

**Professor Dr. Robert Obermaier**

Lehrstuhl für Betriebswirtschaftslehre  
mit Schwerpunkt Accounting  
und Controlling

Universität Passau · 94030 Passau



## **Master seminar**

### **Banking Crises and Organizational Misconduct – Theories, Causes, and Case Studies**

**Winter semester 2026/27**

**Participants:** Students in master's degree programmes

#### **Registration:**

- Please send the following registration documents electronically **in one PDF-document** to: [Controlling@uni-passau.de](mailto:Controlling@uni-passau.de)
  - Registration form
  - Curriculum vitae
  - Overview of grades
- Application period: **22.06.2026- 29.06.2026**

#### **Schedule:**

- Allocation of seminar places (1<sup>st</sup> round) by Fri. July 3, 2026, 12 p.m.
- Deadline for withdrawal: by Mon. July 6, 2026, 9 a.m.
- Allocation of seminar places (2<sup>nd</sup> round): by Fri. July 10, 2026, 12 p.m.
- Kick-off event (attendance appointment): Mon. July 20, 2026, 10 a.m.-12a.m.
- Final presentation (attendance appointment): Thu. Oct 15, 2026, 10 a.m.-12a.m.
- Submission: by Thu. Oct 22, 2026, 12 p.m.

#### **Thematic background and goal of the seminar:**

Banking crises are among the most consequential economic crises. Cases such as Barings Bank, Crédit Lyonnais, Bayerische Raiffeisen-Zentralbank, and the global financial crisis of 2007/08 demonstrate that spectacular institutional failures are often not solely the result of external shocks or individual misjudgments. Rather, organizational factors such as incentive systems, corporate culture, control mechanisms, and decision-making processes play a central role.

Research on organizational misconduct examines how risky or non-compliant practices emerge within organizations, become institutionalized, and persist despite existing control and governance structures. Theoretical approaches such as Agency Theory, the concept of the “Normalization of Deviance,” Groupthink, and institutional theory provide important explanations for these developments.

The aim of this seminar is to introduce students to key theories of organizational misconduct and to apply them to selected banking crises and financial scandals. And gives students valuable experience of scientific work, preparing them for thesis writing. Through case study analyses, participants will examine how organizational failures arise, the role of control and governance mechanisms in these processes, and how crises can be explained from an organizational perspective. The Seminar paper can be written in German or English.

### **Introductory literature:**

- Vaughan, D. (1999). *The Dark Side of Organizations: Mistake, Misconduct, and Disaster*.
- Palmer, D. (2012). *Normal Organizational Wrongdoing*.
- Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). *Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony*.