



Syllabus **Practical Aspects of Contemporary Academic Research**

Training course
Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Roman Petrov

Total number of hours: 30
Final grade: pass/fail based on the work for the whole semester

Summary

The aim of the course is to transfer a complex set of research, oral and writing skills to doctoral students to enable them independently design, conduct, present and write up research projects and papers in their chosen area of research focusing on international and European legal studies in English.

The course will lead students through all steps of research and writing in line with best practices, formal requirements and international standards of research in broad area of legal studies. All the assignments are based on the topics that students choose for their actual master dissertations, thus allowing to start design and structuring their research projects under guidance of the lecturer and feedback of their peers. Focus of the course is to give chance for doctoral students to present their individual research projects for public discussion and debate in English.

Aims of the course

The learning outcomes of the course focus on the following skills 1) development of critical thinking in doing international research; 2) learning contemporary means of working with fundamental and reference literature in relevant fields of research; 3) enhancing skills in designing research in the field of international and European law; 4) articulating and developing own style of writing academic texts in line with best international practices; 5) mastering skills of oral presentation; 6) learning contemporary means of academic time management.

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The learning outcomes of the course focus on the following skills 1) critical thinking; 2) working with the literature 3) design of research 4) writing of texts 5) oral presentation 6) time management.

Course schedule, 2023

<i>Weeks</i>	<i>Classes and topics</i>
1	
	Course introduction
2	
	Topic 1. Motivation for academic research on post-doctoral and professional levels.
	Topic 2. Choosing your topic for a research project.
3	
	Topic 3. Time-management skills for conducting research on international level.
4	
	Topic 4. Giving feedback on international research projects. Peer review process.
	Topic 5. Finding your research question, writing an abstract for an international research project.
	Individual consultations
5	
	Topic 6. Working with the literature and bibliography managers
6	
	Topic 7. Academic writing - literature review
	Topic 8. Methods of research for law and interdisciplinarity in contemporary international legal research.
7	
	Topic 9. Writing research proposal for international publishing houses and funding authorities.
	Topic 10. Oral presentation skills
8	
	Topic 11. Oral presentations

Course Outline

Topic 1. Motivation of research students on post-doctoral and professional levels.

1. Introductions.
2. Overview of the course, syllabus and rules.
3. Personal motivation of an international researcher.
4. What contemporary research in international law can offer young researchers?

Topic 2. Choosing your topic of an international research project/paper/monograph.

1. Experience of writing large research paper.
2. Criteria for choosing your research area.
3. Algorithm of research.

Topic 3. Time-management skills for contemporary international legal research.

1. Challenges in managing time efficiently.
2. Time-management tools for academic research and writing.
3. Planning for efficient research – developing “your” plan of action.
4. Major tools and software for efficient time-management.
5. Developing the plan for submission of the thesis.

Topic 5. Giving feedback. Peer review process.

1. Types and principles of giving feedback and peer review.
2. Sandwich model of feedback.
3. Practical exercises.

Topic 6. Finding your research question, writing an abstract for international legal research.

1. Problems that make the focus of dissertation..
2. Formulating the research question.
3. Linking research question and the structure of the text.
4. Research question and other concepts - “aim and goals of the research”, “hypothesis”.
5. Abstract and research question.
6. Practical exercises to word the research question.

Topic 7. Working with the literature and bibliography managers.

1. Quality of sources – ranking of the sources in English language.
2. Quality of sources – ranking of the sources in Ukrainian language.
3. Search for sources (search engines – Google Scholar, databases JStor, EBSCO, ProQuest, etc).
4. Systematic monitoring and automated alerts (TOC, Zetoc, alerts for databases and individual journals).
5. Systematization and storage
6. Making notes, effective and ethical use of notes in the text..

Topic 8. Academic writing – literature review in contemporary international legal research.

1. When and how to start writing.
2. Creative writing and prompts.

3. Technique of “expanded writing”.
4. Rewriting, editing and polishing the paper.
5. Literature review and its purposes.
6. Literature review and theoretical framework.
- 7.

Topic 9. Oral presentation skills

1. Power-point presentations – pro and cons.
2. Best and worst experiences of public speaking.
3. Tips for better presentation.

Topic 10. Methods of research for law and interdisciplinarity in contemporary international legal research.

1. Overview of research methods in international law.
2. Empirical research and its logic.
3. Experience of qualitative research – how it frames the writing.
4. Interdisciplinary approach to research.
5. What is interdisciplinarity.
6. How interdisciplinarity can be used for contemporary research in international law.

Topic 11. Writing research proposal for individual research project

1. Structural elements and purpose of research proposal.
2. Formal requirements.
3. Peer-groups on research proposals.

Recommended literature:

Derntl, Michael. "Basics of research paper writing and publishing." *International Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning* 6.2 (2014): 105-123.

Hartley, James. *Academic writing and publishing: A practical handbook*. Routledge, 2008.

Morley, John. *Academic Phrasebank*, 2014

Evera, Guide to Methods for Students in Political Science

Boscolo, Pietro, Barbara Arfé, and Mara Quarisa. “Improving the Quality of Students' Academic Writing: An Intervention Study.” *Studies in Higher Education* 32 (August 2007): 419-438; [Academic Writing](#). The Writing Lab and The OWL. Purdue University; [Academic Writing Style](#). First-Year Seminar Handbook. Mercer University; Bem, Daryl J. [Writing the Empirical Journal Article](#). Cornell University; Candlin, Christopher. *Academic Writing Step-By-Step: A Research-based Approach*. Bristol, CT: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2016; [College Writing](#). The Writing Center. University of North Carolina; [Style](#). College Writing. The Writing Center. University of North Carolina; [Invention: Five Qualities of Good Writing](#). The Reading/Writing Center. Hunter College; Sword, Helen. *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012; [What Is an Academic Paper?](#) Institute for Writing Rhetoric. Dartmouth College.

A Sample Research Proposal with Comments¹

A research project or thesis will take at least two semesters to complete. Prior to starting a research, i.e. enrolling in the first semester research course, students must go through the proposal stage, during which students will develop their proposal and have it reviewed by his/her research advisor. This means that students need months of planning and background research work before the start of the first semester research. During the proposal stage, students should discuss their research interests, identify a research topic, conduct preliminary literature review and develop a project proposal. The proposal should discuss problem statement, objectives, research methodology, research activities, and a time schedule in about 3-5 pages. A sample proposal is attached here for your reference.

Comment

A Conceptual Framework for Scheduling Constraint Management

1. Introduction

Every construction project is unique and has its own operating environment and sets of technical requirements. As a result, the execution of a construction project is subject to numerous constraints that limit the commencement or progression of field operations, which invariably have significant negative impact on overall project performance. By definition, constraints refer to any condition, such as temporal/spatial limitations and safety/quality concerns, which may prevent a project to achieve its goals. Successful execution and control of a construction project relies on effective identification and management of constraints through master planning and short-term look-ahead scheduling. While the master schedule provides a global view of a project and the overall execution strategy, a look-ahead schedule offers a detail account of operational constraints and a detailed plan showing work to be done within a relatively short time window. Ideally, these detailed schedules should reflect actual field conditions and provide field personnel with operation instructions free of constraints and conflicts (Hinze 2008). This look-ahead scheduling and constraint analysis procedure is also a critical component of the last-planner methodology proposed by Ballard (2000). This research project will provide an overview of state-of-art schedule constraint analysis practice during look-ahead

Provide a brief and meaningful title to your project

Background or introduction section provides a description of the basic facts and importance of the research area - What is your research area, the motivation of research, and how important is it for the industry practice/knowledge advancement?

¹ Materials are based on "Organising Your Social Science Research Paper: Writing a Research Proposal", <https://libguides.pointloma.edu/c.php?g=944338&p=6806963>.

scheduling. In addition, it will propose a conceptual framework for managing constraints.

2. Problem Statement

The importance of developing a constraint-free and reliable work plan has long been recognized by the industry. However, numerous construction projects are still plagued by delays and cost overruns, which can frequently be traced to ineffective identification and treatment of constraints. First, when a constraint is not properly identified during scheduling, subsequent conflicts in the field are inevitable. Today's projects are becoming more and more technically complex and logistically challenging, which exposes construction operations to even more complex constraints. Second, the traditional scheduling methods, bar charts and Critical Path Method (CPM) which are widely used as a basis for constraint analysis, greatly limit our capability in modeling and resolving constraints

Problem statement provides a clear and concise description of the issues that need to be addressed - What is the specific problem in that research area that you will address (e.g. lack of understanding of a subject, low performance ...)?