Master Thesis (MT) 2017-2018

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Office hours: Thursday 15:30 – 16:30 and by appointment

Course Description

The Master’s Thesis (MT) is an original written work, prepared by students in groups, that integrates and develops the training, competencies and skills acquired along the MSc IB. The MT is a 6 ECTS course and, in terms of individual student time dedication, it requires a 150-hour workload. The MT will be defended before an Examination Committee in June.

Each group works in the MT project under the direct supervision of a faculty member, acting as the group Supervisor. Another faculty member is appointed as MT Coordinator, with the role of coordinating and overseeing the development of the whole course and for all MSc IB students, as well as providing general guidance and training about the MT. The MT Coordinator will set up several MT lectures throughout the year to assess the progress of the work done by groups and to address potential difficulties.

The MT can be, among other possibilities:

• a full-fledged internationalization plan for an existing company;
• a detailed proposal for the creation of a new company with an international vision;
• an in-depth study of the business implications of an international/multinational trend.

Objectives

The MT should allow the students to put in practice the knowledge acquired throughout the Master in a real or simulated situation.

The work necessarily needs to be done from a business perspective and with an international dimension.
Methodology

**Organization**

The MT is to be done in groups of either three or four students.

The MT Coordinator will ask the MSc IB faculty for proposals of projects and, after examination and consultation with the Program Director, shall produce a short list of those. In the first MT lecture, the MT Coordinator will inform students about the MT projects proposed by the faculty. Students can choose one of those projects or make a MT project proposal on their own. In any case, preferences over an MT project will only be accepted for consideration if they are submitted by a full team of students, that is, each comprised of three or four people.

By the second MT lecture, all students will need to be assigned to a group and to a MT project. The formation of student groups, the authorization to perform a particular MT project and the assignment of a MT Supervisor are tasks that will be led and managed by the MT Coordinator in communication with the Program Director.

Students need to hand in two progress reports during the year and inform the MT Coordinator of the meetings they have with the Supervisor. For the MT to be presented and defended, the Supervisor needs to authorize it.

**MT Paper**

The MT final report’s maximum extension will be 25 pages, inclusive of an Executive Summary (2 pages maximum) the tables and figures which are considered particularly relevant; i.e. references to tables or figures outside the main text in the report should be kept to a strict minimum. Additional material can be relegated to the appendix, without any further limitation on length. The following fields are necessary: title, abstract, and keywords. All pages must be numbered, the typography shall be Arial, Calibri or Times of size 12 and the maximum interline space is 1.5.

**Legal and UPF e-repository**

**The MT from previous courses are accessible through the password-protected MT course webpage.** In addition to this, if a group of students is interested in having their MT included in the UPF Library e-repository, they will need to fill in an authorization. Only MT awarded with a Distinction grade will be considered for inclusion in the UPF Library e-repository.
Evaluation criteria

**Students work in the MT in groups but grades are individual to each student**, i.e. members of a given group might get different grades if there are signals of different effort and involvement. All members of the group will be requested to cross evaluate their group peers. For each MT, an Examination Committee is appointed by the MSc IB Director that evaluates each student individual performance according to the following criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment element</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous assessment</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<td>It includes three elements: a) attendance to and active participation in the plenary sessions, b) the evaluation of the tasks prior to the final MT submission (the submission and content of the progress reports and other due documents); c) input from the co-evaluation by peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final work and presentation</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<td>It includes five elements: a) motivation and relevance; b) methodology and results; c) discussion and conclusions; d) style and presentation; e) degree of internationalization and scope for applicability.</td>
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Students are required to attend 80% of classes. Failing to do so without justified reason will imply a Zero grade in the participation/attendance evaluation item and may lead to suspension from the program.

As with all courses taught at the UPF BSM, students who fail the course during regular evaluation will be allowed ONE re-take of the examination/evaluation. Students that pass any Retake exam should get a **5 by default as a final grade for the course**. If the course is again failed after the retake, students will have to register again for the course the following year.

In case of a justified no-show to an exam, the student must inform the corresponding faculty member and the director(s) of the program so that they study the possibility of rescheduling the exam (one possibility being during the “Retake” period). In the meantime, the student will get an “incomplete”, which will be replaced by the actual grade after the final exam is taken. The “incomplete” will not be reflected on the student’s Academic Transcript.

Plagiarism is to use another’s work and to present it as one’s own without acknowledging the sources in the correct way. All essays, reports or projects handed in by a student must be original work completed by the student. By enrolling at any UPF BSM Master of Science and signing the “Honor Code,” students acknowledge that they understand the schools’ policy on plagiarism and certify that all course assignments will be their own work, except where indicated by correct referencing. Failing to do so may result in automatic expulsion from the program.”
Calendar and Contents

First Term
First MT Lecture September 27, 15 h.
Group Formation Deadline November 1
Second MT Lecture November 8, 15 h.
First Progress Report Deadline December 1

Second Term
Third MT Lecture / Workshop January 29, 15 h.
Fourth MT Lecture incl. Finance Module March 5, 15:30 h.
Second Progress Report Deadline March 16

Third Term
Fifth MT Lecture April 16, 13:15 h.
Sixth MT Lecture May 28, 13:15 h.
MT Submission Deadline June 11
MT Presentations June 21 and June 22

MT Presentations Retake December 2017

Bio of Professor

Ramon Xifré is Associate Professor of Economics and Research Director at ESCI–UPF School of International Studies and Policy Research Fellow in the Public-Private Sector Research Center at IESE Business School. He is a member of the European Central Bank (ECB) Competitiveness Research Network (CompNet) and the academic coordinator of the SpanishReforms project.

His main interest is the competitiveness of the Spanish and EU economies and the related policies and structural reforms on issues like business environment, internationalization, R&D&I and industrial policy. He has led and participated in numerous research projects on these areas, commissioned both by public and private organizations, and he has published one book and dozens of articles on these topics.

From January 2009 to December 2011 he was on leave serving as Senior Economic Policy Advisor at the Spanish Prime Minister Economic Bureau. He is Council Member of the Gerson Lehrman Group (GLG), has been member of Board of Directors of ICEX and regularly addresses international audiences on investment climate and competitiveness issues for Spain and the EU.

He holds a BA from Universitat Pompeu Fabra, MSc from the London School of Economics, was “Marie Curie” Fellow at the University of Munich (LMU) and he received his Economics PhD from Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

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Note: This document is only informational, detailed contents and faculty may change.