

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator
(cc Allan Sikk a.sikk@ucl.ac.uk and Alexa Stewart alexa.stewart@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.

Student:	Adrien Beauduin
Dissertation title:	Old Master, New Neighbour. Putin's Russia in the Czech Foreign Policy Discourse

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor
Knowledge <i>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.</i>	X		
Analysis & Interpretation <i>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.</i>	X		
Structure & Argument <i>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 arguments limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.</i>	X		
Presentation & Documentation <i>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.</i>	X		

ECTS Mark:	B	Charles Mark:	2	Marker:	Daniela Kolenovská
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>				Signed:	
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+): 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.

A = výborně = 1

B/C (UCL mark 60-69):

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.

B/C = velmi dobře = 2

D/E (UCL mark 50-59):

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.

D/E = dobře = 3

F (UCL mark less than 50):

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.

F = neprospěl = 4

CONTINUES OVERLEAF
**PLEASE PROVIDE SUBSTANTIVE AND
 DETAILED FEEDBACK!**

Constructive comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (*at least 300 words*):

The topic of Mr Beauduin's master thesis is original thus demanding a wide range of knowledge. The author was more than successful in finding an appropriate theoretical and methodological approach. For his analysis, he chose five recent events of Czech-Russian relations excellently too.

Unfortunately Mr Beauduin failed to grasp historical context of the Czech foreign policy discourse about Russia and built his research on only two black and white conceptual histories. Conceptualizing Czech 'Self' and Russian 'Other' was more complicated in the past. If Mr Beauduin had taken it into account it could have brought out more precise findings.

Firstly, I must comment on Mr Beauduin's picture of the 19th century. The first attempts to confront blind Czech Pan-slavism came from Karel Havlíček Borovský in 1846, two years before Palacký. In 1848 it was Borovský again who began to criticize blind Austroslavism. Later the pivotal role of Czech-Russian relations belonged to František Ladislav Rieger. The revolutionary Josef Václav Frič, another man of the second half of the 19th century, would help Mr Beauduin understand the Czech connection to the program of early Russian radicals. Furthermore it is impossible to ignore that Czech political parties of those times did try to pursue their own foreign policy. For example among the reasons leading numerous delegates of the Czech National Party to Moscow in 1867 was a very self-confident intention to settle Russo-Polish disputes.

Secondly, the problem of Russian backwardness was articulated in the Czech discourse long time before April 2007. The famous sentence "Russia represents the childhood of Europe" was written by the first Czechoslovak president Masaryk in one of his many texts on Russia. If Mr Beauduin attempted to read any of them he would probably get to know about the Russian action, the Czechoslovak humanitarian action of early 1920s designed to help Russian emigrants. The thesis does not notice this humanitarian aspect in contemporary Czech foreign policy discourse about Russia either.

Regrettably, the thesis does not make any effort to discover the Czech concept of Russia in the period 1945-1968.

Finally, the Russian policy of Václav Havel stays unnoted in the text and it is of great consequence for the author's notion that there was nothing special happening in the Czech policy towards Russia during the period 2003-2006.

As a theoretical construct the thesis reached the desired goal and proved post-structuralist discourse analysis effectiveness. As a whole the theses demands deeper historical background and more evidence to be fully asserted.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (*at least 3 questions*):

How did Václav Havel contribute to the Czech foreign policy towards Russia?

Which official institutions create the Czech foreign policy towards Russia? Is there any difference among their approach?

In your opinion, what are the reasons of disagreement between Eastern and Western EU member states when it comes to relations with Russia?