Bachelor's Thesis Guidelines & Requirements

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*****In 2020-2021, Prof. Frank will only be
supervising theses that are written in English.*****

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*****Laura Rothfritz supervises theses in both
German and English*****

The most up-to-date source of information about thesis guidelines for the Information Management Lehrstuhl can be found in Moodle:

- Information Management Thesis Advising Moodle course page:
    - https://moodle.hu-berlin.de/course/view.php?id=97462
    - enrolment key: IBIResearch

Note: the requirements described below may be changed, subject to the approval of both reviewers as well as the student.

Thesis Advising Roles

A thesis is reviewed by two people. The primary advisor is responsible for advising you in the preparation of your thesis, the second reader assesses your work as an independent reader but does not provide assistance or supervision while you are writing.

The decision about who will be able to serve as your primary advisor will depend on both your research topic and your research methods. It is important for supervisors to consider the degree to which we will be able to provide unique advising about your topic and methods, and the type of support that you would receive from another advisor.

Primary Advisor

Guidelines and instructions for theses which are supervised by Prof. Frank or Frau Rothfritz are described in detail below.

Second Reader

The second advisor agrees to follow the process and requirements that you decide upon with your primary advisor. We trust in the expertise of your primary advisor, and any assessment of your thesis will be based upon how well you have carried out the work that you and your advisor agreed upon.

Thesis Process

The following guidelines explain the process that you should expect if Prof. Frank or Frau Rothfritz are your primary thesis advisor.

- Join the Information Management Thesis Advising Moodle course page:
  - https://moodle.hu-berlin.de/course/view.php?id=97462
  - enrolment key: IBIResearch
- If your primary thesis advisor is in the Information Management Lehrstuhl, then you will use this Moodle course to submit documents and communicate with your advisor(s) throughout the course of your thesis work.

1.   Topic Selection

- If you would like to write a thesis with either Prof. Frank or Frau Rothfritz, the first thing to do is schedule a meeting.
  - To meet with Prof. Frank, you can sign up for office hours here: https://calendly.com/rebecca-frank/office-hours
  - To meet with Frau Rothfritz, you can schedule a meeting here: https://calendly.com/laura-rothfritz/sprechstunde
- At this meeting, we will discuss your research interests, and agree on a general topic for your thesis.

2.   Proposal/Exposé

2.1   Process

- Once we have agreed on a topic for your thesis, you will need to come up with your research questions, your research design, and a timeline for your thesis.
- Before you file your topic, you should prepare a thesis proposal (exposé). This document will be an early outline of your work, and will help guide your writing.

- You will submit this proposal/exposé via the Information Management Thesis Advising Moodle course.
- After you submit your proposal via Moodle you should schedule a meeting with your advisor to discuss your plans.
  - At this meeting, your advisor may ask for additional information, or may request that you revise your proposal in some way. The goal of this process is to make sure that you have a solid plan for your thesis before you begin.
- The proposal is a very important part of the research process. Thesis advisors from the Information Management Lehrstuhl will not sign the *Antrag auf Bestätigung der Bachelorarbeit* until we have approved your research proposal.

2.2 Format

- 300-500 words, plus a list of approx. 10 references
  - (references do not count toward the word limit)
- Can be written long-form, or formatted as an outline
- Other formats should be discussed in advance
- See Moodle for more information about the proposal document

2.3 Content

Your Thesis Proposal/Exposé should include the following elements, clearly marked, and can be written as an outline or a narrative:

- **Thesis Title**: in order to register your thesis topic you will need a unique, descriptive title
- **Problem Statement**: what is the problem that you want to address with this thesis?
- **Research Question(s)**: what is/are your research question(s)?
- **Background/Literature**: include here a list of approximately 10 articles, books, and/or other sources that are relevant to your topic.
- **Research Design**: describe the research methods that you will use for data collection and analysis.
- **Plan of Work**: create a timeline for your project, which includes information about: data collection, data analysis, writing, editing, etc. Be sure to include your deadlines, as well as the times when you plan to meet with your advisors.

3. Thesis

After your proposal/exposé has been accepted by your primary advisor, you will submit your thesis topic to the Prüfungsausschuss.

3.1   Meetings

You should plan to meet with your primary advisor approximately 3 times after your topic is accepted. These meetings should be spaced out across the 10 weeks that you have to work on your thesis so that you can talk about the different phases of work (data collection, data analysis, writing, etc.).

You can schedule these meetings by signing up for office hours, or via email.

- First meeting: during weeks 1-3
- Second meeting: during weeks 4-6
- Third meeting: during weeks 7-9

Additional consultations may be possible, but are not guaranteed, so please prepare well for each of these meetings.

3.1.1 Forschungskolleg

We strongly recommend participation in the Forschungscolleg. You should make every effort to attend, as it is required for Bachelor students. In the Forschungskolleg we discuss topics such as selecting a thesis topic, formulating research questions, designing data collection strategies, writing a literature review, etc. These topics will not be addressed during office hours unless you have additional questions beyond what was covered in the Forschungskolleg.

3.2   Content

All theses should follow a classical empirical research paper structure, unless you and your advisor have agreed upon an alternative format ahead of time.

Your thesis should follow APA style, and should be approximately 80,000 characters without spaces. This includes all text, including section headings. The character count does not include: title page, table of contents, references, appendices. Footnotes will be counted, as long as they follow the APA style guidelines as specified below.

3.2.1   Required Sections
- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Research Methods
- Findings

- Discussion
- Conclusion
- References
- Appendices (if applicable)

3.2.2 Figures, Tables, Etc.

Tables included in the text of your thesis will count toward the number of required characters without spaces.

Each figure and/or image included in your thesis will be counted as 100 characters without spaces regardless of the size or content of the figure/image.

3.3 Formatting

Your thesis should follow the guidelines described in the APA Style Guide (7th Edition), unless you agree on a different format with your advisor: https://apastyle.apa.org/.

- Quick reference available here:
  - https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/
  - https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/heading-template-student-paper.pdf
  - https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html