

SECINTEL Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2225811	Charles 22690481
Dissertation Title	Natural resource abundance and food insecurity – An interrelationship? The Venezuelan case stud	

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Glasgow Marker <i>Office Use</i>	Charles Marker <i>Office Use</i>	Grade Conversion UoG-CU CU-UoG	Charles Additional Info <i>Please advise ranking</i>
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JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark A3 [20] 1 [Excellent]
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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>	Excellent
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Excellent
• <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

Glasgow Marker

This ambitious project seeks to understand a the relationship between what has been termed the "resource curse" (roughly, the observation that resource rich countries remain economically poor) with food insecurity (precarity in relation to availability of high-quality food). If the two issues can be linked, or, indeed, if their relationship is causal, the author postulates that this could be valuable informaiton for countries wishing to avoid the long term negative effects of resource abundance. By using the case study of Venezuela in recent years, the author has ensured that her analytical thinking on the subject is not only properly and pratically applied, but also that her work has clear contemporary relevance.

The author presents a contextualised research question with clear goals and a methodological framing that involves making a literature-derived model to test the hypothesis that resource curse and food insecurity are linked issues. The review of literature on which the resulting model is based is thorough, meticulous, and well constructed, it represents excellent scholarship. The model itself is clearly tied to the literature and, thus, is well-justified and well situatated to test what the author wishes to test. The model itself structured the analysis of the whole dissertation which made for a cohesive whole: everything logically followed. The model itself can clearly be reapplied to other contexts beyond Venezuela and it may be something that the author could consider expanding upon in future research. The author should seirously consider future research as she is already producing high-quality work.

The Venezuelan case study, too, was thoroughly researched and the application of the model to Venezuela resulted in excellent critical analysis. Indeed, with a bit of reformatting and focusing, this work could result in a published journal article as I do believe it contributes to the literature on both of the issues being studied as well as the current situation in Venezuela.

Indeed, there is very little to criticise in this work. The author has done well and should be proud of the result.

Charles Marker

This dissertation investigates a truly interesting research puzzle: how it happens that oil-rich Venezuela suffers a serious food insecurity. As the author presents in a comprehensive literature review, the paradox of resource abundance/'resource curse' is an extensively discussed issue in the economics/IPE literature. However, the connection between resource abundance and food security remains an underresearched issue. This dissertation thus truly attempts to fill a gap in the literature.

The dissertation demonstrates a painstaking effort of the author to trace the complex and complicated routes connecting resource abundance and food insecurity. Based on a literature review, the author constructs a causal model connecting these two phenomena. Unfortunately, the explanation produced by so constructed a model rests predominantly on the factor of economic decline (a well documented outcome of a 'resoure course' and an obvious cause of food insecurity). It is only a relatively brief critical evaluation of this model that attempts to explore specificity of the relationship between resource abundance and food insecurity in the case of Venezuela. I consider this sub-chapter (5e) the most valuable contribution of this dissertation. It would only make the dissertation more interesting if this part was given more space and was moved to a more central position in the dissertation's argument.

In the oral defence the author may explain if, in her understanding, resource abundance in combination with institution weakness are likely to lead to food insecurity in general or if this connection is specific for Venezuela and depends on the specific context of Venezuelan politics.

Please note that this grade is recorded as the provisional final grade for the University of Glagsow

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degree. All grades remain provisional until confirmed at the joint examination board.

The Czech State Exam/Oral Defense may make a difference to the final grade for the Charles University degree.

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Notes for Markers: When grading the SECINTEL Dissertation markers are asked to reflect upon the aims and learning outcomes for the dissertation. Each dissertation should also adopt a clear security focus reflecting the relevant programme pathway

Aims: The course aims to provide students with independent research opportunities. It will include engagement with research methods training leading up to a period of independent research and the production of a substantial dissertation that builds upon themes and issues covered within the MSc International Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies. Students will be encouraged to develop their own ideas and demonstrate their capacity for original thought and independent research. The dissertation element aims to enable students to identify and research particular issues or problems, linked to security, intelligence and strategy, at a deeper level than is possible within assessed essays and to develop a critical analysis of the existing body of academic work relating to their topic of choice. Students taking this course will be prepared for further research, study or professional careers through the development of their skills in data collection and analysis, use of original and secondary sources and the conducting and writing up of a detailed research project.

Intended Learning outcomes: By the end of the dissertation, students will be able to:

- > Devise a realistic programme of research on a topic reflecting the main themes of the programme;
- > Collect, select and critically analyse relevant background literature and arguments of a range of scholars;
- > Understand and select the appropriate methodology for dealing with information sources and data;
- > Apply these methods to gather and interrogate data in an open-minded, rigorous and undogmatic manner;
- > Be able to critically evaluate competing theories and apply relevant theoretical frameworks to guide the study
- > Organise the data collected and analyse the findings in a competent manner that allows for a fluid and logical argument to be presented;
- > Be reflexive and self-critical about findings and the limitations of analysis;
- > Work independently, organising and maintaining own programme of study to meet academic deadlines so as to produce work containing a substantial element of originality.

Word Count:

Dissertations should be 20,000 words in length for students undertaking work-placement as part of the independent study portfolio and 22,000 words in length for standard dissertation students. Word counts exclude the title page, abstract, contents, bibliography and appendices). All dissertations must display an accurate word-count including the citations, footnotes/endnotes and chapter/section titles.

Language:

The dissertation **must** be written in British English. A Czech Language cover page / abstract may be included

Late Submission Penalty:

Dissertations that do not have an extension or are submitted after an extension deadline are subject to a penalty of 2 secondary bands per day (this includes weekends and holidays) on the Glasgow grading Scale.

Plagiarism:

Dissertations which suffer from excessive (e.g. serious and/or deliberate) plagiarism will be subject to a grade of 0/Fail and be referred to the appropriate authorities at both universities. Dissertations that contain some elements of plagiarism, but which are deemed not to be excessive (e.g. minor instances that are not considered deliberate) based on consultation of both internal markers, should be graded accordingly and will be subject to scrutiny from the external examiner and could still result in a mark of 0 as well as referral to appropriate authorities for disciplinary action.

Consultation prior to final grading:

First marking by both institutions should be completed blind with no prior consultation. Once both markers have graded the dissertation and provided written comments, they should consult on the grading and come to a joint final grade, taking into consideration any late submission or excessive word count penalty. It is the responsibility of the Glasgow marker to oversee this. Where markers cannot come to a joint agreement then the dissertation should be referred to the Programme Convenors at Glasgow and Charles (Dr. Eamonn Butler & Dr Vít Střítecký). The external examiner will be used to moderate any dissertation in this position and the comments referred back to the internal markers for confirmation.