



Barcelona Research Seminar
January, 17th and 18th 2024
2023-2024 Edition
Instructions for Students

Attendance

This academic course, the Barcelona Research Seminar will take place in Barcelona on January 17th and 18th. Please remember that attendance to the BRS is compulsory within the scheme of our Master Program.

General Structure of the Event

In the first slot of activities (Opening Lecture, both days), all students will be required to join a common session where they will be attending lectures from leading academics. On the first day, we will also invite the winner of the Best Thesis Award from the previous academic year. This year, there will be a student who will share his research experiences from writing his Master Thesis. Also in the afternoon we will have some Alumni to provide additional tips.

Next, we will start the group sessions where students will present and/or defend their research projects. The students will be divided into four (4) groups of five (5) and two (2) groups of four (4), whose distribution criteria will depend on the topic of the MA dissertations. All students will have the opportunity to present and/or discuss their research project. The different classrooms where each presentation will take place will be provided along with the final program.

On January 18th, a number of short methodological seminars will take place. Students will be able to attend these seminars according to their research interest and the type of research methods they are willing to use in their Master Thesis.

Instructions for each Activity

● Activity: Opening Lectures I-II

ALL students are required to attend the opening lectures on time for the beginning of the day. They attend a lecture from a leading academic demonstrating the application of their research field and inspiring them with innovative/well-established research questions and methodologies. The lectures also include open debates for asking questions both on content and methodologies. We expect an active involvement from students.

● Activity: Short Presentation from the winner of the “Best Thesis Award” from the previous academic year.

One student from the previous academic year will share his research experiences with all EPS students.

● Activity: Research Feedback for Second Year Students – Master Thesis Project

Students will be distributed in 6 groups inside separate classrooms, which will consist of four (4) groups of five (5) and two (2) groups of four (4), respectively. Presentations will be divided equally within Day 1 and Day 2 (if necessary). During this activity, students who are not presenting must still attend their own group presentations.

Students might make use of a PowerPoint (PPT) presentation to support their 10-minute research project presentation, which is to be uploaded to the link below (by 7th of January). Additionally, students will be requested to present their research question and small presentation of five minutes in Barcelona and this will be followed by an additional 40 minutes for professors’ and student reviewers’ feedback plus questions and inquiries from fellow participants in the group.

In total, each student will be assigned a 45-minute slot (presentation + feedback & questions) which includes the review from two professors and the appointed student-reviewer from his/her group. Thus, students will have to make a very short presentation of five minutes introducing themselves and explaining their research question, why that question is relevant and the basics of their research project.

● Activity: Update of Alumni Session

● Activity: Social Event

After the academic events of Wednesday 18th, students will be able to meet in a space outside the University where they will be able to develop activities. Please check the final program for further details.

Tips on How To Be a Good Discussant with your fellow students

A discussant is tasked with reading papers, listening carefully to any related presentation and then delivering a concise, constructive discussion of the relative merits of the work, in a manner designed to help the author develop and strengthen the work.

Remember the wider audience – not everyone will have read the paper, the discussant should therefore deliver a concise summary that gives the audience a good sense of the substance of the paper. Below are some tips on what you might pick up on in that content.

- Objectives and significance – are the goals of the work clear? Is the work contextualised well? Has the author made their contribution and the significance of that contribution clear? A discussant can be invaluable in ensuring modesty does not obscure the value of the work but equally in ensuring that authors do not make excessive claims that the work does not fully substantiate.
- The literature – has the author relied on appropriate, authoritative literature, demonstrating a good command of the subject matter? Is there a clear connection between the literature relied on and the research question(s)/hypotheses? Can you suggest further reading that would help them to develop their arguments further and to anticipate criticisms and counter them?
- Data, methods and operationalization – Is this set out in an unambiguous and comprehensive fashion? For many peer reviewers, a good discussion of methodology is a necessary element of the work. A discussant, even if unfamiliar with the method, can provide valuable feedback regarding how accessible the content is in this regard.
- Analysis and conclusions – Is the work persuasive? Why? How might it serve as a model? Or could it benefit from specific revisions?

Considerations

- Shaping the discussion agenda – it is helpful if the discussant can oil the wheels of the wider discussion by highlighting certain insights from or issues raised in the paper that warrant wider discussion.
- Remember to assess the paper on its own merits – don't fall into the trap of suggesting the author was trying to or should have written a different paper!
- Centre the paper and its arguments – play the ball and not the player.
 - Don't veer into a discussion that is essentially about how you would have approached the work.

● **Activity: Methodological Workshops**

A number of short methodological workshops will be offered to all students in order to be able to choose the one which best fits their research needs on Thursday 19th after the presentations of MA students.



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