

# **Proposed policy on selection and administration of Masters by Research**

## **Cluster Coordinator – Nicholas Ngepah**

### **1. Introduction**

This document stipulates the procedure of selection of candidates for MCOM by Research only, in Economics and Econometrics. It is to be read in complementarity with the general processes in the yearbook. Applications for MCOM in Economics and Econometrics by research will happen once a year. The window of applications opens on 1st April and closes on 31st August for international applicants and 31st October for South African applicants every year.

### **2. Application and decision processes**

Assessment of the applications will be undertaken as follows:

- 2.1 Once applications have been received, overall marks in academic transcripts will be used as the first screening criteria. Any application with marks less than 65% will not be considered further.
- 2.2 Once the overall mark threshold has been considered, the next screening criteria will be on the content of economic theory and quantitative techniques in the applicant's transcripts.
  - 2.2.1 Economics criteria: at least microeconomics, macroeconomics and/or Development economics at Honours level
  - 2.2.2 Quantitative techniques: at least econometrics, statistics and/or mathematics for economist at the postgraduate level
- 2.3 We will NOT accept candidates to pursue MCOM by research (in economics and/or econometrics) from any other background without economic theory, quantitative and/or qualitative techniques foundation at post graduate level
- 2.4 Candidates for interdisciplinary MCOM (RD), after meeting conditions 2.1 to 2.3 above, will only be accepted further, if any qualified staff member is found for the purpose of supervision in the area of interdisciplinary research.
- 2.5 In general, applicants who meet the above requirements and who already have a qualified supervisor stands a better chance of acceptance subject to space. Onus is on the applicant to approach staff for supervision and proposal of co-supervisors (if required)
- 2.6 Once criteria 2.1 to 2.5 are applied:
  - 2.6.1. Then the pre-proposal of the applicant will be circulated to the School's Higher Degrees Committee (SEHDC) for consideration and deliberation.
  - 2.6.2. Pre-proposals are to be used as a yardstick to assess the applicants' understanding of research roadmap and ability to undertake research in terms of choosing a proper title, motivating their research, appropriate consideration of prior theoretical and empirical literature, consequently establishing the research gaps the study would close and bringing out key contributions.
  - 2.6.3. Candidates will be accepted or rejected based on the quality of their pre-proposals.

- 2.6.4. Where available, a supervisors will also be allocated to selected applicants at the Higher Degrees meeting to guide the applicants further in full proposal development.
- 2.6.5. If suitable supervisor is not found, the applicant will be rejected.
- 2.7 Once all the above criteria has been complied with, letters will be issued to the selected applicants indicating the acceptance of their applications, the latest date at which full proposal will be submitted and the supervisor allocated to each candidate.
- 2.8 At the date of the end stipulated date, candidates who have not complied with the deadline will be automatically rejected from further participation and hence excluded from the process
- 2.9 The submission of a full proposal by a candidate must be accompanied by an endorsement by the supervisor, by way of him/her signing on the first page of the proposal. This will be to ensure that the supervisor is happy with the quality of the proposal being submitted.
- 2.10 Upon submission of the proposals, candidates will be invited to present their proposal at a proposal defense meeting, where research cluster members will be present to assess the quality of the proposals. There shall be two presentations following the two intakes per year. Proposals that align to thematic areas of each research cluster will be sent to the cluster coordinators and they will convene meetings for deliberation.
- 2.11 After the presentation, following the decision of the SEHDC panel, a candidate's proposal is:
- 2.11.1 Approved for continuity, with an approval letter stipulating the month and the year the candidate will be expected to complete the MCOM.
  - 2.11.2 Approved on condition that he/she addresses the concerns raised. The conditional approval will be given in the form of a letter, stipulating the concerns to be addressed and a three months maximum period with specific date on or before which a revised proposal will be submitted.
    - Failure to meet the three months deadline will lead to outright rejection
    - Submissions within the deadline will be considered in a Round Robbin and depending on the views of the majority of the DHDC members, the candidate's proposal is either approved (with a letter as per 11.1 above) or rejected with a letter as per 11.3 below).
  - 2.11.3 Rejected, with a letter of rejection