

## Information – Masterthesis in Organization Studies

7.12.2009

The master-thesis is an important part of the master-programme. Above all, of course writing the thesis should be a rewarding experience. There are, however a few formal things to be considered:

**(1) The master-thesis has to be written in the 4th semester.**

(see § 10 Studienplan published at <http://www.uibk.ac.at/service/c101/mitteilungsblatt> (= Mitteilungsblatt vom 19.April 2007)

**(2) Topic:**

- The topic can be chosen freely from all areas of organization studies (i.e. Topics with reference to any of the modules)
- The topic can be theoretical and/or empirical; ideally there should be an empirical reference to specific organization/organizational problem.

**(3) Proposal/Exposé**

- Every student develops a proposal for a topic. The proposal includes: Topic, Problem, research methods and an indication of the preferred supervisor (see checklist below). The proposal (2- 3 pages) has to be handed in by January 31 at the IOL-secretary. Students and academic supervisors will be allocated by topic and mutual agreement by first week of February.

**(4) Supervision:**

- Anyone (internal staff) teaching in the master-programme can principally act as supervisor. In summer-term 2010 these are: Iain Munro, Mario Vötsch, Alan Scott, Richard Weiskopf, Heike Welte).
- The academic supervisor and the student agree on the frequency of meetings, feedback, and when drafts of chapters and sections should be provided, or whether merely a mature final draft should be submitted.

**(5) Formal „Application for a Master's Thesis Topic“**

- A formal „Application for a Master's Thesis Topic“ has to be handed in at the Prüfungsreferat SOWI (forms are available at the Prüfungsreferat). This should be done immediately after agreeing on the topic with the chosen or assigned supervisor.

**(6) Length and format.**

- The page range of a Master's thesis strongly depends on whether you apply qualitative or quantitative methodology, or a purely theory-based work.

Qualitative findings usually need more space than quantitative ones. On average, the thesis will be about 60 pages *excluding* the cover pages, table of contents, table of figures, list of references and appendices. We accept no more than 80 pages.

- A standard format is  
DIN A4  
1.5 line spacing  
Times New Roman 12 point or Arial 11 point  
2.5 cm margin

### **(7) Submission – handing in**

- Two hardcopies of the finished thesis have to be handed in at the Prüfungsreferat by may 31. Additionally, an electronic version on CD-ROM has to be attached to the inside of the front cover of one of the hard copies of the thesis. The electronic version will be checked by an anti-plagiarism software.
- Submitting by may 31 should be the rule, if, for whatever reason the master-thesis cannot be finished in this period, there is a second date for handing in September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **(8) Defensio (§ 7 (3) Studienplan)**

- Signing up for the „Defensio“ at IOL-secretary. (3. floor, dept. Personal und Arbeit, Ms Triendl), by june 30th. Also those who only submit their thesis by sept. 1<sup>st</sup> have to sign up at this date for the defensio which in this case will take place middle of October 2010.
- Oral Presentation (Defensio)

The oral presentations and defenses are public oral exams. They take place in front of the official examiner (= supervisor) and a second supervisor, and - most likely – other Master students. The duration of the presentation and defense is 30 minutes. Of these, a maximum of 15 minutes are allocated to the presentation, 15 minutes to the defense of the thesis. Candidates should concisely present their theoretical framework, the empirical study, and the main findings of their work. Following all presentations, the examiners will decide on the grade of the Master thesis (27.5 ECTS) and the defensio part (2.5 ECTS).

### **(9) Academic writing and formal rules**

- Formal rules are analogous to Diploma-thesis. (see [http://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/lehre/diplomarbeiten\\_iol\\_sept07.pdf](http://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/lehre/diplomarbeiten_iol_sept07.pdf))
- Academic writing and referencing follows particular and strict rules. The following Internet page provides useful tips for good writing: <http://www.ceu.hu/caw/resources>
- There is also a wiki on our homepage with useful support: <http://wiki.uibk.ac.at/confluence/display/asun/Home>
- When you draw on the work of others, you must give proper credit. The key issues with regard to quotations are to clearly mark the intellectual

property of others, give exact information relating to the source, and keep consistency of quotation throughout the entire work. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

- The following Journals are good sources for your Master's thesis (they are all available from the library):
  - *Organization*
  - *Organization Studies*
  - *Organization Science*
  - *Journal of Management Studies*
  - *Scandinavian Journal of Management Studies*
  - *Management Science*
  - *Academy of Management Review*
  - *Administrative Science Quarterly*

*There is also a variety of HANDBOOKs FOR ORGANIZATION STUDIES in the library which provide a good overview on several topics and the respective state of the art.*

### **Checklist for the proposal/exposé**

- Topic or problem of the thesis
- Short description of the "state of the art" in research (what has already been researched on this topic?)
- What are the motivation and the scientific interest of the thesis?
- What is the (theoretical, practical, managerial, social, or political) relevance of the topic or problem that has been selected?
- What is the planned or desired outcome of the thesis? (e.g. An overview, a deeper understanding of xy, a critique of xy, a contribution to development of theory xy, a discussion, evaluation or development of problem-solving strategies, etc.)
- What is the focus of the study and what aspects of the topic will *not* be covered in the study?
- What are the main sources (literature) that will be used?
- What are the methods that will be used?
- What are the main resources that I need for a successful thesis?
- How does the basic structure of the thesis look like?
- Rough time schedule and main work steps.