**Research report (graded)**

*Format*

The research report is an intermediate product at the end of the first semester and has one of two formats (whatever fits the student’s project and approach best, this is the choice of the student):

* It is written as a (mini) thesis, with a short introduction, methods section, some results (i.e., preliminary analyses, or pilot simulations), and a discussion of results. Please do not include appendices, and add at least 1 Table *and* 1 Figure (but no more than 4 tables/figures). Table and Figure captions do not count towards the word limit. An abstract may be included, but is not necessary.
* It is the first ‘half’ of the thesis, i.e., there are no results included yet, but the report contains a full introduction including a literature review and a methods section that contains details about the data, instruments and/or statistical procedures. Include at least one Table and one Figure. If you don’t have results yet, add synthetic results. Table and Figure captions do not count towards the word limit. An abstract may be included, but is not necessary.

The length of the research report should be maximally 2500 words of text (without references list and/or tables and figures).

*Grading*

The grade will reflect the clarity of writing (clear and correct formulations, a logical structure of sections and of paragraphs within sections, no typos or errors in grammar), and the conciseness in presentation of tables, figures, and formulas (if any), that is, a nice looking and consistent lay-out of the report. We will also judge the logic of your research report. For example, does your summary of key questions follow from your discussion of the literature? Or do your conclusions follow from the results you have shown?

The rubric, see next page, displays all criteria and the relative weighting of each aspect.

The research report should be sent (by email) to:

- Your Research Seminar mentor

- Your thesis supervisor(s)

- The coordinator of the course “Research Seminar”

- The coordinator of the course “Preparation Master’s thesis”

Note that y*our thesis supervisor will also take the report into account when proposing a grade for the course “Preparation for master’s thesis”. However, in that course the focus is much more on content, amount of work done, and independency, i.e., it is not solely based on the research report.*

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| **Grade:** | **Less than 5.5**  **Unsatisfactory:** | **Between 6 and 7.5**  **Satisfactory to good** | **Between 8 and 10**  **Good to Excellent** | **Weight** | **Grade** |
| **Clear message** | The thesis topic is not introduced and explained clearly and not linked to a meaningful review of the current state of knowledge (literature). It is not explained in the broader context of the thesis. There is no clear claim of the objectives of the study. | The thesis topic is introduced and explained clearly and linked to a meaningful review of the current state of knowledge (literature). It is explained in the broader context of the thesis. There is a clear claim of the objectives of the study. | The thesis topic is introduced and explained very clear and well linked to a meaningful review of the current state of knowledge (literature). It is very well explained in the broader context of the thesis topic. There is a clear claim of the objectives of the study. | 0.30 |  |
| **Structure:** | Content is not logically organized or presented; topics/paragraphs are frequently disjointed and/or fail to make sense together; reader cannot identify a line of reasoning and loses interest. | Content is presented in a clear and reasonable sequence; topic/paragraph transition is usually good with clear linkages for the most part; reader can generally understand and follow the line of reasoning. | Content is presented in a logical, interesting, and effective sequence; topics flow smoothly and coherently from one to another and are clearly linked; reader can easily follow the line of reasoning. | 0.20 |  |
| **Writing** | Writing is unengaging and reader finds it difficult to maintain interest; tone is not consistently professional or suitable for an academic project; the report exhibits multiple errors in grammar, sentence structure, and/or spelling; inadequate writing skills (e.g., weaknesses in language facility and mechanics) hinder readability and contribute to an ineffective project. | Writing is usually engaging and keeps the reader’s attention; tone is generally professional and appropriate for an academic project; the report displays good word choice, language conventions, and mechanics with a few minor errors in spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and/or punctuation; errors do not represent a major distraction or obscure meaning. | Writing is compelling and sustains interest through-out; tone is consistently professional and appropriate for an academic project; readability of the report is enhanced by facility in language use/word choice, excellent mechanics, and syntactic variety; uses language conventions effectively (e.g., spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing, grammar, etc.). | 0.20 |  |
| **Layout** | The report is unattractive in terms of design, layout, neatness, unity and consistency; | The report is sufficiently attractive in terms of design, layout, neatness, unity and consistency; | The report is highly attractive in terms of design, layout, neatness, unity and consistency; | 0.15 |  |
| **Tables/Figures** | Figures and tables are not accompanied by meaningful captions. Figures do not have proper scales and legends. Font sizes, line thicknesses, symbols sizes etc. in the figures are not chosen appropriately. Figures/tables are overloaded with information. Tables do not contain all relevant information including e.g., units, explanation of abbreviations used. | All figures and tables are accompanied by meaningful. All figures have proper scales and legends. Font sizes, line thicknesses, symbols sizes etc. in the figures are chosen appropriately. Figures/tables show the essentials. Tables contain all relevant information including e.g., units, explanation of abbreviations used. | All figures and tables are accompanied by very clear captions that can be comprehended without reading the main text. All figures and Tables are designed extremely well. | 0.15 |  |
| **General comments** |  | | | | |
| **Overall grade** |  | | | | |