



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Joe Oxton

Title: The Future Utilisation of Space: Orbital Debris and the Space Security Agenda

Programme/year: BS, 2016/2017

Author of Evaluation (consultant): Doc. Dr. Nik Hynek, PhD

Criteria	Definition	Maximm	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	22
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	30
Total		80	59
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	4
Total		20	16
TOTAL		100	75



Evaluation

Major criteria and evaluation:

This is a thesis written on a greatly interesting topic of orbital debris within the wider composite agenda of space security. The author does a decent job to introduce the agenda, specify the main issues and in doing so, overviews relevant literature. The thesis contains the discussion and outline of a research design. For the theory, it has embraced the broadening/narrowing of security approaches. It then focuses on space governance and its legal edifice and links it to the urgency in solving the issue as its volume increases still. It goes on to offer some future trajectories and finishes with concluding remarks. I see three shortcomings in the thesis: first, the theoretical framework is not a real theory as much as the depiction of evolution in security thinking. Here, utilization of the regime theory, especially its second generation (neoliberal to thin constructivist) would propel the thesis further. Second, space governance section would have benefitted from the discussion of unilateral/multilateral pushes and pulls, especially focus on the growing number of countries with space ambitions as demonstrated by ASAT capability (where the demonstration itself produces space debris). Third, in a technologically increasingly sophisticated world which can also be observed in and around the orbit, some of the technologies that have been proposed to “clean” the debris could easily be used as either offensive or defensive weapons systems, so one would consider the dual or even a triple-use technology here.

Suggested grade: C1

Signature:

Nik Hynek