



KARL-FRANZENS-UNIVERSITÄT GRAZ
UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ



Master Thesis and Master Seminar - General Information

Institute of Systems Sciences, Innovation and Sustainability Research
2018

Step 1: Collecting Ideas

- Brainstorming: Which topics are of interest to you? What do you want to do in the future? What content from courses did you find particularly exciting?
- Conversations with friends and contacts
- Use company contacts
- Exchange ideas with fellow students
- Check if there are calls for master theses on specific topics (from our institute or others, e.g. Wegener Center)

Step 2: Preliminary literature research

- Limit ideas from step 1 to 2-3 concrete ideas
- Carrying out initial literature research in international databases (e.g. Scopus)
- Check whether there have already been master theses on this topic at the institute
https://online.unigraz.at/kfu_online/wbAbs.showMaskAbsListe?pOrgNr=14202
- Check whether similar topics have already been dealt with at other institutes and universities (research in the library catalogues)

Step 3: Contact potential supervisors

- At the SIS institute, the following people may supervise master theses:
 - Univ.-Prof. Dr. Baumgartner
 - Univ.-Prof. Dr. Füllsack
 - Univ.-Prof. Dr. Stern
 - Ao.Univ.-Prof. Dr. Posch
 - Ass.-Prof.ⁱⁿ Dr. Rauter
 - Ass.-Prof. Dr. Bruderermann
 - Dr.ⁱⁿ Gelbmann
 - Dr. Aschemann
- Co-supervision might be done by other staff with a PhD/doctoral degree (in exceptional cases also staff without doctoral degree)

Step 3: Contact potential supervisors

- If you already have an idea of the topic you would like to work on, if you have research questions in mind or a practical partner for your thesis project, contact a potential supervisor.
- The areas of research and interests of potential supervisors are at least partly known from the courses they offer (and you took). You may also check their recent publications and ongoing research projects.
- You might also look for supervisors at other institutes – in this case however first check with the academic coordinator.
- Your main supervisor needs to have an affiliation with University of Graz.

Step 4: Research Proposal

- If your topic meets with interest, you will be asked to write an exposé on the topic.
- The potential supervisor will decide on accepting your supervision based on the research proposal will and your previous academic performance
- Length of the proposal: 5-8 pages (max. 10 pages)
- Check the additional guideline on how to write a research proposal on <https://sis.uni-graz.at/en/studying/downloads/>

Step 5: „Betreuungsusage“

- If your proposal meets the requirements of your supervisor, you can officially announce your topic
- Print and fill the form „Betreuungsusage“ (Acceptance of supervision), sign it and let it sign by your supervisor.
- At this stage you may also nominate a second reader (might be nominated later as well, but in any case well in advance before you submit your thesis)
- Forms – see <https://urbi.uni-graz.at/en/programs/organizational/formulare-geographie-und-umweltsystemwissenschaften/>

Step 5b: 2nd reader

- You will also need a second reader from one of the partner universities – preferably from your mobility university.
- Please make up your mind on potential second readers (minimum requirement: PhD degree, affiliation with one of the universities in the consortium)
- Feel free to contact potential second readers directly, or via the academic coordinator in Graz. The second reader needs to be approved by the academic coordinator.
- The second reader is not co-supervising your thesis (unless agreed otherwise), but only reviews and assesses your thesis after submission

Step 6: Master Seminar

- If you have been granted supervision, please register for the Masters Seminar at the Institute (winter or summer term)
- In the course you will present the proposal or the current status of your work.
- It is recommended to take the master seminar during the process of writing the thesis (usually 4th semester)
- In case you are not in Graz during your thesis project, remote participation is possible.
- Please check up-to-date information on UGO and Moodle.

Step 7: Writing master thesis

- In coordination with your supervisor
- Arrangements regarding schedule, process etc. are to be made individually with your supervisor – there are no institutional deadlines for thesis submission, and no fixed dates for final exams.

Step 8: Submission

- The master thesis needs to be uploaded via UGO, and approved by your supervisor.
- After approval, you need to submit two hardcover copies to the “Studien- and Prüfungsabteilung”. These copies need to be identical with the electronic version. Please see the details with regards to required attachments on the respective forms.
- The first possible date for the final examination is four weeks after submission of hardcover copies.
- The thesis must be assessed positively by your main supervisor and second reader at least two weeks before the date for the final examination
- Note: Supervisor and second reader have a maximum of two months to assess your thesis

Step 9: Final examination

- The exam date and the composition of the examination board has to be coordinated by the student (see respective form – “Anmeldung zur kommissionellen Masterprüfung”).
- Examination board:
 - 1st examiner: Your supervisor
 - 2nd examiner: Professor from University of Graz (not your second reader)
 - Note: At least one of the two examiners needs to be a senior professor, i.e. with a habilitation degree (full professor, associate professor, PD)
 - Head of commission: Institute staff with at least a doctoral degree
- Duration of exam: 60 minutes (20 minutes presentation, 40 minutes examination – contents of the exam are up to the examiners – please check with them in advance)

Remarks and Disclaimer

- This is a general description of the basic procedure.
- No rights and obligations arise from this, neither for you as a student nor for the staff of the institute.
- Individual deviations may occur. These can depend on the topic, the time frame, the people involved or other circumstances.
- Information on deadlines, forms, etc. can be found on the website of the URBI Dean of Studies.
- Last update: August 2018