



Information Sheet: Master's Thesis in Social Anthropology

The module “Master's Thesis in Social Anthropology” can be booked via the University of Zurich online module booking system. The module is a two-semester module but can also be completed in one semester. It counts for 30 ECTS credits towards the master's programme in Social Anthropology and comprises 50–90 pages (22,000–40,000 words) or is a film with a written part of at least 25,000 words.

The information applicable at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences regarding the completion of the master's degree program can be found at <https://www.phil.uzh.ch/en/studies/studyessentials/graduation.html>.

Master's thesis: planning and procedures

The master's thesis and its preparations are an essential part of our master's program. We advise master's students to seek a supervisor during the first semester. A list of possible supervisors can be found on the website of the ISEK – Social and Cultural Anthropology at “[Master's Theses](#)”.

In the second semester and once you have arranged a supervisor, the module “Master-Colloquium I” can be booked. You will create a “Research Concept” as part of this course. You also attend the module “Methods and Research Design” to work out the methodological aspects of your research. If you start your master's programme in a spring semester, the timing of these steps will change. In this case, you will look for a supervisor at the beginning of the first semester while at the same time attending the modules “Master-Colloquium I” and “Methods and Research Design”.

These modules are followed by research, either in the form of fieldwork, museum research or an extended literature research (see the “[Information Sheet for Research Modules for a Master's in Social Anthropology](#)”). After completion of your research, you attend the “Master-Colloquium II”, in which you prepare and present your research report. (Please consult the “[Information Sheet for Research Concept and Research Report](#)”). All documents can be found on the ISEK – Social and Cultural Anthropology website.

Once your work has progressed to the point where you can complete and submit your master's thesis within one or two semesters, book the module “Master's Thesis” in consultation with your supervisor.

Interim discussions and revision

In addition to a preliminary meeting and a debriefing session, two to three interim meetings should be held with the supervisor to discuss the status of the work and to clarify questions regarding content. Before the final submission, a supervisor can be presented either a chapter, several chapters or a complete first draft, which will then be revised based on the supervisor's comments before submission of the final version. The exact procedure and number of chapters read by a supervisor should be discussed between supervisor and student in advance.

A “Master's Thesis Code of Practice for Supervision” is available to supervisors for this process. It is closely related to this “Information Sheet for a Master's Thesis”. Additionally, a supervisor explains in



advance their own evaluation criteria and their weighting to the student, adopting the document “Master’s Thesis Evaluation” to their needs and sharing it with the student.

Booking the module “Master’s Thesis in Social Anthropology”

The “Master’s Thesis” module is booked via the regular online module booking system within the booking deadlines provided for master’s theses. You should only book this module once you have agreed upon this step with your supervisor. This is usually the case when the “Research Report” from the module “Master-Colloquium II” has been accepted by the supervisor.

The name of the supervisor and the provisional title of the master’s thesis must be reported to the Office of the Dean of Studies following the module booking deadline.

If a master’s thesis is not passed, the module can be booked again but a new topic must be specified for the second booking.

Supervisors

A master’s thesis can be supervised by our chair holders (professors), titular professors, privatdozents and members of the mid-level faculty. Supervisors must have at least a doctorate in social anthropology or an equivalent degree and have taught social anthropology for at least two semesters. With the exception of titular professors and privatdozents, supervisors must be employed at ISEK – Social and Cultural Anthropology at the time of booking. Associated researchers who are not employed at ISEK but have particular expertise can act as co-supervisors. The final responsibility lies with the person who is authorized to supervise a thesis according to the criteria mentioned above.

Master’s thesis for a minor degree

It is not possible to write a master’s thesis for a minor.

Evaluation

An evaluation is prepared for each master’s thesis. The student receives it together with the grade from the supervisor. The document “Master’s Thesis Evaluation” is available to supervisors, who may adopt it to their needs.

Submission dates and deadlines

For completion in an autumn semester:

1 December: latest possible submission of the thesis to the supervisor and the Office of the Dean of Studies

9 January: deadline for the supervisor to submit the grade and the written evaluation to our teaching coordinator (contact information below)

For completion in a spring semester:

1 June: latest possible submission of the thesis to the supervisor and the Office of the Dean of Studies

9 July: deadline for the supervisor to submit the grade and the written evaluation to our teaching coordinator (contact information below)



Teaching coordinator contact

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Miriam Wohlgemuth, teaching coordinator, miriam.wohlgemuth@uzh.ch

Module responsibility

Please contact Prof. Dr. Annuska Derks, annuska.derks@uzh.ch