

Philipps-Universität Marburg
Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies (CNMS)

Course Outline:

Course Title:	Methods of Middle East Economics (LV-10-772-743)
Semester:	Summer Semester 2020
Type of Course:	Seminar
Level:	Bachelor
Credits:	6 LP
Language:	English
Date:	23 April to 16 July 2020, 14:15 to 15:45 p.m. (weekly), except on 21 May 2020, and 11 June 2020
Location:	Online via BigBlueButton
Research Group:	Economics of the Middle East (FB02/CNMS)
Instructor:	Sven Fischer, M.A.
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Course Contents and Objectives:

Das Modul „Theorien und Methoden“ (oder OWiM) führt methodische Grundkenntnisse ein, die die wissenschaftliche Analyse wirtschaftlicher und polit-ökonomischer Fragestellungen in Bezug auf den Nahen und Mittleren Osten ermöglichen. Die Inhalte des Moduls sind Grundlage für die weiterführende wissenschaftliche Analyse der Region des Nahen und Mittleren Ostens in den Folgemodulen. Zielgruppe des Moduls sind Studienanfänger.

Dementsprechend werden vier Schwerpunkte gesetzt: Erstens werden die Studierenden an die Wissenschaft als Konzept herangeführt und erhalten eine umfassende Einführung in zentrale Begriffe und Prozesse. In einem zweiten Schritt werden wissenschaftstheoretische Grundbegriffe eingeführt, auf deren Basis dann im weiteren Verlauf des Moduls verschiedene Methoden vorgestellt und in Grundzügen erlernt werden. Anhand von Beispielen aus der Wirtschaftswissenschaft und der Politikwissenschaft, insbesondere der Politischen Ökonomie (empirischer Fokus: MENA-Region), wird die Unterscheidung von Theorie und Empirie eingeführt. Im dritten und vierten Teil des Moduls erwerben die Studierenden Grundkenntnisse im Bereich qualitativer und quantitativer Methoden. Ziel ist hier die Vermittlung von Methodenkompetenz, d.h. die Studierenden sollen in die Lage versetzt werden, Methoden im Hinblick auf verschiedene Fragestellungen adäquat auszuwählen und in Grundzügen anzuwenden. Im Bereich qualitativer Methoden liegt der Schwerpunkt auf Fallstudien (case study analysis) sowie der qualitativen Auswertung empirischen Materials. Im quantitativen Teil werden mathematische und statistische Grundlagen quantitativer Methoden und Fertigkeiten des Datenmanagements vermittelt. Zudem werden einfache quantitative Analysen vorgestellt und ihre Interpretation eingeübt.

Im gesamten Verlauf des Moduls werden die erlernten Methodenkompetenzen an praktischen Beispielen trainiert. Dabei erlernen die Studierenden gleichzeitig den Prozess wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens, welcher im weiteren Verlauf des Studiums für Hausarbeiten, Bachelorarbeit etc. benötigt wird.

Enrollment:

Enrollment for this course via MARVIN. Registration for examinations via QIS/LSF. Please keep updated about the developments and make sure not to miss the deadlines of your study programs. Maximum 25 students.

Teaching Timetable:

The course is taught online via BigBlueButton (or an alternative software) in summer semester 2020. The seminar sessions take place **weekly on Thursdays (excluding public holidays on 21 May and 11 June), 14:15 – 15:45 p.m., from 23 April – 16 July 2020**. For further information on the different sessions, see the attached seminar plan.

Examination Forms:

Students from CNMS (e.g., B.A. Orientwissenschaft / Nah- und Mitteloststudien):

1) The **exam (for CNMS students)** is on **Thursday, 30 July 2020, 14:00 – 15:00**, in CNMS in room 01A03. The second exam date (Nachschreibetermin – second try) is on **Thursday, 17 September 2020, 14:00 – 15:00** in CNMS (room tba).

2) In addition, students have to hand in a **homework**. The **deadline** for submission of the homework is **2 July 2020**.

Students from FB02 (e.g., B.Sc. Volkswirtschaftslehre / Betriebswirtschaftslehre):

The examination has two parts, namely presentation (Referat) and seminar paper (Hausarbeit). During participation at the course, students will learn to work on their own small empirical projects and will apply the gained knowledge in their presentations and papers. With their own presentations on **9 or 16 July 2020**, students will learn to present proposals of empirical projects with topics relevant to the MENA region. Topic selection in first session. Please send the presentation one week before it is your turn to the course instructor. Students can give their presentations via BigBlueButton. If this is not possible, they can (hopefully) present at the end of the semester in CNMS.

The empirical projects will be finalized within the seminar paper. The **deadline** for the seminar paper is **30 September 2020**.

Course Evaluation:

Students from CNMS (e.g., B.A. Orientwissenschaft / Nah- und Mitteloststudien):

The grade in the exam will be your grade for the course. In addition, you have to hand in a homework which will not be graded (Studienleistung). But you have to pass it with an implicit grade of at least 5 points (4,0). In case you will not hand in the homework, or hand in a homework which is graded worse than 5 points, you will NOT pass the course.

Students from FB02 (e.g., B.Sc. Volkswirtschaftslehre / Betriebswirtschaftslehre):

The final grade consists of two parts. The presentation counts 1/3 and the written paper counts 2/3. Both parts are mandatory for passing the course.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

In the homeworks and papers, always indicate if you got an information from an author other than yourself (e.g. from books, articles, websites, unpublished work)!

Stealing body of work or ideas (i.e. NOT indicating its source and displaying it as your own) is PLAGIARISM. This is both unethical and illegal!

Failure to comply will be considered as fraud and result in grading down your work to 0 points = 5.0 which means you have failed the course. In addition, your case will be forwarded to the Prüfungsausschuss for academic prosecution.

Seminar Plan (Summer Semester 2020)

Session	Date	Contents	Literature
1	23.04.2020	Introductory session - Course organization - Philosophy of science - The scientific process - Selection of presentation and seminar paper topics (FB02 students)	
2	30.04.2020	Qualitative vs. quantitative methods - Method dispute (“Methodenstreit”) in science - Inductivism vs. deductivism - Verification vs. falsification	
3	07.05.2020	Qualitative methods - Case studies - Surveys	
4	14.05.2020	Quantitative methods I - Introduction to econometrics - Mathematical and statistical basics	
	21.05.2020	Public holiday: Christi Himmelfahrt	
5	28.05.2020	Quantitative methods II - Gathering data - Introduction to linear regression analysis - Interpretation of regression output tables - Practical exercises with EXCEL - Homework will be introduced (CNMS students)	Video Tutorial 1 & 2
6	04.06.2020	Quantitative methods III - Multivariate linear regression analysis - Necessary assumptions for OLS - Practical exercises with EXCEL	Video Tutorial 3 & 4

	11.06.2020	Public holiday: Fronleichnam	
7	18.06.2020	Exercises and Q&A - 30-minute Q&A: presentation, seminar paper, and exam - Exercises with RSTUDIO	Video Tutorial 5
8	25.06.2020	Exercises and Q&A - 30-minute Q&A: presentation, seminar paper, and exam - Exercises with RSTUDIO	Video Tutorial 6
9	02.07.2020	<u>Student presentations (FB02 students):</u> - Topic 1: Environment and Economic Growth - Topic 2: Natural Resources and Economic Growth	
Homework deadline	02.07.2020	CNMS students	
10	09.07.2020	<u>Student presentations (FB02 students):</u> - Topic 3: Natural Resources and Governance - Topic 4: Democracy and Economic Growth	
11	16.07.2020	<u>Student presentations (FB02 students):</u> - Topic 5: Trade and Economic Growth - Topic 6: Corruption and Conflict	
Exam	30.07.2020	CNMS students	
Exam (2)	17.09.2020	CNMS students	
Paper deadline	30.09.2020	FB02 students	

Seminar Paper Guide:

Your paper should be a research-oriented paper, in which you conduct a scientific analysis of a contemporary issue in Middle East Economics.

The topic / topical field you have been assigned at the beginning of the seminar is too large to constitute your paper topic. By reading articles and books situated within this topical field you will develop ideas about a more specific research question you want to deal with in your paper. Try to formulate a **precise analytical research question** and draw up an **outline** (i.e. an overview of the different chapters you intend to include in your paper). This gives you an idea if the question you found can be dealt with on 10-12 pages. Discuss your research question and outline with the instructor before starting to write your seminar paper.

Here are some general guidelines:

Search for literature thoroughly. Make sure you have covered the major literature on your topic. In addition to the standard readings of the seminar, search the CNMS- or Marburg University library (OPAC-, MARLA- Catalogues), e-databases (EconLit, Academic Search Premier, Jstor; also via Marburg University library), the E-Journal database of Marburg University library and the Internet via online search engines (but: Websites constitute only complementary material. They are mostly of inferior and non-academic quality!).

A good strategy is to search for literature by the „**snowball principle**“: Whenever you found a good book or paper, you might find additional helpful literature in its reference list. You can then get the full texts via Marburg University library (OPAC for books or E-Journal-database for journal articles).

Please note that citing Wikipedia or any other material not verified and published by scientific publishers will NOT be accepted as references! You can use internet pages as references, but these have to be sites of scientific quality (ask us if you are in doubt).

Structure your paper into six parts:

- **Introduction:** Present your topic, explain why it is interesting and relevant in the larger context of Middle East Economics. Formulate a precise analytical (NOT: descriptive or normative) research question.
- **Theory:** Introduce the literature sources that offer theories which can help you to answer your research question (this might be purely theoretical literature or literature that uses theory for empirical analysis). Extract the relevant theories / theoretical propositions and present them in detail. You have to come up with at least two different theoretical answers / hypotheses to your research question (that partly or fully contradict each other in their arguments).
- **Previous studies:** Sum up the main findings of previous studies that dealt with similar research questions. Sketch the theoretical model and assumptions these studies used and indicate what their empirical findings were.

- **Data and methodology:** Present the theoretical propositions / hypotheses (simple variable relations) you are going to test. Indicate which methods you are going to use to test your theoretical propositions. Describe the material/data you have at hand and justify the choice of method from the form of available material/data + the number of observations.

If you can quantify the variables in your research question, if you have access to a suitable large N-dataset, and if you are pretty confident on variable relations, aim for a statistical test of your research question. If you are familiar with linear regression, aim for a multivariate (i.e. include several control variables, based on the theory you presented and/or on the setup of previous studies) or a univariate (just one explanatory variable) setup. Present in detail the measurement of all the variables you are going to use and the structure of the dataset. If you do not feel so comfortable with inductive statistics, just aim for the measurement over time (descriptive statistics) of your independent and your dependent variable and calculate a Pearson-Correlation-Coefficient.

If you cannot quantify the variables in your research question, if you do not have access to a dataset with the necessary quantifications, or if you have little knowledge on variable relations, you should aim for a qualitative analysis. The focus in this seminar is on the case study. Plan to conduct either a single case study or a comparison of two cases. Indicate which cases (e.g. which countries) you are going to use for your analysis and justify your selection.

If you can quantify the variables in your research question, if you have a suitable dataset at hand, and if there is additional qualitative material available, aim at a mixed-methods approach, i.e. start with a statistical analysis (either a multivariate or univariate regression) and re-check your results with the qualitative material (through a single case study or a case comparison).

The chapter Data and Methodology thus presents your PLAN for the analysis, now you implement it in the Empirics – chapter.

- **Empirics:** First, substantiate the relation of your independent and your dependent variable which you stated in your research question (show us that what you stated in your research question has some preliminary empirical justification). If your variables are quantifiable you should present some descriptive statistics (i.e. how did the values of both variables change over time). If they are not, justify your statement by recurring to qualitative material (e.g. journal articles, books, newspaper articles etc., which postulate that the variable relation is such).

Second, make a statistical analysis if your variables are reasonably quantifiable. If you are advanced, conduct a multivariate analysis. If you do not feel comfortable with a multivariate regression, make a univariate regression (Microsoft-Excel can do that for you). Test the theoretical model and its hypotheses which you presented in the “Data and methodology” chapter. Alternatively, you can stick to descriptive statistics and calculate a

Pearson-Correlation-Coefficient between your independent and your dependent variable. Show how the statistical results accord with or contradict the theoretical propositions.

Third, to re-check your statistical results, proceed with the case study (single case study or case comparison). Analyze your qualitative material (books, journal articles, newspaper articles, internet pages). Test the theoretical propositions which you presented in the “Theory” chapter on your chosen cases. Show how the empirical facts of the cases accord with or contradict the theoretical propositions.

- **Conclusion:** Summarize your findings. Evaluate how well the theories / theoretical propositions explain the empirical observations. If you did a comparative case study, carve out the factors that, according to your results, might be responsible for the different accuracy of the theoretical propositions in each case.

On this basis you come to a qualified answer to your research question. Give a short outlook on open questions, research gaps or the relevance of your findings to contemporary debates.

Please notice: Your paper should have a point to it. **You have to answer your research question, although your conclusions will always be tentative** (indicate the weaknesses in your arguments)!

Minimize the errors in spelling and grammar using the spelling and grammar checkers in your word processing software.

Use tables and graphs only when appropriate, i.e. when the reader has an additional benefit after reading the text. For example, you might use them if the matter you describe in your text is very complex and can be presented more easily in a graph. Or you might give the reader additional information not contained in your text. Always refer to your graphs in your written text.

The **body of your seminar paper**, excluding title page, bibliography, tables and graphs has to be **10-12 pages** (DIN A4, 1.5 spaced, 12-point font, Arial, Margins: Left-hand 2cm, Right-hand 3cm, Upper 2,50cm, Lower 2,00cm). Your paper should also include an **Abstract** (4-8 lines), summarizing the research question and the main points you make in the paper.

At the end of your paper, you have to attach a “**Declaration in lieu of an oath**” (**Eidesstattliche Erklärung**), stating that the paper is your own work.

If you run into any other problems while drawing up or writing your paper, do not hesitate to contact the course instructor. The grade will only depend on the final product.

Your seminar paper has to be submitted to the course instructor via email at the **specified deadline at 23:59, meaning before the start of the next day**. Papers sent after this date will not be accepted (which means you have failed the course).

After the course, feel free to come to the office hours to get **feedback** on your paper!

Presentation Guide:

Work with a **presentation software** to present the topical field you have been assigned in class. Presentation time is 15-20 minutes maximum (calculate 2-3 minutes per slide). The slides do not have to be sophisticated, much more important is content, a logical structure and the way how you present the contents to the class. You will find a template presentation in the ILIAS folder of this course.

Please hand in your presentation by email **one week before your presentation in class (deadline Thursday before class, 23:59)**. After your presentation in the seminar, please feel free to contact the course instructor to get feedback on it.

Basic Literature:

Berg, Bruce. 2009. Qualitative research methods for the social sciences. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Bunge, Mario. 1996. Finding philosophy in social science. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Burton, Glyn, Carrol, George and Wall, Stuart. 2002. Quantitative methods for business and Economics. Financial Times: Prentice Hall

Callegaro, Mario and Lozar Manfreda & Vasja Vehovar. 2015. Web survey Methodology. Los Angeles: SAGE

Chalmers, Alan. 2007. Wege der Wissenschaft: Einführung in die Wissenschaftstheorie. Berlin: Springer.

Chen, X., Ender, P., Mitchell, M. and Wells, C. 2003. Regression with Stata, from <http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/webbooks/reg/default.htm>

Cleff, T. 2013. Exploratory Data Analysis in Business and Economics: An Introduction Using SPSS, Stata, and Excel. Springer Science & Business Media

Crotty, Michael. 1998. The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process. London: SAGE.

Fowler, Floyd J. 2013. 5th edition. Survey research methods. Los Angeles, California: Sage

Gujarati, Damodar N. 2009. Basic Econometrics. Tata McGraw-Hill Education

Gujarati, Damodar N. 2011. Econometrics by example. Palgrave Macmillan

Lee, Cheng-Few and Lee John C. and Lee, Alice C. 2013. Statistics for business and financial Economics

Patzelt, Werner. 2013. Einführung in die Politikwissenschaft. Passau: Wissenschaftsverlag Richard Rothe.

Richards, Alan and John Waterbury. 2013. A political economy of the Middle East. Boulder: Westview.

Smith, Gary. 2012. Essential statistics, regression, and econometrics. Elsevier

Snyder, Christopher and Walter Nicholson. 2008. Microeconomic Theory: Basic principles and extensions. Mason: South-Western.

Toepoel, V. 2015. Doing Surveys Online. SAGE

Walter, Rolf. 1997. Wirtschaftswissenschaften: Eine Einführung. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh.

Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. 2013. Introductory Econometrics: A modern approach. Melbourne: South Western

Yin, Robert. 2009. Case study research: Design and methods. Los Angeles: SAGE