

Report on Bachelor Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Student:	Adam Bruzl
Advisor:	Mgr. Barbara Pertold-Gebicka M.A., Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	The Impact of COVID-19 on Students' Academic Performance: The Case of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

Short summary

The thesis examines the impact of the COVID-19 crisis (and related switch to online teaching) on the academic performance of the Faculty of Social Sciences' students. It utilizes a panel data of over 5 000 students during the academic years since 2016/17 till 2020/21. The panel data estimation procedures are used to examine the impacts of the crisis on the students' academic performance (GPA) and their graduation (dummy)

Contribution

The paper is contributory in several aspects. The first and the most important contribution of the paper lies in its empirical aim: investigation of the impacts of the coronavirus crisis on the faculty students' performance. The results have not only an empirical academic value but may be used also by the faculty management to reflect the faculty performance during the epidemic. The second relevant contribution stems from the inclusion of the academic year 2020/21, which makes the results more trustworthy compared to other research.

The contribution of the paper is clearly stated and I regard it more than sufficient for a bachelor thesis.

Methods

The paper investigates a panel dataset with observations of more than 5 000 students within 10 time periods (semesters). The chosen methodology investigates the impacts of the crisis on GPA and also on graduation. The methodology then includes estimation approaches such as the first-differences, fixed and random effects estimators for GPA as the dependent variable, and the linear probability model and binary logit model for graduation as the dependent variable. The author discusses the assumptions behind the models in detail and explains the reasons for the chosen models (e.g., whether to interpret results of the first-differences, fixed or random effects model) in the Results section.

I have no serious remark on the applied methods in the thesis.

Literature

The literature review is divided into two parts. The first part examines the existing research on the impacts of COVID-19 crisis on students' GPA presenting the counterintuitive results (positive impacts of the crisis on GPA) and explaining the possible reasons behind this outcome. The second part summarizes research findings on the influence of the coronavirus crisis on the graduation and its possible delays.

The literature review is well written, clearly structured and covers significant amount of relevant research papers. I have no critical remarks on this part.

Manuscript form

The thesis has clear structure and logic, and is well written. I have no serious remark on this part.

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Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

The thesis is well written, estimation procedures are clearly explained and the results properly interpreted. The paper is also in my opinion contributory above standards for bachelor theses. I have therefore no critical comment on the paper and **recommend it for the defense and suggest a grade A**. The **results of the Urkund analysis do not indicate significant text similarity** with other available sources.

I have several discussion questions for the defense:

- Based on your results and the literature you have covered would you recommend the faculty to continue with a hybrid teaching in coming years even in period without coronavirus or similar epidemic? What can be the potential negative and positive consequences?
- Given your findings, can you think about some possible measures which you would recommend to the faculty or institute management to at least partially mitigate the negative impacts of the coronavirus epidemic on students' GPA and graduation?
- In the literature review you have discussed several possible reasons behind the identified positive impact of coronavirus epidemic on students' GPA. Which of those potential factors are in your opinion relevant for your results?

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED:

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	29
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	19
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	19
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	97
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A

NAME OF THE REFEREE: *Mgr. Michal Paulus*

DATE OF EVALUATION: 30. 5. 2022

Digitally signed (30. 5. 2022):
Michal Paulus

Referee Signature

