

# CARLETON UNIVERSITY

## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

**BUSINESS 42.597\* Thesis Tutorial**

**Spring, 2000**

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1315-1415  
**Class Hours:** Tues. and Thurs. 1830 till 2130  
**Class Location:** 303 DT

### **Catalogue Description**

A seminar designed to help the student formulate and evaluate specific research topics. The successful submission of a thesis proposal is necessary for the completion of the course.

### **Course Objectives**

The objective of this seminar is for participants to develop an accepted MMS thesis proposal with a formal supervisor(s) and advisory committee.

### **Required Texts**

1. Davis, Gordon and Parker, Clyde A. (1997) Writing the Doctoral Dissertation: A Systematic Approach, Second Edition, Barons=Educational Services, NY, NY.
2. Meredith, Jack R. and Mantel, Samuel Jr. (1999) Project Management: A Managerial Approach, Fourth Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Toronto, ON.

### **Project Planning Software**

Project Planning Software is available in several places. Microsoft Project is available in DT811 and on machine 1 in the grad lab.

### **Actions To Be Taken in this Course to Achieve the Objective.**

The MMS is a graduate research degree. You will benefit most from this course if you view it as help in accelerating your progress towards a finished thesis. You will benefit most if you pick your thesis problem early (if you have not already done so) in the term and then use this course to work on developing your proposal. Your goal should be to present your thesis proposal in June, July or August, 2000. Notice that the thesis proposal grade is assigned by the Proposal Examining Committee at the time of the proposal defense. Therefore, the final grade for 42.597 cannot be submitted until the thesis proposal is successfully defended. Students are required to maintain continuous registration in 42.597 until that time.

The following actions are an integral part of this course:

- (a) Since this course is about research, as part of this course you will be expected to become an active participant in the research culture of the School of Business. This means:
  - i) attending all MMS or PhD thesis proposals scheduled during the May-June 2000 period;
  - ii) attending all MMS or PhD thesis defenses scheduled during the May-June 2000 period;
  - iii) attending all School of Business research seminars scheduled during the May-June 2000 presentations;
  - iv) and attending research presentations elsewhere in the University when they are relevant to your particular research interests.
  
- (b) Identifying and developing knowledge and skills required for writing a thesis proposal. This means:
  - (i) Reading the textbooks;
  - (ii) Learning about project management: developing a thesis proposal and executing it is an example of a very substantial project. Therefore, this course will give all participants an opportunity to study project management.

Each participant will develop and present a "lecture" on a topic or topics in project management. The date, time, and topic will be arranged during the first meeting of the class;

- (iii) Developing your own knowledge and skill base as it relates to your particular topic.
- (c) Development of written and oral presentation skills for academic and non-academic audiences. This means:
- (i) Preparing and presenting the "lecture" on your chosen topic in Project Management,
  - (ii) Preparing and presenting a fifteen minute introduction to your thesis proposal, and
  - (iii) Preparing a draft of your thesis proposal
- (d) Identifying and utilizing academic and administrative research resources within the School of Business, elsewhere in the University, and in the outside community
- (e) Developing links with faculty members with similar research interests and linking with an individual or individuals who can act as a thesis advisor.

### **Achieving The Course Objective**

The course is intended to be extremely practical so as to achieve the course objective. It is designed to work through a process to enable you to have a draft Thesis Proposal by the last day of class. Toward this end, seven major topics will be addressed:

1. Reviewing and discussing the academic and administrative requirements in the MMS Program (Week 2).
2. Identifying research problems: what makes a good problem for research (Week 2, Week 3); what makes a good problem for a thesis (Week 2, Week 3, Week 4)

3. Writing a cohesive argument: Taking a stance and using research literature and theory to support this position (Week 2, Week 4, Week 5, Week 7).
4. Reading, reviewing, and critiquing a thesis proposal and finished thesis (Week 3 and Week 4).
5. Developing a Mini-Proposal and turning it into an MMS Proposal (Week 4 to Week 6).
6. Presenting one's Thesis Proposal (Week 7).
7. Managing your Thesis Research Project to complete quickly and successfully (Week 1 to Week 7).

### **Paul Menton Centre:**

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to come and discuss your needs with me at least two weeks prior to the first in-class or ITV test. This is to ensure sufficient time to make the necessary accommodation arrangement. Please note the deadline for submitting completed forms to the Paul Menton Centre is June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2000 for Spring courses.

### **Plagiarism:**

The University Graduate Calendar, p 64, lists plagiarism as an instructional offence. Plagiarism will be deemed to have occurred when a student either:

- (i) directly copies another's work without acknowledgement; or
- (ii) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgement; or
- (iii) borrows, without acknowledgement, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own, would contribute to the merit of his or her own work".

**Please do not do this.**

**Grading:** The final grade for 42.597\* includes two components, and will be calculated as follows:

Term Work

70%

### Thesis Proposal Grade 30%

The Thesis Proposal grade is assigned by the Proposal Examining Committee at the time of the Proposal Defense. Therefore, the final grade for 42.597\* cannot be submitted until the Thesis Proposal is successfully defended. Students are required to maintain continuous registration in 42.597\* until the thesis proposal is successfully defended.

The term work component of the final 42.597\* grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation (including participation in thesis proposal defenses, thesis defenses, and research seminars)	20%
Lecture grade	5%
One page definition of your thesis research problem	5%
Book review of a thesis proposal of your choice	5%
Book review of a thesis of your choice	5%
10 page mini thesis proposal	5%
Draft of MMS thesis proposal	5%
Class Presentation of Draft Proposal	5%
Final Examination (Students who have scheduled a thesis proposal defense by the final examination date may elect not to sit for the final, and to have the thesis proposal grade have a 45% weight.)	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70%</b>

#### **Availability of Supplementals/Graders:**

Supplemental and grade raising examinations are not available in this course.

#### **Prerequisite Statement:**

There are no official pre-requisites for this course beyond the admission requirements for the MMS. It should be noted, however, that this course is most useful to the participant taken in the final

semester of course work. As noted in the course outline, students are expected to present an MMS thesis proposal as part of this course.

### **Course Outline**

1. Thursday, May 18                      Introduction and Course Organization
  - Review of Course Outline
  - Preliminary statements of research interests
  - Choice of date and topic for participants lecture on project management

**Read:** M&M, Ch.1 and Appendix  
Davis and Parker, Ch. 1-3
2. Tuesday, May 23                      Review and Discussion of the Thesis - Academic and Administrative Requirements in the MMS Program: Project Evaluation and Selection.

#### **Practical Matters:**

1. How does one obtain a thesis advisor?
2. Who sits on the Proposal Examining Committee?
3. Who is on the Thesis Committee?
4. What is the process of defending an MMS Thesis Proposal?
5. What is the process of defending an MMS Thesis?
6. What should the proposal include?

#### **Research in the School of Business:**

C Who is doing what kind of research?

C Preliminary statement on where your research fits, and with whom?

#### **Preparation Action**

1. Read:
  - a) The University Graduate Calendar
  - b) The MMS Program Proposal
  - c) The School of Business Graduate Handbook
  - d) Brochures of the School's Organized Research Units
2. Talk with:
  - Three faculty members in some detail about their research in progress and ideas for future research
3. Come to class:

With question you need to ask to proceed successfully through the thesis process

**Read:** M&M , Ch. 2 - Lecture on Project Selection  
Davis and Parker, Ch. 4 and 5

3. Thursday, May 25

Identifying Research Problems - The Project Manager

Preparation Questions-

1. What makes a good research problem?
2. What makes a good problem for a MMS Thesis?
3. How does one find a research problem?
4. Identify three research problems.

Using the material discussed in the previous class, evaluate these three research problems.

**Read:** M&M, ch. 3 - Lecture on the Project Manager  
Davis and Parker, Ch. 6

4. Tuesday, May 30

Planning the Research Proposal and Organizing Your Project

Preparation Action

1. Be linked with a faculty advisor (who may turn into a thesis supervisor);
2. Have selected a research problem you will study in your Thesis Research;
3. Hand in your thesis problem statement: A one page definition of your Thesis Research Problem, including some key references.

**Read:** M&M, ch. 4 - Lecture on Project Organization.  
Davis and Parker, Ch. 7 and 8

5. Thursday, June 1

Reviewing a Proposal and Planning Your Project

Preparation Action

Select a thesis proposal of your choice and write a book review of it.  
Read the proposal and prepare a review to include:

C A general overview of the author's thesis.

C Key points of the author's argument.

C Impacts on business, as suggested by the author or developed by yourself at the proposed research. If the author has suggested them, critique them - do they seem logical, what other suggested impacts do you think those will be?

C A conclusion about the value of the proposal, and for whom?

C Keep in mind, a good review will encourage a reader of the review to read the book reviewed if the author of the review thinks that people should be encouraged to read the book reviewed.

C Be prepared to present a brief summary of the proposal you have reviewed in class.

**Read:** M&M ch. 5 - Lecture on Project Planning.

6. Tuesday, June 6

Negotiation and Conflict Resolution; Budgeting

**Read:** M&M ch. 6 and ch. 7-

Lecture on Conflict and Negotiation



Lecture on Budgeting and Cost Estimation

7. Thursday, June 8

Reviewing a Thesis of Your Choice; Scheduling

Preparation Action

- C Select a thesis of your choice, and write a book review of it.
- C Follow the guidelines given for the review on Week 5. Be prepared to present a brief summary of the thesis you reviewed in class.

**Read** M&M, ch. 8 - Lecture on Scheduling.

Davis and Parker.Ch. 9 and Appendix

8. Tuesday, June 13

No class. Keep in mind you have been attending thesis proposals, thesis defenses, and research seminars as part of this course, so you have some compensatory time due to you. Feel free to use this time working on your own thesis proposal.

9. Thursday, June 15

Draft of the core of your thesis proposal due; Resource Allocation

Preparation Action

Hand in a 10 page mini-thesis proposal which will form the core of your MMS thesis proposal. Be prepared to present a brief summary of your proposal in class.

**Read:** M&M, ch.9 - Lecture on Resource Allocation.

Davis and Parker, Ch. 10

10. Tuesday, June 20                      Monitoring and Information Systems; Project Control

**Read:** M&M, ch. 10 and ch.11

Davis and Parker, Ch. 11

Lecture on Monitoring and Information Systems

Lecture on Project Control

11. Thursday, June 22                      Project Termination and Technological Forecasting

Preparation Action

You should be organizing, outlining, and writing - expanding the mini-proposal.

**Read** M&M, ch 12 and 13

Lecture on Project Auditing

Lecture on Project Termination.

12. Tuesday, June 27                      Presentations of MMS Proposals

Turn in your draft of your MMS proposal to the instructor's office or mailbox on or before 2130

Tuesday, June 27, 2000.

15. Date and time to be arranged:    Final Examination

16. Schedule your proposal defense before June 27, 2000.

**42.597\***

**Handy Summary of Due Dates -**

1. My lecture is on the topic:  
on the date:
  
2. One page definition of your thesis research problem      May 30
  
3. Book review of a thesis proposal of your choice      June 1
  
4. Book review of a thesis of your choice      June 8
  
5. 10 page mini thesis proposal      June 15
  
6. Draft of MMS thesis proposal      June 27
  
7. Final Examination

## Presentation Evaluation Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Presentation Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Presentation Team Evaluation:

#### **I. Analysis**

A. Identification of the Central Strategic and Tactical Problems	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Good
B. Use of Necessary and Reasonable Assumptions	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Good
C. Evaluation of Interrelationships of Issues	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Good
D. Generation and Analysis of Alternative Courses of Action	Very Comprehensive	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Comprehensive
E. Statement of Recommendation(s) and Underlying Rationale	Very Comprehensive	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Comprehensive
F. Structure of Detailed Plan of Action for Implementation	Very Comprehensive	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Comprehensive

#### **II. Organization of Analysis Presentation**

A. Appropriate Introductions and Set-Ups	Very Appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Appropriate
B. Logic of Presentation Organization	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Good

#### **III. Presentation Dynamics**

A. Clarity of Presentation Organization	Very Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Clear
B. Documentation of Argumentation	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Very Weak Documentation
C. Effectiveness of Visual Aids Used in Presentation	Very Effective	1	2	3	4	5	Very Ineffective
D. Effectiveness of Team's Verbal Skill in Presentation	Very Effective	1	2	3	4	5	Very Ineffective
E. Time Management: Allocation of Presentation Time to Analysis Sections	Very Good	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Good

#### **IV. Critique Response**

A. Directness of Team's Response to Critique	Very Direct	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Direct
B. Logical Strength of Team's Response	Very Strong	1	2	3	4	5	Not Very Strong
C. Factual Documentation of Team's Response	Very Strong	1	2	3	4	5	Very Weak
D. Overall Effectiveness of Presentation Team's Response	Very Effective	1	2	3	4	5	Very Ineffective