



#### **Accounting Department**

The Wharton School  
University of Pennsylvania  
1319 Steinberg Hall-Dietrich Hall  
3620 Locust Walk  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6365  
215.898 8205  
215.573 2054 fax  
lhail@wharton.upenn.edu

**Luzi Hail**  
Professor of Accounting

### **Ph.D. Seminar**

## **Market-Based Research in International Accounting, Part II: Applications & Special Topics**

**October 9-11, 2019, University of Zurich**

### **Course Overview and Objectives:**

Market-based research in international accounting uses cross-border comparisons and within-country analyses exploiting the unique features of the local institutional environment to study how public and private institutions affect the properties and uses of accounting information. More recent studies go beyond descriptive analyses and attempt to better understand how economic institutions affect the role of accounting information in capital markets, financing decisions, and corporate governance.

The course consists of two parts: in Part I, we cover the foundations and discuss some of the basic concepts of international accounting research (e.g., disclosure and cost of capital). In Part II, we apply these concepts to specific areas. Specifically, the topics of Part II cover identification in empirical research, the impact of institutional factors on accounting outcomes, voluntary and mandatory adoption of IFRS, the role of enforcement, and securities regulation. Note that it is suggested but not required that students attend both parts of the course in sequence.

The objective of the course is to develop your ability to critically evaluate and conduct empirical research in an international context. In particular, you should get (1) an appreciation for the role of theory in applied work, (2) an understanding of research designs commonly used in international accounting research, and (3) the necessary skills to design and conduct empirical research in a cross-border setting. Overall, this course provides an overview of this fast evolving area, and discusses economic hypotheses, research methods, data issues, and limitations to this type of research.

### **Conduct of Course:**

For the most part, the course will be conducted using a seminar format. Therefore, you are expected to take an active part in discussing and evaluating the readings assigned for each course session. In general, the class discussions will be centered around two papers per session, and we

will dedicate about half the time to each paper. I expect you to be familiar with the required readings.

For each paper, I will assign one or more discussion leaders who will each prepare a two-page summary before the course starts. In addition, your task as a discussion leader consists of briefly summarizing the paper, highlighting the contribution, and pointing out/discussing some critical research design choices. This presentation should take no more than 25 minutes (if two people are assigned to the same paper, they can prepare the presentation jointly). I will of course help you with that task. The course language is English.

On top of the required readings, I have indicated additional reading material for each class. This is just a small selection of papers that I find important or closely related to the topic of the session. We will not have the time to cover those papers in detail, but I expect you to skim the content of the papers to get a basic sense for the results and the research approach. This will help you to put the main readings into a broader context, and also serves as a good starting point to probe further into any of the areas covered.

Moreover, I will offer students the opportunity to present their own work during one of the sessions. This allows you to improve your presentation skills and receive feedback on your work. Ideally, we would have two student presentations in a workshop-style format (45 minutes each) over the course of the three days. If interested, please, contact the course administrator in advance to discuss the details.

I will also dedicate special time to the discussion of the process and peer-review system of publishing in academic journals.

### **Course Requirements:**

In preparation of the course:

- Carefully work through the required readings with a focus on the research question, the contribution to the literature and the research design.
- Skim the additional readings to get a basic sense for the research question.
- Prepare a two-page summary of the assigned paper to be distributed before class.
- Prepare a two-page research proposal for an international research question (to be handed in at the start of the course; be prepared to present your idea in a short, five minute pitch).

During the course:

- Lead the class discussion of the assigned paper (together if multiple people are assigned to the same paper).
- Contribute to class discussions when you are not the leader.