

# FAQ

# Master Thesis

Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

M.Sc. Forest Sciences

M.Sc. Environmental Sciences

Stand Januar 2021



**UNI**  
**FREIBURG**

# Overview



- Topic/Titel
- Supervision
- Registration
- Writing
- Interruption/extension/illness
- Grading
- Defense
- Final Degree
- Exmatriculation/Fees
- Further question

- How do I find a suitable topic?
  - Announcements (website of the professorships, notices, master mailing list)
  - Suggest your own ideas and interests
  - Helpful questions:
    - Which modules were particularly interesting?
    - Where would I like to deepen my knowledge?
    - Literature research or own data?
    - Laboratory or field data?
    - In which areas do I want to work?
  
- How do I find the right methodology?
  - Methodology varies depending on the work approach
  - The right methodology is agreed upon in consultation with the supervisor
  - In case of uncertainty, the first supervisor is the right contact person

*Those who can implement their own ideas are often more successful and also find a supervisor more easily*

- Who can be considered as a supervisor?
  - All professors and PDs, as well as some lecturers/scientists with doctoral degrees.
  - Emeritus professors are not eligible for supervision.
- How do I find a suitable supervisor?
  - Who is a good match for my topic/idea?
  - -> Contact, write to or call
- How and when to look for a second supervisor?
  - At the same time or after consultation with the first supervisor.
  - The name of the second supervisor must be noted on the registration form.
- What is the difference between first and second supervisor?
  - First supervisor: active supervisor, contact person and reviewer(grading)
  - Second supervisor: only reviewer (grading)

Face-to-face meetings with the first supervisor are possible, often necessary. (Depending on the type of work)

# External supervision

1 Supervisor MUST be a member of the UNR



- Who can be considered as a supervisor?
  - Professors or PhDs at a university who are additionally authorized to supervise master theses.
  - Scientists without an employment at a university are not accepted.
- How do I find a second supervisor at the faculty UNR?
  - Who is a professional match for my topic/idea?
    - > Contact, write to or call
- Can the laboratories of the faculty be used to analyze external data?
  - As a rule, external master theses are also prepared externally.
  - After consultation it might be possible in exceptional cases.
  - Consultation with the head of the laboratory or the associated professorship is absolutely necessary.

# Registration



- How do I register the master thesis?
  - Form (website of study program or examination office)
- When do I have to/can I register the thesis?
  - Min. 70 ECTS must be successfully completed
  - Can be registered flexibly at any time
  - No deadline by which the thesis must be registered
- Can I register the master thesis if I am still in the internship?
  - Theoretically yes, as a start date is given on the registration form.
- How long does the registration usually take?

(registration of the thesis until receipt of the confirmation letter including the submission date)?

  - Usually only a few days  
(receipt - check - send confirmation letter by mail)

Sometimes a "proposal" is required before the work begins - this does not count towards the writing time, as it is usually required before registration.

- Is there a course on scientific work and writing? (Timetable, outline, creating a research question, research, sources, ...).
  - Basics were taught in the module "ResearchSkills".
  - Offers of the university: ILIAS, library, ZfS
  - Questions directly to SCS, ZfS or at the UB
- What can I do if I have writer's block?
  - Short time out or professional help (-> SWFR)
  - Exchange with supervisor
- How long should the thesis be?
  - No fixed guideline, as different implementations result depending on the approach.
  - Thesis must represent the workload = 900h
  - Consultation and agreement with supervisor necessary

Workplaces are available in the UB and in the Herderbau

# Interruption/extension/illness



- Can the master thesis be interrupted?
  - In justified exceptional cases, you can apply for an extension of the deadline
- What happens in case of prolonged illness?
  - If a medical certificate is available, the deadline can be extended by the duration of the illness.
  - up to a maximum of 6 weeks.
  - The illness must prevent the processing of the master thesis
- What are the reasons for an extension of the deadline?
  - Illness, external circumstances that e.g. do not allow a data recording, ...)
- What is the maximum processing time?
  - 6 months (regular time) + max. 6 weeks justified extension

If the certificate is submitted **AFTER** the illness, it will **NOT** be considered!

Informal requests must be submitted to the Examination Office **immediately** when the reason arises



# Grading



Details should always be discussed with the supervisor, as there are individual preferences and different approaches depending on the subject matter.

- What criteria are used for grading?
  - The submitted work is evaluated as a whole.
  - As a rule, quality rather than quantity applies (structure, content, style, ...)
- Which format is required?
  - 3 written versions, bound (spiral binding is not accepted!)
  - 1 CD (digital version of the thesis)
- How do I find out the grade of the thesis?
  - Check if the grade has been posted at HisInOne
  - Ask the supervisors (grade = average of both grades)
- What happens if I do not pass the thesis (=5,0)?
  - Repetition possible
  - Within 2 months after receiving the notice, a new topic must be registered! (new supervisor possible)

# Defense



- Does the master thesis have to be defended?
  - No!
  - There is no defense, your oral exam or anything else.
  - Everything is done with the submission of the thesis to the examination office.

# Final degree



- How and when do I receive the certificate?
  - Active contact with the examination office after the thesis grade has been posted in HisInOne (if thesis = last performance).
  - Approx. 1 week after the last grade has been posted, the certificate is issued.
  - Receipt: Pick up or send by mail (on request)
  
- Is there an official graduation ceremony with certificate presentation?
  - No

# Exmatriculation/Fees



- How do you get de-registered?
  - Automatically at the end of the semester
  - Actively by application on date xy
- Do I have to re-register if I hand in my master thesis shortly after the beginning of the semester?
  - Yes, you have to be enrolled (= re-registered) until the last work has been done (handing in the master thesis = last work).
  - Fees must also be paid for this semester!
- Do I get tuition fees back if I exmatriculate shortly after the beginning of the semester?
  - If you exmatriculate within 1 month after the beginning of the lecture period, the tuition fees (1500€) and the administrative fee for the current semester will be refunded.

Application for exmatriculation  
recommended  
-> one receives a proof of  
exmatriculation

# Further question



For special questions the  
EXAMINATION OFFICE  
is always the right contact

- Is it allowed to be employed as a student assistant within the scope of my master thesis?
  - yes
- Is it possible to get an insight into work of former students?
  - No, this is officially not possible.
  - Please contact former students directly
  - The student council may be able to help.
- What do I do if I don't get along with the topic/supervisor?
  - Within the first 2 months you can cancel your thesis. Within 4 weeks you have to register a new topic.
  - With the new topic you can also look for a new supervisor.