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Master Thesis Award of Excellence 2025

Alumni who completed their studies between 01 May 2023 and 31 December 2024 are invited to apply for the award. Eligible are master theses graded "Excellent (1)" within the following programs:

- ESS / Geography
- ESS / Economics
- ESS / Sustainability and Innovation Management
- ESS / NAWI-TECH
- Sustainable Development (entrance university: Graz)
- Circular Economy (degree awarding university: Graz)

Submissions must include

- The completed submission
- The self-assessment on pages 2 to 5
- The submitted master thesis in PDF format
- The review/grading of the main supervisor

All submissions will be assessed by a jury with regards to the following criteria:

- 1. Relevance of the topic for the broad field of sustainability
- 2. Concise and clear research question(s)
- 3. Thorough implementation of the project
- 4. Clarity of writing
- 5. Critical reflection on the conducted research
- 6. Advancement of scientific or practical knowledge
- 7. Additional aspects brought forward by the applicant.

Electronic Applications are welcome anytime - Deadline January, 31th 2025

usw.koordination@uni-graz.at

For the Curricula-Commission Environmental Systems Sciences

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thomas Brudermann Chair of the Curricula Commission ESS







We expect each student to grade themselves with the below form, and give a clear explanation why they deserve the grade (with examples from the thesis when appropriate).

lt a ma	Points for item			Evaluation		
ltem	1	2	3	Explanation		
	1. Relevance of the topic					
1.1 Connection to existing	The context of the	The context of the	The context of the			
research	researched topic is	researched topic is	research is described in			
	described in detail.	described in detail, and	detail. As a result, the			
	However, no	an interconnection is	research question			
	interconnection is made	made between what is	emerges from the			
	between what is known	known and what will be	described context and the			
	and what will be	researched.	described research gaps.			
	researched.					
1.2 Delineation of the work	The delineation of the	The delineation of the	The delineation of the			
compared to existing	research compared to	research compared to	research compared to			
research / novelty of the	existing work is unclear,	existing work is clear, but	existing work is clear, and			
work.	and the research is not	the research is not novel.	the research is not novel.			
	novel.					
1.3 Contribution of the	The work makes a clear	The work makes a clear	The work makes a clear			
work to existing research	contribution to the	contribution to the	contribution to the			
	research field.	existing research field,	existing research field,			
		and on top of that has	and on top of that has			
		consequences for other	consequences for other			
		research fields.	research fields, and fields			
			outside of research (e.g.,			
			the public or private			
			sector)			
	2. Concise and clear research question(s)					
2.1 Clarity of the research	The research questions are	The research questions	The research questions			
questions	unclear and unfalsifiable.	are clear and defined	are clear and defined			
		sharply.	sharply. The research			







2.2. Boundaries to the researchThe research was conducted within clearly described spatial and tis is unclear in the research questions.The spatial and temporal boundaries are sharply described.3.1 Theoretical underpinningThere is some discussion of the underlying theory, but the description shows serious errors.The relevant theory is used, but the description shows occasional errors.Clear, complete and coherent toworkew of review paper.3.2 Use of literatureSome peer-reviewed papers in reference list but also a significant body of grey literature.The relevant theory is to also a significant body of grey literature.Clear, complete and coherent toworkew of review paper.3.3 Use of methods and dataResearch is not reproducible reproducible research is not research is not reproducible information treatment and analysis methodsSome apperts in regregating data- collection, data analysis methods is complete insufficient reproducible research is not reproducible reproducible reproducibleSome apperts of research is not reproducible research is not reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducible reproducibleSome apperts in reproducible research reparing data- collection, data complete and panysis methods and reproducibleSome apperts in reproducible research is not reproducible research is not reproducible reproducible research is not reproducible research is not reproducible research is not re	CRSITAL	1		1		
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but lower-level hierarchy of sections is not logical inclear and unique function.section has a clear and unique function.		4. Clarity of writing				
sections is not logical in Hierarchy of sections is unique function.	4.1 Structure of the text	Main structure is correct,	Most sections have a	Well-structured: each		
		but lower-level hierarchy of	clear and unique function.	section has a clear and		
places. Some sections mostly correct. Ordering Hierarchy of sections is		-	Hierarchy of sections is	unique function.		
		places. Some sections	mostly correct. Ordering	Hierarchy of sections is		







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	have overlapping functions	of sections is mostly	correct. Ordering of			
	leading to ambiguity in	logical.	sections is logical.			
	placement of information.					
4.2 Language of the text	The text is ambiguous in	Formulations in text are	Textual quality of thesis			
	some places but this does	clear and exact, as well	(or manuscript in the form			
	not always inhibit a correct	as concise.	of a journal paper) is such			
	interpretation of the text.		that it could be			
			acceptable for a peer-			
			reviewed journal			
4.3 Graphical	Lay-out is mostly clear.	Lay-out is clear.	Lay-out is functional and			
representation	Tables, graphs and	Appropriate use of text,	clear. Clever use of			
	graphics in few places only	tables, graphs and	graphs and graphics			
		graphics.				
	5. Critical reflection of the conducted research					
5.1 Critical reflection on the	Only some possible	Weaknesses in the	Not only all possible			
conducted research	weaknesses and/or	research are indicated	weaknesses in the			
	weaknesses which are in	and weighed relative to	research are indicated,			
	reality irrelevant or non-	each other. Furthermore,	but also it is indicated			
	existent have been	(better) alternatives for	which weaknesses affect			
	identified.	the methods used are	the conclusions most.			
		indicated.				
5.2 Critical reflection on the	Only trivial reflection vis-a-	Only most obvious	Results are critically			
conducted research in light	vis existing literature.	conflicts and	confronted with existing			
of existing research		correspondences with	literature. In case of			
		existing literature are	conflicts, the relative			
		identified.	weight of own results			
			and existing literature is			
			assessed.			
	6. Advancement of knowledge					
6.1 Consideration of	Audience not taken into	Audience hardly taken	Audience taken into			
Audience	account.	into consideration.	consideration and clear			
			and to-the-point			
			conclusions for each			
			audience group are			
			specified.			







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6.2 Clarity of the	Weak link between	Conclusions are linked to	Clear link between		
conclusions and	research questions, results	the research questions,	research questions and		
recommendations	and conclusions	but not all questions are	conclusions. Conclusions		
		addressed. Some	substantiated by results.		
		conclusions are not	Conclusions are		
		substantiated by results	formulated exact and		
		or merely repeat results.	concise. Conclusions are		
6.3 Recommendations	Recommendations are	Recommendations are	Recommendations are		
given	absent or trivial,	well-linked to	well-linked to conclusions		
		conclusions.	and original.		
Other aspects that are considered relevant					