

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2685595 DCU 21109591 Charles 43583897
Dissertation Title	Territorial Loss to Organized Crime: Assessing National Security Challenges in Mexico and Brazil

<p>Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)</p> <p>Word Count: 23589 Suggested Penalty: no penalty</p>		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

<p>Final Agreed Mark: B1 [17]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">After Penalty: Select from drop down list</p>
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DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Excellent
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Very Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Excellent
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Very Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Very Good
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Excellent
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required
• <i>Appropriate word count</i>	Yes

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ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

This work showcases an important effort to delve into the complex intersection of international relations and criminal studies, with a keen focus on the interplay between territorial control, organized crime groups, and state security. The thesis admirably seeks to examine how institutional weaknesses, violence, and corruption contribute to the loss of state territorial control to organized crime groups. The primary case studies of Mexico and Brazil provide valuable insights into these dynamics.

The work's motivation to uncover the intricate connection between the loss of state territorial control and the rise of organized crime groups is great. This research question is both relevant and significant, as it contributes to our understanding of the challenges posed by criminal organizations to state sovereignty. The chosen cases of Mexico and Brazil are well-suited to the research objectives and offer insightful comparative perspectives. The selection demonstrates a thoughtful approach to identifying instances where state control has been challenged by organized crime entities.

The literature review conducted in the thesis is effectively capturing the key concepts in the realms of international relations and criminal studies. However, a more focused structure that emphasizes the summary of essential definitions would enhance the clarity of the theoretical framework. By succinctly presenting the foundational concepts and theoretical underpinnings, the thesis would provide readers with a more cohesive understanding of the research landscape.

The chosen methodology is sound and appropriate for addressing the research questions. The analysis employs a comparative approach to investigate the cases of Mexico and Brazil, facilitating insightful cross-case observations. However, the thesis would benefit from the inclusion of additional details regarding the comparative methodology. Providing a more explicit explanation of the criteria used for comparison and the rationale behind the selection would enhance the analytical rigor and provide a more comprehensive framework for the subsequent discussion.

The analytical portion of the thesis provides a valuable examination of the relationships between institutional weaknesses, violence, corruption, and the subsequent loss of state territorial control to organized crime groups. This exploration is helpful and contributes to the understanding of the multifaceted factors that shape such dynamics.

The inclusion of maps to illustrate territorial control dynamics is a helpful addition to the thesis. However, it is essential to ensure that these maps are properly referenced, indicating their origin as creations of the author.

In conclusion, the exploration of the interplay between territorial control, organized crime, and state security in the contexts of Mexico and Brazil is both insightful and timely. While the literature review effectively captures key concepts, restructuring it to emphasize definitions would enhance clarity. Similarly, the methodology could benefit from a more detailed description of the comparative approach. Nevertheless, the analytical framework demonstrates a thoughtful analysis of the relationships under study.

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With some refinements in the areas mentioned, this thesis holds the potential to make a valuable contribution to the academic discourse surrounding the complex interplay of territorial control, organized crime, and state security.

Reviewer 2

Overall, this dissertation is pretty good and I am quite happy with it. You have chosen an important topic that needs much more research on. The structure of the work is good and all the main ingredients are there. I am happy with the embedding in the literature, the design of the project and the empirical material. Your analysis is good and improves our knowledge on the area.

I would recommend a bit more work on:

(1) The literature review should be more structured around the originality and significance that your work will bring.

(1) Introduction and conclusion could be a bit more substantial, outlining more clearly the puzzle of the research, the design, and, eventually, a summary of the findings.

(2) The paragraphing and signposting could be improved at times.

(3) there could have been an analytical framework which would have improved the quality of the comparison. As it is, it remains a bit descriptive.

Nonetheless, this is a pretty good dissertation – I am quite happy with it! Many congratulations!