

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	Post Neoliberalism and the Path towards Integration in South America
Author of the thesis:	Celeste Flores
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr.Martin Riegl, PhD.

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	14
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	20
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	16
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	81
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	1 - Excellent

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Theoretical background:

No theories are explicitly mentioned, but the author explicitly and correctly formulated research problems which are objectively analyzed throughout the reviewed paper. I would recommend to reduce parts (first two chapters) of the thesis concerning the colonial history of Latin America which does not seem to be relevant to the thesis' topic and seem to be partially superfluous although I do understand the author's motivation to cover this area.

I decided to award 14 points for the author's effort and ability to understand such concepts as new regionalism and integration processes in Latin America.

2) Contribution:

The author has chosen relevant and important topic which falls into regional studies.

The main contribution of the reviewed thesis is author's ability to fulfill main aims, particularly *to discover South America's path towards regional integration, in order to measure recent integration initiatives up to previous regional initiatives* along with an analysis of Post Neoliberal tendencies in the context of political shift to the left within the region.

Secondly, the submitted paper provides detailed insight into the researched topic and the author's research is undoubtedly actual and definitely contributes to the political science knowledge. The author's contribution to understanding of researched topic and its academic value is above average, therefore I decided to award 16 points.

3) Methods:

The author based his research on empirical research using the method of critical analysis which is obviously relevant research method concerning the thesis topic.

4) Literature:

The author of the submitted thesis showed her ability to critically analyze huge amount of sources (including primary and internet one). The author has succeeded in collecting theoretical as well as empirical sources so I can not find and deficiency in this aspect.

5) Manuscript form:

The reviewed thesis fulfills all criteria of the diploma thesis required by Faculty of Social Sciences. The whole thesis complies with a demanded scope of 50 pages. Despite of minor shortcomings (misspellings) I do not have any major deficiencies regarding the formal aspect of the thesis. Also the structure of the thesis is well logically structured into six chapters including introduction and conclusion. Therefore I find the thesis as sufficient from the methodological, theoretical and research perspective and recommend it to be defended. The manuscript form itself is rather average so I decided to award 16 points.

DATE OF EVALUATION:

Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

2) CONTRIBUTION: Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

3) METHODS: Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

4) LITERATURE REVIEW: The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading	US grading
81 – 100	1	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	2	= good	= B
51 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	3	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	4	= fail	= not recommended for defence