

PIA8609: POSTGRADUATE THESIS SEMINAR

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Postgraduate Thesis Seminar

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

8609

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

2

Level

R8 - Research Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to ease the transition in the intellectual lives of research postgraduates from course takers to independent researchers. Through regular structured discussion of the progress of the actual work of the students’ thesis and research, led by a designated faculty, the course provides much needed enculturation as well as an opportunity to share ideas and experience on addressing concerns and solving problems in their research. The course will also bring the same cohort of students together to provide support and mutual stimulation of ideas. Similar courses in major universities overseas have proved effective in improving students’ performance and enhancing successful completion.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Bridge the gap between ‘course-takers’ and independent researchers	30	x		

2	Develop the capacity to resolve difficulties in research and thesis by sharing ideas and experiences	50	x	x	
3	Continue to provide mutual support and assistance for each other	10		x	x
4	Maintain good momentum of research and progress in thesis preparation	10	x		

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Seminars	Structured seminars	2, 4	1.5
2	Preparation of materials	Preparation of materials for presentation and discussion during seminars	4	
3	Individual consultation	Individual consultation with instructor	3, 4	0.5
4	Small group discussion	Small group discussion before and after seminars	3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Individual presentation on one's research or aspects of it	4	40	-	No
2	Commentary on others' presentation and participation in discussion	4	30	-	No
3	Submission of writing samples for discussion	4	30	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Student-based learning; bridging gap; independent research; sharing and experience; new modes of intellectual engagement; enculturation; research strategies and skills; problem solving; research progress.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	George Watson, Writing a Thesis: A Guide to Long Essays and Dissertations, (London: Longman, 1987).
2	Frank W. Lewins, Writing a Thesis: A Guide to Its Nature and Organization, (Canberra, ANUTACH, 1993).