grade is a weighted score that is determined as follows:

- 70% of the points are determined by the quality of thesis as a scientific or entrepreneurial document.
- 30% to the oral presentation and ability to answer critical questions about the thesis (defense).
- A penalty of half a point for each follow up deadline missed.

## Calendar and Contents

Schedule of planned meetings [subject to modifications]:

**For all:**

	Date	content
<b>Term 1</b>	<b>October 20, 14.45</b>	<b>General instructions</b>
	<b>November 7, 14.45</b>	<b>Defining your topic and methodology</b>

**For those doing a research thesis:**

	Date	Content	Professor
<b>Term 1</b>	<b>November 3, 14.45</b>	<b>Research topics in Business Organization Case Study methodology 1</b>	<b>Mircea Epure</b>
	<b>November 10, 14.45</b>	<b>Research topics in Business Organization Case Study methodology 2</b>	<b>Mircea Epure</b>
	<b>November 14, 18.15</b>	<b>Research topics in Strategy Case study methodology 3</b>	<b>George Chondrakis</b>
	<b>November 17, 14.45</b>	<b>Research topics in Management</b>	<b>Jordi Quoidbach</b>
	<b>November 21, 19.00</b>	<b>Research topics in Strategy Case study methodology 4</b>	<b>George Chondrakis</b>
	<b>November 24, 14.45</b>	<b>Research topics in Management</b>	<b>Jordi Quoidbach</b>
	<b>November 30, 13.00</b>	<b>Developing a research question/theoretical framework What is an interesting research question? Research design and methods for data-collection</b>	<b>Gert Cornelissen</b>
<b>Term 2</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>Data analysis and hypothesis testing</b>	<b>Gert Cornelissen</b>
	<b>TBA</b>	<b>Data analysis and hypothesis testing</b>	<b>Gert Cornelissen</b>
	<b>TBA</b>	<b>How to write an academic article [research thesis]? Writing style and references</b>	<b>Gert Cornelissen</b>

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<b>Term 3</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>How to present your findings convincingly?</b>	<b>Gert Cornelissen</b>
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**For those writing a business plan:**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Professor</b>
<b>Term 2</b>		<b>Choose electives “Business Plan” and “How to start your own company?”</b>	<b>Susanna Domingo Elena Yorda</b>
<b>Term 3</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>Business plan-advanced insights</b>	<b>Susana Domingo</b>

Additional to these workshop style sessions, (individual) feedback sessions are organized.

## **Reading Materials/ Bibliography/Resources**

Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill (2015). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 7th edition. Pearson Education.

## **Bio of Professor**

Various professors of the program participate in this course: Gert Cornelissen, Mircea Epure, George Chondrakis, Jordi Quoidbach, Susana Domingo, and Elena Yorda.