



PhD in Economics and Management
- Corporate Governance -
[Syllabus 2023]

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0. Scheduling, Timetable and Venues:

The course is structured along 5 weeks with **10 sessions** held once/twice a week. Each session will approximately last 3 hours.

In each session students will be assigned a set of research papers and other relevant suggested readings. As part of the PhD programme, the attendance to Weekly Departmental Seminars is mandatory (both the seminars in Management and Economics).

Classes schedule will be posted on Moodle and updated – if necessary.

1. Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

This unit focuses on the main topics and emerging trends in corporate governance research. Next, it emphasizes issues in designing, carrying out and interpreting research in corporate governance. The unit explores a range of *research questions, theories, and methods* widespread in the governance field. Given the breadth of the area, you will be exposed to a few selected topics.

The unit aims at offering students the opportunity to identify potential topics and research questions (RQs) requiring investigation.

Most of the issues surrounding ownership structures, management teams, boards of directors, formal and informal governance mechanisms will inevitably surface in your research, regardless of the chosen topic. The *focus* will be on *thinking* about and *evaluating* research questions alongside with discussing research design choices, interpretation of results and placement of research findings in the literature.

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Identify key research questions surfacing in the area;
2. Describe and evaluate the different theoretical bases underlying empirical research in corporate governance;
3. Review a range of extant accounting research to critically analyse and assess the fit between a stated research questions and the execution that authors suggest;
4. Develop a written referee report targeting an academic audience whereby you highlight the main issues authors of a manuscript should take into account when re-working their paper;
5. Discuss, and present in a competent academic style, research outputs from their own and other researchers' work in the field of accounting.

2. Course Content & Structure

This unit aims at developing a student's critical knowledge and skills in a broad range of topics within the governance literature. Through the exploration of key theories and research methods applied in corporate governance, this unit prepares students to complete their proposed research topic [if applicable].

We will adopt a flipped classroom approach. Students are *expected* to *read* the material prior to the lectures. Lecturing will be limited to the analysis of the key issues that are of paramount importance when evaluating a research paper. Students will review a range of theories and research approaches applied in the governance field and identify potential topics and research questions requiring investigation.

Students are required to:

- (i) submit written critiques of the research papers prior to the relevant class and
- (ii) be prepared to discuss and debate alternative views of the theories, research methods and findings advanced in the readings.

This unit encompasses contemporary accounting research in various areas of corporate governance. The coverage will be necessarily limited. The following are topic areas may be included:

- The separation of ownership and control and the agency problems
- Financial statements as governance mechanisms
- Ownership structures and forms of organizations
- Compensation of top management teams
- Boards of directors

3. Teaching Material and Resources

Journal articles and working papers for each relevant session are listed in the reading list. Articles should be retrieved from the journal website. These are available through the UniPD library services.

Lecture slides and teaching material will be made available through the Moodle online platform prior to the classes.

4. Examination Method & Assessment Criteria

4.1. Assessment Item 1: Paper Presentation & Participation

Weighting: 30 marks.

This is an individual activity aiming at developing your presentation skills in an academic environment. Seminar Presentation and Participation marks will be awarded for preparedness and contributions to class discussion on assigned readings and other relevant material.

Paper Presentation: students will be assessed on the two presentations worth 10 marks each for a total of 20 marks. Each student will be required to act as lead discussant on two pre-assigned articles. You are expected to use slides and lead the in-class discussion. This activity will begin in session 3 and students will be randomly assigned to two sessions/papers. Each presentation will last 20 min + 10 min Q&A. The average of the two marks will count towards the final grade.

Participation: students will be assessed based on their contribution to each session (10 marks).

4.2. Assessment Item 2: Written Critique (Report)

Weighting: 30 marks.

This individual activity aims at developing your critical skills in evaluating a published article or a working paper. It is both formative and summative, as it will enhance your writing skills for an academic audience.

Higher marks will be awarded to students who display a sound understanding of the research questions, theory, methods, results, contribution, and limitations of the assigned readings. Such understanding would be displayed through critical analysis of the assigned readings and ability to discuss and defend points of view by reference to relevant theory and empirical evidence.

Due dates: in weeks 2, 3, 4 & 5 you will be required to submit a referee report whereby you will analyse an assigned manuscript. The manuscripts will be identified in advance. The submission in week 2 does not count towards your mark, but it is important as a venue to trial, make mistake and amend them.

You are expected to submit the written critique on Sunday evening (before 11.59pm) in each relevant week – prior to the discussion in class (e.g. for the critique in week 2, you will be required to submit on Sunday 16th October, before the class on the following Monday).

Students will be assessed on the best **three out of four** critiques worth 10 marks each for a total of 30 marks. Guidelines are available for you to structure your written critique (on Moodle).

Word limit: each critique should not exceed 3 pages or 1,200 words (+/- 5% allowance). Please submit a word or pdf document (TNR or Calibri, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing).

4.3. Assessment Item 3: Research Proposal

Weighting: 40 marks.

The exam is take-home. It is an individual piece of assessment aiming at testing your ability to design a potential research project in the relevant domain of interest (e.g., corporate governance).

Length: The take home exam can normally be completed in 4 days.

Release Date: Thursday 10th November.

Due Date: Tuesday 16th November @ 11.59pm. Submission through the Moodle Platform.

Word limit: 3,500 words (+/- 5% allowance). Please submit a word or pdf document (TNR or Calibri, 12 pt). Please note that students can consult with each other on the main issues but the research proposal should be an individual outcome.

Assessment Item	Weight	Activities	Marks	Due Date	Details
1. Paper Presentation & 2. Participation	30%	Presentation	30	Weekly	2 presentations worth 10 marks each + 10 marks as average of participation in each session
3. Written Critique	30%	Review Report	30	Each week – Submission on Sundays	Each week you are expected to provide a full report on a pre-assigned article, starting from week 2. Four written critiques will be submitted. The first submission is a trial. The best 3 of 4 will be taken into account towards the final mark



4. Research Proposal	40%	Proposal	40	End of term	Details will be provided on Moodle. The assignment will be released on the last day of the course and you will be given 1 (one) week to deliver it.
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5. Office Hours & Student Consultation

It is strongly recommended that students use the Moodle forum to post general questions (e.g. about time, readings, activities or assessment) that might be of interest to the whole class.

Revised and updated information about student consultation will be available on Moodle from Week 1.

Prof. Amedeo Pugliese: Students are required to book a consultation time through an online platform (Setmore). Booking is easy:

1. Click and Open the following link: www.amedeopugliese.setmore.com
2. Select the relevant activity (Consultation Hours – Teaching) and the name of the instructor (Amedeo Pugliese)
3. Select the date and time that are available. [Be careful that you can only book an appointment starting 8 days in advance of the chosen date and up to 12 hours in advance. For instance, if you wish to book an appointment on Feb 16th you can only book from Feb 9th until Feb 15th at 12am).
4. Once you have booked an appointment, you will receive an email with all relevant details and instructions to amend or cancel your appointment.

Should you experience any issues, please contact me via email at amedeo.pugliese@unipd.it

6. Use of Moodle Platform

All students are strongly encouraged to use the Moodle platform available through the Department webpage (<https://sesp.elearning.unipd.it/course/index.php?categoryid=2>). All relevant information about teaching activities, assessment and last-minute updates will be released via Moodle that syncs automatically with your institutional email address. It is required enrolling into the Financial Accounting Course on Moodle. You can self-enrol using the single-sign (SSO) on and your student email address (@studenti.unipd.it).