

# Bachelorarbeitsthemen im Studiengang Betriebswirtschaftslehre 2024

Thema	Titel	Betreuer/in	Sprache
1	Analyzing the Political Process of Transparency Regulations in the EU	<i>Benjamin Tödtmann</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
2	Congressional Grilling of SEC Chairperson and The Chief Accountant	<i>Benjamin Tödtmann</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
3	Expected Effects of the New Accounting Standard for Insurance Contracts IFRS 17	<i>Benjamin Tödtmann</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
4	Retail Chatter and Post-Earnings Announcement Drift	<i>Pascal Schrader</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
5	Do Natural Disasters Increase ESG-Innovation?	<i>Pascal Schrader</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
6	Does Mood Matter? The Role of Behavioral Biases in Information Processing	<i>Felix Fritsch</i>	<i>Englisch</i>
7	Managers' Strategic Disclosure Decisions	<i>Felix Fritsch</i>	<i>Englisch</i>
8	The Use of LinkedIn Data in Accounting and Finance Research	<i>Tobias Kalmbach</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
9	Supply Chain Transparency and its Regulation and Enforcement	<i>Tobias Kalmbach</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
10	Evidence-Based Policymaking in Transparency Regulation: Do we need it?	<i>Tobias Kalmbach</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>
11	Dissecting the Differences Between Singapore's FRS and IASB-IFRS	<i>Sara Alsarghali/ Kriti Bhattacharya</i>	<i>Englisch</i>

Thema	Titel	Betreuer/in	Sprache
12	Examining the Financial Impact of Boycotts on Firms Supporting Israel	<i>Sara Alsarghali</i>	<i>Englisch</i>
13	Which Accounting Programs Pay the Most?	<i>Felix Vetter</i>	<i>English</i>
14	The Changing Landscape of Accounting Programs	<i>Felix Vetter</i>	<i>English</i>
15	The Role of IFRS Commentaries	<i>Benjamin Tödtmann /Sara Alsarghali</i>	<i>Deutsch/ Englisch</i>

Topic 1:

# Analyzing the Political Process of Transparency Regulations in the EU

*Supervisor: Benjamin Tödtmann, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Eine Analyse des politischen Prozesses von EU-Transparenzregulierung

## Topic Description:

In the past decades, the European Union (EU) regulated and thereby increased corporate transparency in the financial and non-financial domains. Examples are the Non-Financial Reporting Directive (2014/95/EU), the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (2022/2464/EU) or the Directive on Country-by-country reporting to tax authorities (2016/881/EU). EU transparency regulation goes, however, also beyond the corporate domain. Examples are the transparency of political institutions and processes (e.g., the Transparency Register for Lobbyists, introduced in 2011) and consumer protection (e.g., Clinical Trials Regulation, 2014/536/EU). All these regulations have in common that they go through a political process, including the role of key players, such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, or the Council of the European Union.

This thesis aims to shed light on this political process and potential avenues that EU rulemaking can take to end up in a new Regulation or Directive. The focus should thereby be on corporate transparency regulation with an in-depth analysis of the process behind three to five regulations. The thesis should further comprise a literature review on (corporate) transparency regulation, the political process behind it, and the economic effects emerging from such regulation.

## Introductory Literature:

- Breuer, M., & Breuer, P. (2022). Uneven regulation and economic reallocation: Evidence from transparency regulation. Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract\\_id=4383086](https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract_id=4383086).
- Christensen, H. B., Hail, L., & Leuz, C. (2016). Capital-market effects of securities regulation: Prior conditions, implementation, and enforcement. *The Review of Financial Studies*, 29(11), 2885-2924.
- Lelieveldt, H., & Princen, S. (2023). *The politics of the European Union*. Cambridge University Press. (focus on: "Part III - EU Policies: Agenda-Setting, Decision-Making and Implementation")

Topic 2:

## Congressional Grilling of SEC Chairperson and The Chief Accountant

*Supervisor: Benjamin Tödtmann, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Verhör des SEC-Vorsitzenden und SEC Chief Accountants durch den U.S. Kongress

### Topic Description:

The process of congressional oversight on regulatory bodies, exemplified by the rigorous questioning of key actors during congressional hearings, underscores a critical aspect of government accountability and regulatory compliance. Examples in the financial sector are so-called “grillings” of the chairperson or chief-accountant of the U.S. Securities and Exchange commission (SEC). On one side, such oversight aims to ensure transparency, adherence to legal standards, and the protection of public interest by scrutinizing regulatory decisions, enforcement actions, and the effectiveness of financial market oversight. On the other, it raises questions about the potential impacts on regulatory independence, the risk of politicization, and the effectiveness of regulatory processes under intense political scrutiny. The interactions during these hearings can influence regulatory practices, shape public perception of both the regulators and the legislative body, and ultimately affect investor confidence and market stability.

The goal of this thesis is twofold. First, the student should provide a literature review on the question of what we know about congressional hearings in general. In the second step, the student should take a deeper look into accounting-related congressional hearings (e.g., SEC chairperson, SEC chief accountant or FASB personnel) and collect anecdotes on when these hearings are initiated and what types of questions are asked (and by whom).

### Introductory Literature:

- Brasher, H. (2006). Listening to hearings: Legislative hearings and legislative outcomes. *American Politics Research*, 34(5), 583-604.
- Miller, M. G., & Sutherland, J. L. (2023). The effect of gender on interruptions at congressional hearings. *American Political Science Review*, 117(1), 103-121.
- Wischnewsky, A., Jansen, D. J., & Neuenkirch, M. (2021). Financial stability and the fed: Evidence from congressional hearings. *Economic Inquiry*, 59(3), 1192-1214.

Topic 3:

## Expected Effects of the New Accounting Standard for Insurance Contracts IFRS 17

*Supervisor: Benjamin Tödtmann, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Erwartete Effekte des neuen Rechnungslegungsstandards für Versicherungsverträge IFRS 17

### Topic Description:

Since January 1, 2023, the new standard for insurance contracts, “International Financial Reporting Standard 17” (IFRS 17), has replaced the old standard IFRS 4. IFRS 17 aims to enable market participants to assess insurers’ financial position, financial performance, and risk exposure and compare them across countries and sectors. Various factors led to the postponement of its implementation from the original date of January 1, 2021. One such factor was the “asynchronous” implementation of IFRS 9 (Financial Instruments), which affected many insurance companies as well, already in 2018. The discussion resulted in a compromise that insurance companies have the option not to apply IFRS 9 until IFRS 17 comes into force.

This bachelor’s thesis aims to first create a brief overview of the content of IFRS 17 and the process leading up to its implementation. Subsequently, possible effects of the standard on the affected companies, but also on the economy in general (e.g., financial stability), will be identified through a literature review. This includes considering both the intended effects by the legislator as well as any potential unintended effects.

### Introductory Literature:

- Arce, M., Giner, B., & Taleb, M. A. (2023). Due Process as a Legitimizing Mechanism: Participation and Responsiveness in the Development of IFRS 17: Insurance Contracts. *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*, 42(6), 107150.
- Longoni, P. (2019). IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts and Firm Value. Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract\\_id=3589560](https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract_id=3589560).
- European Systemic Risk Board (2021). Financial Stability Implications of IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts. Available at: <https://www.esrb.europa.eu/pub/reports/>.

Topic 4:

## Retail Chatter and Post-Earnings Announcement Drift

*Supervisor: Pascal Schrader, Dipl. WInf.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Effekt der Kommunikation zwischen Kleinanlegern auf den post-earnings announcement drift

### Topic Description:

Post-earnings announcement drift (PEAD) is a common theme in the finance and accounting literature. Following the seminal papers by Ball & Brown (1968) and Foster (1977, 1984), research has focused on the subject intensively. Understanding of earnings anomalies (if they exist) is key, as they are used as a case of precedence against assumptions of market efficiency. Especially, as the internet has emerged as an expansive and ever-expanding reservoir of information for investors seeking insights from the perspectives of others, understanding the differences between capital market reaction to information disseminated through “traditional” media outlets and social media is crucial.

In order to answer the research question, the student starts by discussing the accounting theory behind the PEAD. After highlighting the findings of empirical papers, analyzing the determinants of PEAD, the author shall expand on the role of “traditional” information intermediaries on the speed of information absorbed by capital markets. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the differences regarding information dissemination of professional and non-professional information intermediaries.

### Introductory Literature:

- Ball, R., & Brown, P. (1968). An Empirical Evaluation of Accounting Income Numbers. *Journal of Accounting Research*, 6(2), 159–178.
- Drake, M. S., Moon Jr, J. R., Twedt, B. J., & Warren, J. D. (2023). Social media analysts and sell-side analyst research. *Review of Accounting Studies*, 28(2), 385-420.
- Drake, M. S., Thornock, J. R., & Twedt, B. J. (2017). The internet as an information intermediary. *Review of Accounting Studies*, 22, 543-576.
- Hu, N., Dong, Y., Liu, L., & Yao, L. J. (2013). Not all that glitters is gold: the effect of attention and blogs on investors’ investing behaviors. *Journal of Accounting, Auditing & Finance*, 28(1), 4-19.
- Pedersen, L. H. (2022). Game on: Social networks and markets. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 146(3), 1097-1119.

Topic 5:

## Do natural Disasters Increase ESG-Innovation?

*Supervisor: Pasca Schrader, Dipl. WInf.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Erhöhen Naturkatastrophen ESG-Innovationen?

### **Topic Description:**

A burgeoning “Climate-Economy” literature has uncovered many effects of changes in temperature and other associated phenomena, such as natural disasters, on economic activity. Additionally, the determinants of corporate innovation are intensely studied, as innovation is key to firm performance and growth and allows corporations to remain competitive in their industry. Factors such as the work environment, internal control systems, and information environment have been shown to influence the number of corporate innovations.

The thesis aims to present, in the first step, the potential influences of natural disasters on corporate actions, using various examples from empirical and theoretical literature. In the second step, the determinants of corporate innovation, especially in the field of sustainability (ESG), will be discussed. The focus of the literature review is on (I) the measurement of natural disasters and (II) the measurement of corporate innovation. The use of different proxies for these two variables in the empirical literature will be compared, evaluated, and critically assessed. Finally, there is an opportunity to incorporate anecdotal examples from the “Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt” (DPMA) to demonstrate whether natural disasters affect the innovation of German firms.

### **Introductory Literature:**

- Bharath, S. T., & Cho, D. (2023). Do natural disaster experiences limit stock market participation?. *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, 58(1), 29-70.
- Gao, H., Hsu, P. H., Li, K., & Zhang, J. (2020). The real effect of smoking bans: Evidence from corporate innovation. *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, 55(2), 387-427.
- Guiteras, R., Jina, A., & Mobarak, A. M. (2015). Satellites, self-reports, and submersion: exposure to floods in Bangladesh. *American Economic Review*, 105(5), 232-236.
- He, Z., & Hirshleifer, D. (2022). The exploratory mindset and corporate innovation. *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, 57(1), 127-169.
- Miller, B. P., Sheneman, A. G., & Williams, B. M. (2022). The impact of control systems on corporate innovation. *Contemporary Accounting Research*, 39(2), 1425-1454.

Topic 6:

## Does Mood Matter? The Role of Behavioral Biases in Information Processing

*Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Felix Fritsch*

**Deutscher Titel:** Stimmung als Faktor? Die Rolle von Verhaltensmustern bei der Informationsverarbeitung

### Topic Description:

This thesis examines how behavioral biases affect the information processing of managers, analysts, and investors. The focus should be on mood and how emotions shape the production and processing of information. The thesis briefly introduces the relevance of behavioral biases in information production and processing. The second part briefly explains why behavioral bias exists and presents conceptual underpinnings (theory) on how behavioral biases may affect the actions of market participants. It explores theory-based channels and their impacts on decision-making processes. The third and main part consists of a systematic literature review sourced from leading peer-reviewed business journals (referencing the UTD 24 journal list). The focus here is on effectively relating research papers and their findings to overarching topics, methods, and relationships. The fourth part of the thesis summarizes the empirical constructs and methods used by the author to identify biases and emotions, such as weather patterns or personal problems of CEOs, to capture emotions. The thesis briefly concludes with an outlook on future research in this literature stream.

Besides summarizing and contrasting recent literature findings qualitatively, the thesis should create a graphical topography of the relevant literature. This may take the form of a mind map or other graph, summarizing the classification and relationships among authors, findings, and methods.

### Introductory Literature:

- Blankespoor, Elizabeth, Ed deHaan, and Iván Marinovic. 2020. "Disclosure Processing Costs, Investors' Information Choice, and Equity Market Outcomes: A Review." *Journal of Accounting and Economics* 70 (2–3): 101344.
- Dehaan, E. D., Joshua Madsen, and Joseph D. Piotroski. 2017. "Do Weather-Induced Moods Affect the Processing of Earnings News?" *Journal of Accounting Research* 55 (3): 509–50.
- Hanlon, Michelle, Kelvin Yeung, and Luo Zuo. 2022. "Behavioral Economics of Accounting: A Review of Archival Research on Individual Decision Makers." *Contemporary Accounting Research* 39 (2): 1150–1214.
- Heese, Jonas, Gerardo Pérez-Cavazos, and Andrey Pérez-Silva. 2023. "Human Bias in the Oversight of Firms: Evidence from Workplace Safety Violations." *Review of Accounting Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11142-023-09807-3>.

Topic 7:

## Managers' Strategic Disclosure Decisions

*Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Felix Fritsch*

**Deutscher Titel:** Strategische Offenlegungsentscheidungen von Managern

### Topic Description:

What are managers' strategies for disclosing good and bad news? Managers may have incentives to strategically disclose information due to the agency problem when managerial preferences are not aligned with those of shareholders. Typically, managers possess superior private information relative to investors, and therefore, they may have incentives to withhold or disclose their private information strategically.

This thesis provides an overview and examines different strategies managers use to disclose information to market participants. The first part of the thesis briefly introduces the motivation for managers' strategic disclosure. The second part provides an overview of different strategies and goals. The third part and main part provides a systematic literature review of leading peer-reviewed business journals (refer to the UTD 24 journal list). The focus here should be on effectively relating research papers and their findings to overarching topics, methods, and relationships. The thesis concludes with an outlook of possible future research on managers' strategic disclosure.

In addition to summarizing and contrasting recent literature findings qualitatively, the thesis should create a graphical topography of the relevant literature in the form of a map (such as a mind map or other graph) in which the classification and relationships among authors, findings, and methods are summarized.

### Introductory Literature:

- Billings, Mary Brooke, and Matthew C. Cedergrén. 2015. "Strategic Silence, Insider Selling and Litigation Risk." *Journal of Accounting and Economics* 59 (2–3): 119–42.
- Bliss, Barbara A., Frank Partnoy, and Michael Furchtgott. 2018. "Information Bundling and Securities Litigation." *Journal of Accounting and Economics* 65 (1): 61–84.
- Kothari, S. P., Susan Shu, and Peter D. Wysocki. 2009. "Do Managers Withhold Bad News?" *Journal of Accounting Research* 47 (1): 241–76.
- Rawson, Caleb, Brady J. Twedt, and Jessica C. Watkins. 2023. "Managers' Strategic Use of Concurrent Disclosure: Evidence from 8-K Filings and Press Releases." *The Accounting Review* 98 (4): 345–71.
- Segal, Benjamin, and Dan Segal. 2016. "Are Managers Strategic in Reporting Non-Earnings News? Evidence on Timing and News Bundling." *Review of Accounting Studies* 21 (4): 1203–44.

Topic 8:

## The Use of LinkedIn Data in Accounting and Finance Research

*Supervisor: Tobias Kalmbach, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Die Verwendung von LinkedIn-Daten in Accounting- und Finance-Forschung.

### Topic Description:

LinkedIn has become the most important platform for professionals in various industries. With its extensive user base, LinkedIn provides a rich picture of the interactions and behaviors of professionals, offering researchers an opportunity to explore the relationship between professionals' activities on LinkedIn and various aspects of business practices. Researchers use the large amount of data available to identify trends, behaviors, and outcomes in many areas.

The aim of this thesis is to systematically analyze the different applications of LinkedIn data in the field of accounting and finance research. In the first part of the thesis, the student shall describe the significance of LinkedIn as a business network and its growing importance for academic research with a focus on the fields of accounting and finance. Then, the student may focus on specific areas of accounting and finance research for which LinkedIn data is relevant, such as tracking labor market reactions through LinkedIn activity or changes in the quality of financial reporting after hiring certain professionals, and provide a review of the relevant literature in these areas. In addition, the student shall address methodological aspects regarding data collection, analysis techniques, and ethical considerations in the use of LinkedIn data in research.

### Introductory Literature:

- Amiram, D., Huang, S., & Rajgopal, S. (2020). Does financial reporting misconduct pay off even when discovered?. *Review of Accounting Studies*, 25(3), 811-854.
- Barrios, J. M. (2022). Occupational licensing and accountant quality: Evidence from the 150-hour rule. *Journal of Accounting Research*, 60(1), 3-43.
- Jiang, J., Wang, I. Y., & Wang, K. P. (2018). Revolving rating analysts and ratings of mortgage-backed and asset-backed securities: Evidence from LinkedIn. *Management Science*, 64(12), 5832-5854.
- Kempf, E. (2020). The job rating game: Revolving doors and analyst incentives. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 135(1), 41-67.
- Teoh, S. H. (2018). The promise and challenges of new datasets for accounting research. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 68, 109-117.

Topic 9:

# Supply Chain Transparency and its Regulation and Enforcement

*Supervisor: Tobias Kalmbach, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Regulierung und Durchsetzung von Lieferkettentransparenz

## Topic Description:

Since 2023, the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz) has been in force in Germany. The act aims to ensure compliance with human rights and environmental standards in global supply chains. Large companies must examine their supply chains carefully and report on their efforts to comply with due diligence obligations. The law intends, for example, to prevent child exploitation and slavery. The *Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive* (CSDDD) aims to apply uniform guidelines in the European Union. However, many business associations are against the EU law. They argue that the due diligence and documentation obligations would overwhelm companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and become a competitive disadvantage for European firms.

This bachelor thesis aims to provide an overview of the possible benefits and consequences of supply chain transparency, its regulation, and enforcement. In the first step, the student shall explain the rationale and purpose of supply chain due diligence and documentation obligations. In the second step, the student shall compile possible positive and negative economic consequences of increased transparency of companies regarding their supply chain. This will particularly involve examining empirical studies of transparency research, including research on regulation and enforcement, to present fact-based evidence. Lastly, the student shall collect anecdotal examples from the press to illustrate the possible consequences of non-compliance with supply chain due diligence and transparency requirements.

## Introductory Literature:

- Baik, B., Even-Tov, O. M. R. I., Han, R., & Park, D. (2024). The Real Effects of Supply Chain Transparency Regulation: Evidence from Section 1502 of the Dodd–Frank Act. *Journal of Accounting Research*, Forthcoming.
- Christensen, H. B., Hail, L., & Leuz, C. (2021). Mandatory CSR and sustainability reporting: Economic analysis and literature review. *Review of Accounting Studies*, 26(3), 1176-1248.
- Christensen, H. B. (2022). Is corporate transparency the solution to political failure on our greatest problems? A discussion of Darendeli, Fiechter, Hitz, and Lehmann (2022). *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, 74(2-3), 101542.
- She, G. (2022). The real effects of mandatory nonfinancial disclosure: Evidence from supply chain transparency. *The Accounting Review*, 97(5), 399-425.

Topic 10:

## Evidence-based Policymaking in Transparency Regulation: Do we need it?

*Supervisor: Tobias Kalmbach, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Ist Evidenzbasierte Politikgestaltung für Transparenzregulierung nötig?

### Topic Description:

Evidence-based policymaking refers to the practice of making decisions and crafting policies based on the careful analysis of rigorously gathered and evaluated data and evidence, rather than on intuition or ideology. It is a basis for rational decision-making. As political polarization and distrust in institutions rise, evidence-based policymaking is under scrutiny. The political discourse focuses more on emotions than on facts. Current examples include the highly politicized debate about climate-related disclosure regulation in the US. Therefore, the question arises whether we need evidence-based policymaking and what we can do to make successful policies.

The thesis aims to examine the complexities of evidence-based policymaking systematically. The student should examine the costs and benefits of evidence-based policymaking and explore practical challenges faced during its implementation. Furthermore, the student shall synthesize prior literature and anecdotal evidence (e.g., from the press) to demonstrate to what extent empirical evidence influenced transparency regulation in the past and critically assess whether the use of empirical evidence benefitted the respective policy. Finally, the student shall offer a critical assessment of the current state of evidence-based policymaking and suggest directions for its improvement in the future.

### Introductory Literature:

- Becker, K., Bischof, J., & Daske, H. (2021). IFRS: Markets, practice, and politics. *Foundations and Trends® in Accounting*, 15(1–2), 1-262.
- Bischof, J., Daske, H., & Sextroh, C. J. (2020). Why do politicians intervene in accounting regulation? The role of ideology and special interests. *Journal of Accounting Research*, 58(3), 589-642.
- Fülbier, R. U., Hitz, J. M., & Sellhorn, T. (2009). Relevance of academic research and researchers' role in the IASB's financial reporting standard setting. *Abacus*, 45(4), 455-492.
- Leuz, C. (2018). Evidence-based policymaking: promise, challenges and opportunities for accounting and financial markets research. *Accounting and Business Research*, 48(5), 582-608.
- Singleton-Green, B. (2010). The communication gap: why doesn't accounting research make a greater contribution to debates on accounting policy?. *Accounting in Europe*, 7(2), 129-145.

Topic 11:

## Dissecting the Differences Between Singapore's FRS and IASB-IFRS

*Supervisor: Sara Alsarghali, M.Sc./ Kriti Bhattacharya, M.A.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Analyse der Unterschiede zwischen Singapurs FRS und IASB-IFRS

### Topic Description:

Concerns about creating national versions of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) due to variations in implementation methods—how jurisdictions incorporate IFRS into their legal framework—have been frequently highlighted by regulators, local standard setters, and academics. Such variations might lead to deviations from the International Accounting Standards Board's (IASB) IFRS, potentially undermining the global comparability of financial statements. Singapore is one of the earliest jurisdictions to incorporate IFRS by issuing Singapore Financial Reporting Standards (FRS). This development raises questions about the extent of alignment between the original FRS and IASB-IFRS standards.

This bachelor's thesis aims to scrutinize the differences between FRS and IASB-issued IFRS by conducting a paragraph-level comparison. The task is to categorize the differences and examine whether specific standards exhibit more significant disparities than others. The supervisors will provide the initial dataset. The analysis can be conducted entirely using Microsoft Excel ("manual"), Python ("machine"), or, ideally, by a comparison of both approaches. Afterwards, the thesis should explore possible reasons for the detected deviations from IASB-IFRS.

### Introductory Literature:

- Nobes, C., & Zeff, S. (2016). Have Canada, Japan and Switzerland Adopted IFRS?. *Australian Accounting Review*, 26(3), 284-290.
- Stadler, C., & Nobes, C. (2014). The influence of country, industry, and topic factors on IFRS policy choice. *Abacus*, 50(4), 386-421.
- Zeff, S. A., & Nobes, C. W. (2010). Commentary: Has Australia (or Any Other Jurisdiction) 'Adopted' IFRS?. *Australian Accounting Review*, 20(2), 178-184.

Topic 12:

## Examining the Financial Impact of Boycotts on Firms Supporting Israel

*Supervisor: Sara Alsarghali, M.Sc.*

**Deutscher Titel:** Untersuchung der finanziellen Auswirkungen von Boykotten auf Unternehmen, die Israel unterstützen.

### Topic Description:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has led to calls around the world for boycotts against companies supporting Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza. These calls for boycotts, in particular in the global south, have received significant media attention. Examples are boycotts of big U.S. chains like McDonalds and Starbucks. The boycotts aim to economically pressure companies and influence their behavior, yet the actual financial repercussions remain uncertain. As the conflict and calls for boycotts persist, a preliminary examination is feasible.

This thesis will explore the impact of such calls for boycotts on the sales and stock prices of targeted firms around the world. The methodology combines quantitative analysis and qualitative research (content analysis of corporate communications such as management discussion and analysis and earning announcements). In a first step, the student should identify and hand-collect boycotts using media-databases such as Factiva or NexisLexis. A further starting point can be the so-called "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement" that organizes boycott calls. The thesis then aims to reveal how boycotts affect companies perceived as supporting Israel and provide insights into corporate performance under activist scrutiny in politically sensitive business environments.

This thesis includes an empirical archival analysis that can be conducted entirely using Microsoft Excel. Data has to be collected by the student, as indicated above.

### Introductory Literature:

- Acemoglu, D., Hassan, T., & Tahoun, A. (2018). The power of the street: Evidence from Egypt's Arab Spring. *The Review of Financial Studies*, 31(1), 1-42.
- Ahmed, S., Hasan, M., & Kamal, M. (2023). Russia-Ukraine crisis: The effects on the European stock market. *European Financial Management*, 29(4), 1078-1118.
- Chen, S., Schuchard, K., & Stomberg, B. (2019). Media coverage of corporate taxes. *The Accounting Review*, 94(5), 83-116.
- Zhang, Y., He, J., He, M., & Li, S. (2023). Geopolitical risk and stock market volatility: A global perspective. *Finance Research Letters*, 53, 103620.

Topic 13:

## Which Accounting Programs Pay the Most?

*Supervisor: Prof. Felix Vetter, PhD*

**Deutscher Titel:** Welche Accounting-Studiengänge zahlen am besten?

### Topic Description:

Recent years have seen a stark decline in the share of business school undergraduates majoring in accounting, and current research shows that some of this decline might be attributable to declining relative wages paid to accounting majors (Friedman et al., 2024). This work, however, is based on *aggregate* wage trends only and does not consider wage differentials *across* different U.S. accounting programs. This thesis provides first empirical large-sample evidence on differences in returns to accounting majors *across* different U.S. schools.

This thesis includes empirical archival analysis which can be covered entirely using Microsoft Excel. A dataset will be provided by the supervisor.

### Introductory Literature:

- Acemoglu, D., & Restrepo, P. (2018). The race between man and machine: Implications of technology for growth, factor shares, and employment. *American Economic Review*, 108(6), 1488-1542.
- Friedman, H., A Sutherland, and F. Vetter. 2024. Technological Investment and Accounting: A Demand-Side Perspective on Accounting Enrollment Declines. Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4707807](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4707807)
- Kogan, L., Papanikolaou, D., Schmidt, L. D., & Seegmiller, B. (2023). Technology and labor displacement: Evidence from linking patents with worker-level data. Available at: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w31846>

Topic 14:

# The Changing Landscape of Accounting Programs

*Supervisor: Prof. Felix Vetter, PhD*

**Title:** Die sich verändernde Landschaft der Accounting Studiengänge

## Topic Description:

Recent years have seen a stark decline in the share of business school undergraduates majoring in accounting. Recent empirical work (Friedman et al., 2024) explains this decline by empirically showing that technological development, and corporate software investment in particular, is associated with lower employment and wage growth for accounting majors than for other business majors, especially finance. In contrast, accounting majors with a technology minor fare better, on average. This thesis *empirically* explores, to what extent U.S. accounting programs respond to these trends. Specifically, this thesis explores if and to what extent accounting programs shift their curricula and course towards technology-focused offerings (e.g., introducing “Data Analytics”).

This thesis includes empirical archival analysis which can be covered entirely using Microsoft Excel. A dataset will be provided by the supervisor.

## Introductory Literature:

- Acemoglu, D., & Restrepo, P. (2018). The race between man and machine: Implications of technology for growth, factor shares, and employment. *American Economic Review*, 108(6), 1488-1542.
- Friedman, H., A Sutherland, and F. Vetter. 2024. Technological Investment and Accounting: A Demand-Side Perspective on Accounting Enrollment Declines. Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4707807](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4707807)
- Kogan, L., Papanikolaou, D., Schmidt, L. D., & Seegmiller, B. (2023). Technology and labor displacement: Evidence from linking patents with worker-level data. Available at: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w31846>

Topic 15:

## Understanding the Role of IFRS Commentaries

*Supervisor: Sara Alsarghali, M.Sc./ Benjamin Tödtmann, M.Sc.*

**Title:** Welche Rolle spielen IFRS-Kommentare in der Durchsetzung der Regulierungen?

### Topic Description:

The International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) serve as a cornerstone for ensuring transparency and comparability in global financial reporting. However, the interpretation and application of these standards often require additional guidance, leading to the proliferation of independent commentaries by major accounting firms (often referred to as the Big Four) and individual experts (e.g. commentaries by Lüdenbach/Hoffmann/Freiberg). These commentaries aim to elucidate complex IFRS principles, offering practical insights and interpretations that are not officially sanctioned by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). Despite their unofficial status, these commentaries have been referenced in legal cases concerning the enforcement and compliance of IFRS. This development underscores a unique paradox where non-authoritative texts gain quasi-legal standing, influencing both the practice and jurisprudence of international financial reporting. This thesis will explore the significance of independent IFRS commentaries, examining their role in shaping the enforcement of IFRS standards, their influence on legal interpretations, and the implications for the authority of the IASB.

The goal of this thesis is twofold. First, the student should conduct a literature review of the topic who uses IFRS commentaries and for what purpose. Second, the student should dive into some selected court rulings and collect (anecdotal) evidence on how the rulings use commentaries to justify their decisions.

### Introductory Literature:

- Downar, B., Ernstberger, J., Koch, C., & Prott, M. (2022). Does practitioner research help auditors to provide higher audit quality and improve their reputation?. *European Accounting Review*, 31(5), 1059-1088.
- OLG Frankfurt a. M. (2019). Zu den Voraussetzungen einer Fehlerfeststellung im Enforcement-Verfahren. Case-No. WpÜG 3/16, WpÜG 4/16, decided on 04.02.2019. <https://betriebsberater.ruw.de/bilanzrecht/urteile/Zu-den-Voraussetzungen-einer-Fehlerfeststellung-im-Enforcement-Verfahren-39027>