IMESS DISSERTATION

Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (cc ChiarAmini chiara.amini@ucl.ac.uk and fiona.rushworth@ucl.ac.uk)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>Oliver Savory</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation title:</td>
<td>Public Choice Theory and the Russian Food Ban</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>70+</th>
<th>69-65</th>
<th>60-61</th>
<th>59-55</th>
<th>54-50</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
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Knowledge
Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.

Analysis & Interpretation
Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.

Structure & Argument
Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument’s limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.

Presentation & Documentation
Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.

Methodology
Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

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<tr>
<th>ECTS Mark:</th>
<th>Charles Mark:</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Marker:</th>
<th>Jan Šír</th>
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Deducted for late submission: Signed: Date: June 1, 2019

Deducted for inadequate referencing:

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+) = A (Charles mark - excellent): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work. Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 69-65) = B (Charles mark – very good) C (UCL mark 64-60) = C (Charles mark – good): A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade.

D (UCL mark 59-55) = D (Charles mark – satisfactory) E (UCL mark 54-50) = E (Charles mark – sufficient): Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work, demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade.

F (UCL mark less than 50) = F (Charles mark - insufficient): Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.
Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (at least 300 words):

The thesis seeks to answer why states continue to stick to sanctions in their external conduct, despite the generally low efficiency these restrictive measures are believed to have according to prominent theories on economic statecraft. To make his case, the author analyzes Russia's ban on food imports introduced against the West in 2014. Using the Public Choice Theory, he investigates the effect these sanctions have.

As for the overall design, the thesis has a solid theoretical underpinning that has been adequately reasoned. It starts with identifying the blind spots in the existing debate on economic statecraft that, as the author claims, may have often missed the mark in assessing the effects of international sanctions. This is because the prevailing theories fail to take into proper account also the domestic goals the targeting state may have been pursuing by engaging in sanctions. This is also where Public Choice Theory may have been useful in complementing and enriching the prevailing schools of thought.

At the same time, the thesis has a sound methodological framework, including the aims and objectives, which are clearly stated, the research question, and the selection of the case to be analyzed.

The organization of the thesis is logical and clear, with individual chapters addressing, one after another, the four hypotheses the author has formulated on the underlying logic of Russia's latest food ban. These are on Russia's use of sanctions as a mechanism to boost the domestic agriculture; on Russia's desire to cut the over-reliance on foreign imports; on Russia's seeking to achieve, through imposing a ban on food imports, higher farmgate prices; and on the domestic effectiveness of the sanctions as the key criterion for their further continuation, no matter their stated goals. The author has introduced the exposition by a contextual chapter on the Russian concept of food security/self-reliance, which helps explain his chosen analytical approach.

The thesis draws on a rich data set including international statistics that are reported in a well-arranged fashion. The writing style is factual and sober. The thesis also generally reads well, as far as the topic itself permits.

Overall, the thesis under scrutiny is an original, bold and compelling attempt at revisiting the way international economic sanctions can be measured and assessed.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (at least 2 questions):

Would you please elaborate a bit on your idea to revisit the HSEO's database in order to refine our methodology for the assessing of international sanctions, i.e., by defining and adding new criteria against which the effect of sanctions could be measured?