

# 2025-2026 Research Seminar Guidelines

## Graduate School of International Management

For IMBA, DXP, and ISEP  
who enrolled in 2025/2026 Academic Year

### I. Research Report

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All GSIM students in the 1-year programs must write a “Research Report” for their graduation. This is to comply with the regulations implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture (MEXT) for graduate schools in Japan. In order to fulfill this degree requirement, students choose their academic supervisors and take “Research Seminars” for two terms.

Note: If you are an ISEP student who begins your coursework in GSIM in the Winter or Spring term, the timing to take Research Seminar I & II and Research Report submission schedule will be different. Please refer to the information given to you at the orientation session upon your enrollment.

#### <Deciding a Supervisor>

GSIM implements the supervisor assignment procedure in October to match each student with a suitable supervisor. More details are explained in Section II. Once academic supervisors have been assigned, students commence participating in “Research Seminars”

#### <Research Seminars as Core Required Courses>

“Research Seminars” are required courses and are offered in sequence: Research Seminar I (Winter) and II (Spring). These seminars provide students with the necessary skills to develop a research topic and complete the research report. Additionally, students receive guidance and consultation from their supervisors throughout the process.

To fulfill the requirement for graduation, students must earn 2 credits from Research Seminars. Evaluation of Research Seminars is based on a Pass/Non-pass grading system.

#### <Research Report>

Students are required to write a Research Report, and there is no Thesis option for 1-year program students. A research report requires the demonstration of critical academic or industrial analysis. It has the basic components, such as the problem statement, research question, hypothesis, literature review, analysis of data/text, and conclusion.

A research report can be an empirical analysis of a strategy, a policy, or current affairs with a certain concept/theory to an actual situation/policy or an elementary theoretical analysis of an existing concept with a literature review to a lesser extent (not full secondary research in management).

#### <Team vs. Individual>

In some cases, the scale and scope of a research project might impose requirements that exceed the abilities of individual students. In such instances, upon the recommendation of an academic supervisor and approval of the Dean, the research can be conducted by a team of students. However, while team projects providing valuable learning opportunities, students may encounter managerial challenges such as coordination overhead and potential issues with free riding. Thus, GSIM generally encourages the individual research option.

<Scholarly Study, Case Study, and Feasibility Study>

A research report may take the form of “Case Study” or “Feasibility Study,” rather than a more standard Master’s level project with we refer to as “Scholarly Study” (see page 7-10 for their expected formats).

NOTE:

JICA-JDS sponsored students and Linkage students are required to fulfill their research report requirement by writing a single-authored paper as specified in their original application.

## II. Supervisor Allocation and Related Matters

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This section explains the supervisor allocation in the typical order of events.

### 1. Orientation for Research Report Project

Each program director conducts an orientation session for the research report project following the schedule on page 12. The directors will explain the process of selecting academic supervisors and research topics for the Research Report.

### 2. Faculty Members’ Introductory Sessions by Video Recordings

Each faculty member will provide students with information about their area of expertise. It would be better if students select a supervisor whose expertise area matches with their research topics. The area of expertise consists of the two parts:

- Research domain: The areas where faculty members are familiar with the forefront of research and business development.
- Teaching domain: The issues addressed in their course offerings.

### 3. Consultation Period

Once students have familiarized themselves with faculty members’ expertise areas, they are encouraged to schedule meetings with faculty members to find the best fit for supervising their research reports. If scheduling in-person meetings proves challenging, an initiate contact via email can be accepted.

Faculty members generally expect their supervisee students to develop research topics within their expertise area (that is, their research or teaching domain). This approach ensures that students can leverage their supervisor's expertise to the fullest extent possible. If a student wishes to pursue research topics beyond a faculty research or teaching domain, it becomes their responsibility to find supervisors who are willing to work with them throughout their research project.

### 4. Submission of Form 1

Form 1, which includes tentative research titles, and the names of preferred supervisor choices, must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) in accordance with the schedule outlined on page 12.

Please note that, regardless of the supervisor’s location, students are responsible for communicating with their supervisor and receiving a signature from the supervisor on the research report. An electronic signature is also acceptable.

In principle, only full-time GSIM faculty members can be supervisors. If a student’s project requires co-supervision by a visiting faculty member or a GSIR faculty member, they should note this in their proposal. Clearly, the student’s desire to work with a particular faculty member and that person's willingness to collaborate on the project are crucial to its success. Additionally, students must make necessary arrangements to carry on communication with their supervisor when the supervisor is not physically present on campus. The same procedure applies if a student chose to work with a full-time GSIM faculty member who is not on the IUJ campus (e.g., on leave).

## **5. Announcement of Academic Supervisor and Re-adjustment period**

The Dean's Office will review each student's Form 1, taking various factors into consideration, and announce the pairing of students and their supervisors.

Once the announcement is made, each student is expected to communicate with their assigned supervisor to ensure compatibility and establish a productive working relationship.

In principle, there is a limit of 10 students assigned to each supervisor to avoid overloading. However, specific arrangements will depend upon the supervisor's work load, administrative obligations, and other duties. Whenever possible, student preferences for supervision will be respected. Nonetheless, the Dean's Office, taking the above factors into consideration, retains the authority to make final decisions.

## **6. Submission of Form 2**

Form 2, on which a student indicates their final decision of supervisor and their research title, must be submitted to the OAA in accordance with the schedule on page 12 with the approval signature of the chosen supervisor.

## **7. Change of Research Topic**

Students may change their research topics after their supervisors are finalized. This can be done with the consultation with and support of the supervisor. In such cases, there is no need to report a change to the OAA.

However, Linkage students must obtain permission from their sponsor or their home institutions as well as their supervisors when they wish to change the originally proposed research topic beyond minor changes. Similarly, students with other scholarship sponsors are strongly encouraged to consult with their coordinator before making changes to their research topic.

## **8. Change of Supervisor**

In principle, students may not change their supervisor after the submission of Form 2. However, if approved by both the current and new supervisors, a change is possible. To request a change, the student must submit "Application for Changing Supervisor" to the OAA with the approval signatures of both supervisors. There is a due date for this. That is April 10, 2026 for 2026 graduates (Please refer to the schedule on page 12.)

## **9. Notification of Team Research**

When the research is conducted and reported by a team of students, they must fill out Form 3. The form must be submitted to the OAA in accordance with the schedule on page 12 with the approval signature of their supervisors.

# **III. Submission of Research Output**

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## **1. Submission of a Research Report to Supervisor and OAA**

All 1-year program students are required to submit their Research Report to their supervisor by the designated deadline in accordance with the schedule on page 12. For 2026 graduate, that is July 16, 2026.

NOTE: Students must submit a complete version of their papers, which means:

- (1) the paper has the cover page, abstract, all chapters and relevant content in them, reference section, and necessary tables and diagrams.
- (2) the paper conforms to IUJ's paper format (Please see Section IV in this file.)

Supervisors will then evaluate students' Research Report, and provide the results by filling out the designated evaluation form with their supervisees. Students must submit both an electronic version of their Research Report and the evaluation form by the same deadline to the following network folders:



\\iuj-home\IM materials\Research Report\_Thesis\Class\_of\_2026\IMBA\_DXP\_ISEP\_FirstSubmission  
\\iuj-home\IM materials\Research Report\_Thesis\Class\_of\_2026\IMBA\_DXP\_ISEP\_EvaluationForm

The OAA will submit the files of students' Research Reports to an online service that identifies the presence of plagiarism and the use of generative AI based on online resources. The check results will be reported to the supervisors for reference. Based on the results, they usually request further editing or rewriting of the file.

Regardless of the location or availability of their supervisor on the set due date, it is the student's responsibility to maintain communication with their supervisor and submit their research report to the supervisor by the due date.

## 2. Submission of the Final Version to OAA for MLIC Collection

All Research Reports/Theses written by IUJ students will be permanently kept in the MLIC. Students are required to submit a **clean, impeccable report** for this purpose to the OAA in accordance with the schedule on page 12, in both physical and electronic formats. For 2026 graduate, that is August 10, 2026 (by 4:30pm). The printed copy must obtain the signature of their supervisor.

After the submission of the printed copy to the OAA, it will be bound and presented to MLIC/IUJ. The binding cost (about 3,800 yen/copy) of the report is borne by each student regardless of whether the report is written individually or by a team.

An electronic version of each student's research report should be submitted to the following network folders:



\\iuj-home\IM materials\Research  
\\iuj-home\IM materials\Research Report\_Thesis\Class\_of\_2026\IMBA\_DXP\_ISEP\_FinalVersion

An electronic version of each student's research report will be made available through the MLIC website within the IUJ LAN for IUJers' use only.

## IV. Research Report Format

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### 1. General Guideline

Research projects can take various forms including case studies, feasibility studies, surveys, empirical studies, or applied projects, and can be quantitative or qualitative in nature.

A student's research should be original, relevant, and have practical implications. Pure literature reviews or descriptions alone are not acceptable.

These investigations will culminate in a formal report with each individual contributing **at least 30 double-spaced typewritten pages**, excluding the "Bibliography". The report should clearly outline the problem, methodology, and results. The minimum size of a group paper may be adjusted if deemed appropriate by the supervisor.

Student's research should be grounded in academic theory and of sufficient quality. Avoid spelling errors and plagiarism, ensure good sentence structure, and proper referencing. Students must follow formatting guidelines for their Research Report including margins, spacing, font size, referencing, and so forth.

### **Document, Font Type and Size**

- A Research Report/Thesis must be typewritten on A4 metric size paper (21 cm x 29.7 cm) using a clear and legible font. Times New Roman 12-point or Arial 10-point font is recommended for optimal readability when printed on a laser writer or similar printing device.
- Copies produced via xerox, multilith, or mimeograph methods are acceptable if generated from a well-typed original, ensuring the resulting image is clean, clear, dark and sharp. Copies should be devoid of lines, shadows, and other undesirable marks.
- Use a standard typeface. Do not use italic (script) print except for foreign words, book and journal titles, or to emphasize special content. For the title of the Research Report/Thesis and chapter headings, larger font sizes up to 18-point are permissible, provided they maintain readability. “Capitalize Each Word” for heading levels 1 and 2 is preferred. Boldface type may be used on the title page and for headings, as well as in the text for special symbols or for emphasis.
- For tables, figures, and appendices, reduced type may be used, but it should be at least 9-point in size and must be completely legible, particularly for microfilming requirements. When photocopying illustrations from other sources, ensure clarity and sharpness, and consider photo-enlarging the type for improved readability if necessary.

### **Margins**

All copies of a research report must have the following uniform margins throughout the entire document:

- ✓ Left: 4.0 cm
- ✓ Top: 2.5 cm
- ✓ Right: 2.5 cm
- ✓ Bottom: 2.5 cm (with allowances for page numbers, see section on Pagination)

The margin is determined by the last letter or character in the longest line on the page. Everything on the page (including footnotes, etc.) must conform to these requirements. Text should be at least a double-space from the page number. These stringent margin requirements are necessary because all edges are trimmed during the binding process.

### **Spacing and Indentation**

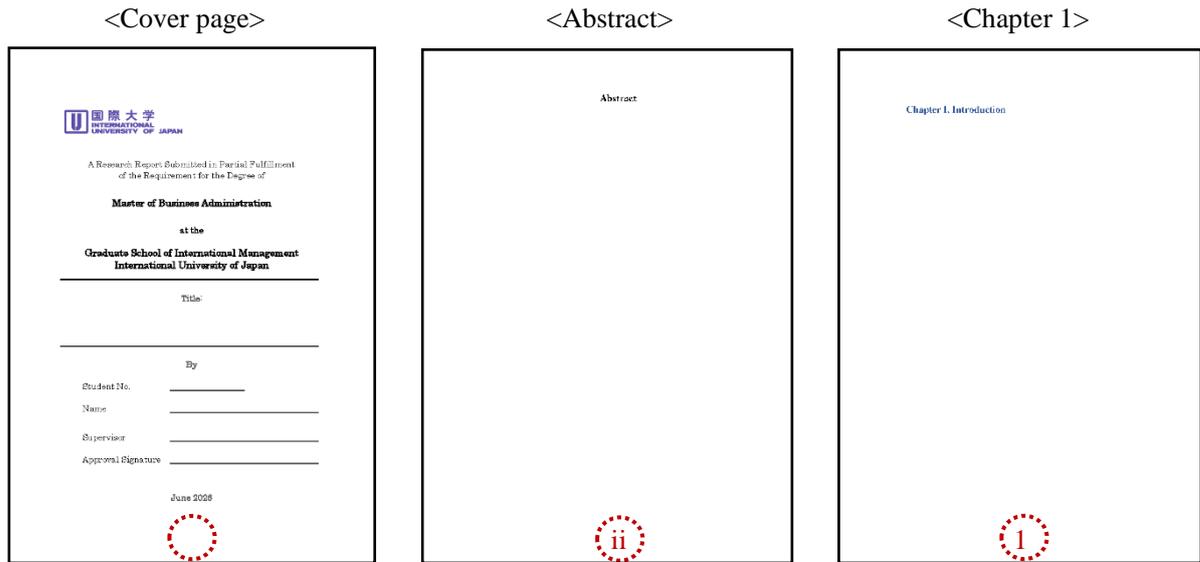
- The body of the research paper must be double spaced. Footnotes, bibliographical entries, long quoted passages, and items in lists and tables may be single spaced. Text material is typed on one side of the paper. The manuscript is to be neat in appearance and without error.
- The document text must be left-justified, not centered nor right-justified.
- New paragraphs must be indicated by a consistent tab indentation throughout the entire document (0.5” or use tab key once). For blocked quotations, indent the entire text of the quotation consistently from the left margin.
- Do not use blank line to separate the paragraphs. Use paragraph spacing instead. Set paragraph spacing 6pt for before paragraph and 6pt for after paragraph.
- Ensure headings are not left hanging alone on the bottom of a prior page. The text following should be moved up or the heading should be moved down.

### **Pagination**

Use lower case Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.) on all pages preceding the first page of chapter one. The cover page counts as page i, but **the number does not appear**. Arabic numerals (beginning with 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) start at chapter one or the introduction, if applicable. Arabic numbers must be included on all pages of the text, illustrations, notes, and any other materials that follow. Thus, the first page of chapter one will show an Arabic numeral 1, and numbering of all subsequent pages will follow in order.

- Do not use page numbers accompanied by letters, hyphens, periods, or parentheses (e.g., 1., 1-2, -1-, (1), or 1a).
- Center all page numbers at the bottom of the Page 1/2" from the bottom edge.
- Pages must not contain running headers or footers, aside from page numbers.
- If your document contains landscape pages (pages in which the top of the page is the long side of a sheet of paper), make sure that your page numbers still appear in the same position and direction as they do on pages with standard portrait orientation for consistency. This likely means the page number will be centered on the short side of the paper and the number will be sideways relative to the landscape page text.

Image:



Page no. ( i ) does not appear

Start from page no. ( ii )

Start from page no. ( 1 )

## References

For citation and references, follow either “one” of the following formats.



The MLA  
Style Manual



The Chicago  
Manual of Style



APA Style

Always begin references section on a separate page at the end of your entire document. They must appear after the appendices as the final component in the document. Select an appropriate heading for this section based on the style manual you are using (e.g., “REFERENCES”, “BIBLIOGRAPHY”, or “WORKS CITED”).

References must be single-spaced within each entry. Include one double-spaced line between each reference. No tab indentation for first line of each reference. Set hanging indentation to 0.5 inch. Page numbering must continue throughout your references section. Ensure references comply with margin and pagination requirements.

Note:

The following templates are examples ONLY, and should be modified based upon each student's needs and the instructions of his/her supervisor. **All research reports and theses should have a cover page, table of contents, abstract, conclusion (not applicable in case of case study) and bibliography.**

## 2. Sample Format of a Scholarly Study

### I. Cover Page

A **designated format** for the cover page that requires the students' supervisor's signature is available at My Curriculum.



### II. Table of Contents

### III. Abstract (100-500 words summary of report contents)

### IV. Introduction to the Research Problem/Issue:

- a. What are the objectives of the research?
- b. What is the research problem and why is it important?
- c. What is original about the research and what is its intended contribution?
- d. What is the scope and limitations of this research?
- e. How is the report organized?

### V. Literature Review:

This should be a thorough review of existing literature in the field to demonstrate that the student has become a "subject matter expert" and is aware of learning to date. This will be the foundation for the student's study and will help them to avoid repeating what others have done as well as to clarify how they intended original contribution adds to the existing body of knowledge in the subject matter area.

### VI. Research Methodology:

This is the design of the student's study and clarifies how they address their research problem. Appropriate methodology books should be reviewed and referenced.

What type of research is this (qualitative based on interviews, quantitative based on data collected, survey/case study/action research?) Why was this method chosen?

If data were collected, how was the sample (study participants) chosen? How were the data collected? Primary sources of data collection are interviews and surveys, secondary sources are publicly available data or that made available by a company.

What frameworks/analytical tools will the student use to assist in their research to diagnose problems and come up with action plans to address them

### VII. Data Analysis and Results:

- a. How were the data analyzed and what were the results?

#### Interpretation of Results:

- a. How does the student interpret these results?
- b. Based on their results, what inferences/conclusions do they make?
- c. What insights do they gain as a result of the research?
- d. What recommendations can they make to address the problem that is the focus of their research?
- e. What contribution has their research made to the existing body of knowledge on the topic?

### **VIII. Conclusions and Suggested Future Directions:**

- a. Has the study adequately and effectively addressed the research problem and objectives stated in the introduction, and if so, how?
- b. What are the limitations of this research and how would the student suggest overcoming them for future studies?
- c. What other areas does the student feel need further exploration?

### **IX. Bibliography/Appendices:**

A research paper must include a bibliography (or reference) section listing all works which are referred to in the text, and in some cases other works consulted in the course of research and writing. This section may either precede or follow the appendices (if any), or may appear at the end of each chapter. Usually, however, a single section is more convenient and useful for both author and reader.

## **3. Sample Format of a Case Study**

### **I. Cover Page**

A **designated format** for the cover page that requires the student's supervisor's signature is available at My Curriculum.



### **II. Table of Contents**

### **III. Abstract (100-500 words summary of Research Report)**

- a. Background of the problem or challenge
- b. Company background
- c. Market information
- d. Other important introductory information related to this case study

### **IV. Introduction**

- a. Background of the problem or challenge
- b. Company background
- c. Market information
- d. Other important introductory information related to this case study

### **V. History of the Challenge outlined in this Case**

- a. How and why has this challenge emerged?
- b. What have been the key factors that created this challenge?
- c. Who are the key players responsible for making decisions related to this challenge?
- d. What other important elements are necessary to address this problem?

### **VI. Detailed Outline of the Current Challenge**

- a. What are the specific factors readers must consider in understanding the dynamics of this challenge?
- b. What research has been conducted in the past, and what has it suggested?
- c. How has the issue been addressed in this case behaved over time? What are the current factors effecting its behavior?
- d. What factors can be adjusted or modified by the managers within this company?
- e. How effective do company managers feel these factors are in solving the challenge outlined in this case?
- f. What other issues/concerns must case readers understand before solving this problem?

### **VII. The Decision**

- a. What decision must be made by readers of this case?

- b. What issues must they focus upon and/or solve in their analyses?
- c. What special considerations by individual case interviewees must they consider in making their decision?

#### **VIII. Appendixes and/or Exhibits**

- a. What additional financial information is important for case readers to understand?
- b. What additional visual information, such as pictures, advertisements, etc. should case readers understand before making their decision?
- c. What other types of information do the case writers feel are essential for case readers to understand that have not been covered elsewhere in the case study text?

#### **IX. Bibliography List**

A research paper must include a bibliography (or reference) section listing all works which are referred to in the text, and in some cases other works also consulted in the course of research and writing. This section may either precede or follow the appendices (if any), or may appear at the end of each chapter. Usually, however, a single section is more convenient and useful for both author and reader.

### **4. Sample Format of a Feasibility Study**

#### **I. Cover Page**

A **designated format** for the cover page that requires the student's supervisor's signature is available at My Curriculum.



#### **II. Table of Contents**

#### **III. Abstract (100-500 words summary of Research Report)**

#### **IV. Introduction**

- a. Background of the project
- b. Company description
- c. Market information
- d. Other important introductory information related to this feasibility study

#### **V. History of the Challenge outlined in this Project**

- a. How and why has this challenge emerged?
- b. What have been the key factors that created this challenge?
- c. Who are the key players responsible for making decisions related to this challenge?
- d. What other important elements are necessary to address this problem?

#### **VI. Detailed Outline of the Current Project**

- a. What are the specific factors readers must consider in understanding the dynamics of this challenge?
- b. What research has been conducted in the past, and what has it suggested?
- c. How has the issue been addressed in this case behaved over time? What are the current factors effecting its behavior?
- d. What factors can be adjusted or modified by the managers within this company?
- e. How effective do company managers feel these factors are in solving the challenge outlined in this case?
- f. What other issues/concerns must case readers understand before solving this problem?

#### **VII. Financial and Economic Calculations**

## VIII. Bibliography List

A research paper must include a bibliography (or reference) section listing all works which are referred to in the text, and in some cases other works also consulted in the course of research and writing. This section may either precede or follow the appendices (if any), or may appear at the end of each chapter. Usually, however, a single section is more convenient and useful for both author and reader.

## V. Assessment Criteria

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### 1. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is one of the key concern areas in evaluating research output. The definition of plagiarism is considerably broader than students often mistakenly assume. Students need to get familiar with the pitfalls of plagiarism by attending a plagiarism seminar, referring to the existing IUJ research material on the website, and consulting with the supervisor. Students are also encouraged to take a research-writing course from ELP to learn how to build a Research Report.

Especially when integrating published source material into one's own writing, it is important to avoid plagiarism in the following two ways:

- (1) Cite the source he/she is using
- (2) Quote, paraphrase or summarize the source material

Other helpful reference materials are available at \\ij-home\ELP\_Materials

#### **NOTE: The importance of paraphrasing and summarizing**

Since quotations should never exceed 5% of a paper's contents and, on average, comprise only about 1%-2% of a paper's contents, paraphrasing and summarizing are the most common means of integrating source material into one's own writing. Special cases exist for case studies. These should be clearly discussed with the supervisor.

Students can use generative AI to facilitate their research, especially for idea generation, literature or data search, or writing assistance. However, if students complete research by substantially copying the output from generative AI, such work cannot be considered as one's own work. That can be considered as plagiarism and violates academic integrity. Supervisors will use available detection tools for AI abuse and monitor students' use of generative AI.

### 2. Assessment of a Research Report

#### < Examination System and Method >

The examining committee for a research report consists of only the supervisor of a student concerned. The examining committee determines whether the Research Report is acceptable or not (Pass or Non-pass) in accordance with examination criteria mentioned below.

#### <Evaluation Criteria >

A research report is evaluated based on the following criteria:

##### Research Question

- Whether a research question or objective is clearly defined.

##### Relevance

- Whether a research question or objective is meaningful and worthwhile for research.

- Whether a research report produces a useful finding or a policy suggestion.

#### Data and Evidence

- Whether the student clearly and logically describes the data and their collection method without serious lapses.
- Whether a student presents evidence clearly to support the research conclusion.

#### Literature Review

- Whether a student reviews the related literature with a critical understanding of the subject.

#### Reasoning

- Whether a research prediction or hypothesis is logically derived
- Whether an alternative hypothesis is clearly considered.
- Whether the interpretation of data and evidence logically supports the conclusion.

#### Writing

- Whether a research report is written in appropriate academic English.
- Whether a research report follows the format of the report, which includes the correct use of citations and construction of a bibliography.

#### <Grading System>

P: Pass

NP: Non-pass

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us.

Thank you.

Office of Academic Affairs

## VI. Event Calendar for IMBA, DXP, and ISEP graduating in August

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Curriculum/Research Guidance	September 29, 2025
Faculty Member Introductory Sessions	September 29, 2025 Zoom Recordings Available: <a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qW Su7iFvXCmIDkA0RRSmaIDkUWumWujHMEuuiwxZuec/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qW Su7iFvXCmIDkA0RRSmaIDkUWumWujHMEuuiwxZuec/edit?usp=sharing</a>
Research Methods (Optional Non-Credit Course)	October 1 and 3, 2025
Submission of Form 1 (Application for Supervisor, and Tentative Research Title)	By October 30, 2025
Announcement of Supervisor Assignment	November 7, 2025
Readjustment Period/ Communication with Academic Supervisor begins	November 8 – 24, 2025
Submission of Form 2 (Decision of Supervisor and Research Title)	By November 25, 2025
Research Seminar I	Winter Term 2026
Research Seminar II	Spring Term 2026
(If applicable) Change of Supervisor/Add Co-Supervisor Submission of Form 3 (team-writing) if applicable	By April 10, 2026
Submission of Research Report to Supervisor and the OAA (electronic format only)	July 16, 2026
Submission of Final Version of Research Report to the OAA (one electronic format copy plus one unbound copy)	August 10, 2026 (by 4:30pm)
Graduation Day	August 28, 2026