

Master of Research Management Sciences

Academic Year: 2009-2010

Course: Writing your Master Thesis
Code: 09CMR90001

ECTS Credits: 2
Credit Category: Elective

Faculty: Anna Iñesta

Course Description:

Writing your Master Thesis is one of the key processes in one's formation as a researcher. Two main reasons account for this. On the one hand, the Master Thesis provides an opportunity for you to integrate and appropriate what you will have learned in the other courses attended, and use it creatively in a new project. On the other hand, the Master Thesis constitutes most of the times the first experience at research, a terrain that can be as rewarding as hard to explore.

It is the MRes Program Direction's wish to help you enter the research path in as fruitful and joyful a way as possible. With this objective the MRes includes this elective subject consisting of different class sessions and individual coaching sessions designed to accompany you in the process of writing and defending your Master Thesis.

Objectives:


At the end of this course, participants should:


- have gained a global picture of what managing a research project entails
- have a clearer idea of what academic writing involves, increasing their confidence in their own management of the writing process
- Have become familiar with the processes involved in the publishing process
- Have a clear representation of what the Master Thesis defense involves and of how they need to prepare for it


Course Outline and Assignments:

Session & date	Timing	Type	Contents	Learning objectives (after the session participants...)	Duration
1	Thursday, October 7, 2009 15.00 – 16.30	Lecture & workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choosing a research topic: what topic works for me and why - Learning with your tutor: strategies to enhance collaboration - Getting organized: research & project management - The first meeting with your supervisor: how to start well - The Master Thesis Guidelines & the schedule to organize your work. - Task: fill in the research topic form to be handed in to Program Direction. Deadline: end of the session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will have selected your research topic and will have handed in a form to Program Direction informing of it - Will be familiar with some of the strategies that ensure an efficient work with their tutor - Will have gained a global picture of what managing a research project entails 	1,5 hours
	<i>Deadline:</i> the 1 st meeting with their tutor	Autonomous work	Task: Prepare working schedule to present to their tutor. Deadline: the day of the scheduled appointment with your tutor		
2	Thursday, January 28, 2010 15.00 – 16.30	Lecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The expert reading process - The academic text - The writing process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key psychological processes involved in writing - Writer profiles: different ways to approach the writing process - The role of emotions in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will have gained a different perspective on your own texts, being able to imagine how the expert reader may approach it and which aspects s/he may focus on - Will have a clearer idea of what academic writing involves, increasing your confidence in your own management of the writing process - Will know some of the key aspects that define academic texts and so will be able to revise your own more efficiently 	1,5 hours
	<i>Deadline:</i> Sunday, February 7	Autonomous work	<p>Task: Select at least 1 research article and identify & take note of the actual expressions and phrasings their author(s) use to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - express the importance of the research field - express the importance of that topic of research in the field - present the gaps in the literature / the niche in the existing research - explain how they are going to occupy the niche with their study - announce readers what they will encounter along the article - express agreement / disagreement / criticism when dialoguing with other authors - discuss their findings and present their conclusions <p>Participants should take special attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - verb tenses (active, passive) - hedges and boosters <p>Deadline: Please use website. Sunday, February 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have a clearer idea of the register and the tone a research article is supposed to show - be more aware of the importance of adjusting to the academic register - have identified examples of expressions and phrasings in a successful research article 	(estimated students' dedication) 2 hours
	<i>Deadline:</i> Week before Easter	Autonomous work	Task: Work on a 1st version of the Master Thesis and submit it through the website. Deadline: Sunday, April 18, 2010		

Session & date	Timing	Type	Contents	Learning objectives (after the session participants...)	Duration
3	Thursday, April 29, 2010 15.00 – 16.30	Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing and receiving feedback on the already written text - Using the tips provided in session 2. - Working in pairs, each participant will provide and receive feedback on each other's texts <p>Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (before the session) Read your colleague's paper in advance & prepare feedback (after the session) Reflect upon the feedback received on your paper. Use the table provided on the website to do this. Deadline: Sunday, May 9, 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should have internalized the tips provided in session 2 - Will have learned about the weak points in their papers - Will have consolidated "the reader's look" which will help you apply a critical perspective on their own article 	1,5 hours
	1st week of May	Autonomous work	Work on a 2nd version of their Master Thesis		
	May	Coaching sessions	<p>Each of the participants will receive personalized feedback on their texts</p> <p>Task: (after the coaching session) Reflect upon the feedback received on your paper. Use the table provided on the website to do this. Deadline: one week after the coaching session has taken place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know how to progress towards a final version of the Master Thesis - Will have a clear idea of the aspects you need to pay special attention to when producing academic texts 	
4	Thursday, June 7, 2010 15.00 – 16.30	Lecture	<p>Getting your work published</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the academic community – what it means to become part of it - knowing the journals & selecting the appropriate one - getting your article revised by other (well connected) eyes - the editor's feedback <p>A researcher's life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - combining research and teaching - how to fulfill the publication requirements of your university and still have some private life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have become familiar with the processes involved in the publishing process 	1,5 hours
6	Thursday, July 15, 2010 15.00 – 18.00	Lecture & workshop	<p>Preparing your Master Thesis defense</p> <p>Task: prepare the presentation (slides and notes/discourse). Deadline: Sunday, July 25, 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have finished a 1st version of the presentation you will use in the defense - Have a clear representation of what the defense involves and of how you need to prepare it 	3 hours
<p>Task: deadline for the submission of the portfolio of course activities: Sunday, July 25, 2010 (including Learning self-report)</p>					

 Participants' autonomous work

 Face-to-face sessions

 Coaching sessions – to be scheduled individually

Bibliography:

The materials we will be using are:

a. Course handouts

- Handout 1 – session 1 (October 7)
- Handout 2 – session 2 (January 28)
- Handout 3 – session 4 (June 7)
- Handout 4 – session 5 (July 15)

b. Guidelines

- Master Thesis Guidelines
- Academy of Management Requirements for Publishing

Methodology:

This course has been designed from a learner-centered approach and will combine face-to-face sessions and autonomous work to suggest different activities and provide materials designed to enhance your ability to self-regulate your Master Thesis writing and defense.

The timing of the sessions and activities has been planned so that they adjust to the different stages you will find yourself in during the elaboration of your Master Thesis writing and ensure your finishing it on time and with the necessary quality requirements.

The course description, lectures and announcements will be posted on the course website.

Assessment:

Three dimensions are considered in the evaluation of your performance in this course, which have to do with the product of your work and with the process followed to achieve it. Please see table below for details:

<p>Product 40%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% - quality of Master Thesis – as assessed by the panel and your tutor • 10% - quality of the Master Thesis defense – as assessed by the panel and your tutor
<p>Process 60%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% - activities suggested during the course – <i>deadline portfolio: Sunday, July 25</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10% - <i>Analysis of a research article</i> (deadline: Sunday, February 7) ○ 10% - <i>Providing feedback to your colleague</i> (deadline: Thursday, April 29) ○ 20% - <i>Reflecting on the feedback received on your Master Thesis</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10% - Your colleague's feedback (deadline: Sunday, May 9, 2010) ▪ 10% - My own feedback (deadline: one week after the coaching session) ○ 10% - <i>Preparing the defense presentation</i> (deadline: Sunday, July 25, 2010) ○ 10% - <i>Learning self-report</i>

Timetable:

1st Session: 07/10/09 Thursday 15:00-16:30
2nd session: 28/01/10 Thursday 15:00-16:30
3rd session: 29/04/10 Thursday 15:00-16:30
4th session: 07/06/10 Thursday 15:00-16:30
5th session: 15/07/10 Thursday 15:00-18:00