



## Fact sheet, Bachelor's and Master's theses

Fact sheets provide general information about the organisation of degree courses and reflect the present legal situation. They express the provisions issued by the University bodies in concrete terms and summarise the most important points. The Dean of Studies issues this fact sheet pursuant to Art. 77(1) of the University Statutes [Consolidated Statute Book of the Canton of St.Gallen No. 217.15; US] to express the implementation provisions for the Bachelor's and Master's Level in concrete terms to regulate procedures concerning Bachelor's and Master's theses.

### 1 Scope of application

This fact sheet is applicable to *Students at Bachelor's level (after completion of the Assessment Year) and at Master's Level*. It expresses the submission process of Bachelor's and Master's theses in concrete terms, establishes the relevant formal criteria and deadlines in a legally binding fashion. Responsibility: Dean's Advisory Office ([bachelor@unisg.ch](mailto:bachelor@unisg.ch); [master@unisg.ch](mailto:master@unisg.ch)).

### 2 Procedure and course of action

- 2.1 Only the application forms posted on the StudentWeb may be used.
- 2.2 **Supervisors/co-supervisors:** Students contact a possible supervisor and agree on a topic. Bachelor's theses do not have a co-supervisor; for Master's theses, students also discuss a possible co-supervisor with their supervisory, and will then contact the co-supervisor for their consent. In case the supervisor do not use their right to recommend a co-supervisor, student may contact a possible co-supervisor directly. Supervisors confirm with their signature the topic and the supervision of the thesis .
- 2.3 Students subsequently submit the completed original application form with all necessary signatures to the Dean's Advisory Office (personally, by post or by e-mail). Four dates per year are available for this purpose.
- 2.4 As soon as the Dean's Advisory Office has registered the application, students will receive an automatic confirmation of registration by e-mail.
- 2.5 Students (or proxy with power of attorney) will then have to personally collect the topic sheet from the Dean's Advisory Office. The twelve-month period allowed for the completion of the thesis begins with the record date of the period which contains the individual topic collection date. If the topic is not collected within the period indicated, it will expire. The attempt will then be regarded as unsuccessful, and it will not be graded. The application procedure will have to be followed once more from the start. The same topic cannot be registered a second time.
- 2.6 If the topic, i.e. the title, is changed during the time allowed for the completion of the thesis (in terms of content or form), the supervisor will have to update and sign this change in the place provided on the topic sheet. The adapted and signed topic sheet must be submitted along with the Bachelor's or Master's thesis. Alternatively, the supervisor can also send his or her consent by e-mail to the Dean's Advisory Office.
- 2.7 The thesis can be uploaded in EDOK (platform for the electronic repository of Bachelor's and Master's theses) and then submitted to the Dean's Advisory Office personally or by post (date of postmark = date of submission) at any time during the time allowed for their completion (cf. para. 7). Any thesis that has not been submitted on time and has formal flaws will be awarded grade 1.0, and will therefore be regarded as failed.

- 2.8 In justified cases, the Dean of Studies may grant an extension of the writing period of up to six months (2 x 3 months) at the student's written request and the supervisor's approval. Illnesses of relatively short duration (shorter than 7 days), short-term indispositions such as headaches, feeling unwell, etc., as well as IT-generated delays cannot be claimed as reasons for an extension of the deadline and fall within the students' risk area. Applications for an extension of the deadline must be submitted to the Dean of Studies no later than 7 days before the final deadline.
- 2.9 On the four dates defined by the Senate Committee, the theses submitted by that time will be passed on to the supervisors for assessment, for which the supervisors have about **10 weeks for Bachelor's theses** and about **8 weeks for Master's theses**. In the case of Master's theses, the supervisors will then pass on their assessment to the co-supervisors. Under no circumstances can theses be passed on outside the defined submission periods.
- 2.10 Semester enrolment: during the entire period allowed for the completion of the thesis until the official submission deadline, students must be enrolled in a regular semester; if need be, there is a possibility of applying for semester leave (cf. fact sheet "Matriculated students on leave").

### 3 Topic and language

- 3.1 The *topic of a Bachelor's thesis* may derive from *core studies* or from *contextual studies*. The *topic of a Master's thesis* may basically derive from *any constituent of the Master's degree course*. The curricula of individual Master's programmes define whether a topic must focus solely on core studies or may also derive from contextual studies.
- 3.2 Bachelor's *theses must be written in German or English as a matter of principle, while Master's theses* must be written in the *Master's programme's main language of instruction*. Theses can also be written in another language, depending on corresponding implementation provisions.

### 4 Supervisors and co-supervisors

- 4.1 At the time of application, supervisors/co-supervisors must be chosen from among the (full) professors, the associate professors, the habilitated lecturers, the visiting professors in residence, the permanent lecturers, the assistant professors and the retired faculty members of the University of St.Gallen, the latter up to and including their 69th year. Assistants cannot be designated as co-supervisors.
- 4.2 In exceptional cases, lecturers of the University of St.Gallen may also act as supervisors for a Bachelor's or Master's thesis, provided that they hold a lectureship at the time of application and provided that the directors of the programme in which the student is enrolled grant their consent.
- 4.3 Supervisors may only be changed if there are objective reasons and with the approval of the Dean of Studies. A change of supervisors marks the beginning of a second attempt.
- 4.4 Bachelor's theses are assessed and graded by the supervisor. The co-supervisor of a Master's thesis comments on the supervisor's assessment. They jointly grade the thesis.

### 5 Support

- 5.1 Supervisors may impose certain conditions on students who write their Master's thesis in conjunction with an external institution. Students must be notified of these conditions when they are given their topic.
- 5.2 Students must write their Bachelor's or Master's thesis on their own. They are given appropriate support by their supervisors.
- 5.3 Any support used, such as proofreaders, translators, graphic artists, etc., must be reported in the list of support and aids. The use of any undeclared help is prohibited. The employment of a ghostwriter may have disciplinary consequences which may result in the student being expelled from the University or stripped of his/her degree. In addition, there is the danger of lifelong susceptibility to

blackmail.

## 6 Form and size

6.1 The layout is subject to the usual criteria of academic working technique. Quotations must be presented in a systematic and consistent manner; the following quotation standards are recommended but should be discussed with the supervisor in advance:

- Business Administration: APA standard (Metzger, C. (2010), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (11th revised ed.), Aarau: Sauerländer); at least 15 sources on the topic.
- Economics: APA standard or MLA standard (Metzger, C. (2010), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (11th revised ed.), Aarau: Sauerländer).
- Law: APA standard (Metzger, C. (2010), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (11th revised ed.), Aarau: Sauerländer) or according to Forstmoser/Ogorek/Vogt, *Juristisches Arbeiten*, 4th new ed., Zurich/Basel/Geneva 2008 (specific legal modifications in accordance with Metzger/ Spoun/Mastronardi (2004), *Einführung in das wissenschaftliche Schreiben* (script, 1st semester) and supplementary references for the term paper in law (in the StudentWeb) can be taken over).

6.2 Particular attention must be paid to the fact that quotations in accordance with the MLA and the APA standards always require the exact indication of the page. It is imperative that quotations are able to be verified without any problems and with the smallest possible amount of work. With regard to sources that have no page numbers, such as electronic publications or unprinted sources, the precise indication must be effected in another way: chapter or paragraph titles, paragraph numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.

6.3 Papers which fail to quote sufficiently or have no source indications at all do not satisfy the criteria for academic work and may have disciplinary consequences.

6.4 A Bachelor's or Master's thesis has to contain the following tables/lists:

- a complete table of contents with page references,
- a list of the literature that has been used,
- a list of the Internet sources that have been used,
- a list of support and aids that have been used,
- a list of any meetings and interviews with informants,
- a specimen of any interview and observation documents that have been used.

6.5 Students have to append the declaration of authorship to their Bachelor's or Master's thesis and put their original signature to it.

6.6 If a Bachelor's or Master's thesis has been written in conjunction with an external institution that has made confidential data available, a declaration of discretion must be appended and signed by hand. In such a case, the Master's thesis must not be passed on, in accordance with Point 6.5. of the Implementation Provisions for the Master's Level, and may not be read.

6.7 The Bachelor's or Master's thesis must be submitted in bound form (adhesive binding is only, spiral binding is not permitted). The paper used must weigh 80gr/m<sup>2</sup> and must not be printed on both sides. The cover must be visible. All the copies must have an identical cover with the following information:

- title of the Master's thesis (complete topic),
- supervisor's first name and surname,
- author's first name and surname.

6.8 The size of a Bachelor's or Master's thesis particularly depends on each individual topic. The actual text part (without appendix) should not exceed fifty pages for a Bachelor's thesis and sixty pages for a Master's thesis (not printed on both sides) and should be written with a 1.2-1.5 line spacing in an easily legible font.

## 7 Submission of the thesis

- 7.1** A *Bachelor's thesis* must be submitted *in hard-copy duplicate*, a *Master's thesis in hard-copy triplicate* within the period allowed for the completion of the thesis and must also be submitted electronically through EDOK in PDF format according to the resolution of the Senate Committee of the University of St.Gallen of 3 February 2004 (cf. information below). This procedure does not only allow for a faster and more efficient check for plagiarism but provides electronic access to the best Bachelor's theses and the successful Master's theses. Only *Bachelor theses* with *grades 5.5, 5.75 or 6.0* are archived electronically. *All the Master theses with satisfactory grades* are archived electronically. Access to such theses is limited to library workstations and students and staff of the University of St.Gallen.
- 7.2** **Generation of PDF files:** instructions for the generation of PDF files can be found in the InfoTools Guide (published on the PC-Tutors website) or on the Library website. The PDF files must not be protected by passwords, and the fonts must be embedded. Please note: the copies to be submitted to the Dean's Advisory Office should be printed out in PDF format in order to prevent differences with regard to contents and layout.
- 7.3** **Submission by EDOK:** instructions for the electronic submission of theses are published in the "EDOK-Dateneingabe" database. Please note that theses cannot be submitted to supervisors by e-mail, which may result in grade 1.0 since the thesis has not been correctly submitted.
- 7.4** **Submission of hard copies:** hard copies and the signed receipt of the electronic submission (EDOK receipt) must be submitted to the office of the Dean's Advisory Office.
- 7.5** Alternatively, there is the possibility of submitting the Bachelor's or Master's thesis incl. EDOK receipt by post (from foreign countries as quickly as possible, for example by courier; date of postmark = date of submission). The parcel must bear an easily legible mailing date. For reasons of safety, it is recommended that it should be sent by registered post. Please note: the time zone (GMT +1) is relevant. The parcel must not be handed in to any public office (police station or other offices).
- Postal address: Universität St.Gallen, Dean's Advisory Office, Dufourstrasse 50, 9000 St.Gallen.**
- 7.6** As soon as the thesis is registered at the Dean's Advisory Office, the students will automatically receive confirmation by e-mail.

## 8 Notification of grade and discussion of the thesis

- 8.1** The grade awarded for a thesis is based on the academic achievement, as well as on the form and linguistic expression.
- 8.2** Students are notified of the grade for their Bachelor's or Master's thesis by the Dean of Studies. Prior to this point in time, no information about the grading of a thesis may be released. A Bachelor's or Master's thesis cannot be returned to a student for revision.
- 8.3** Students are entitled to a discussion of their thesis. Supervisors permit them to inspect their assessment of the thesis and, in the case of a Master's thesis, the co-supervisor's comments on their assessment.
- 8.4** If there is a suspicion of partial or full plagiarism, the supervisor may invite the student concerned to an oral defence of his/her work.

## 9 Failed theses

- 9.1** According to Art. 26 of the Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's Level and Art. 40 of the Examination Regulations for the Master's Level, a Bachelor's or Master's thesis graded as unsatisfactory (grade <4.0) is deemed to be a failed attempt at completing the major or the Master's programme. If there is a possibility of a second attempt, the thesis can be repeated with a new topic.
- 9.2** A re-registration is only possible in the subsequent semester.

## 10 Forwarding and publishing

Further information on forwarding and publishing can be found in the fact sheet entitled “Requirements for the publication of Bachelor’s and Master’s theses”.

## 11 Further information and contact

### 11.1 Further information

Further information can be found in the StudentWeb at <http://www.bachelor-stufe.unisg.ch/bachelor-arbeit> and <http://www.master-stufe.unisg.ch/master-arbeit>. Please also consult the following fact sheets and information, in particular:

- deadlines for Bachelor’s and Master’s Theses,
- fact sheet “Quotations and plagiarism”,
- fact sheet “Requirements for the publication of Bachelor’s and Master’s theses”,
- EDOK data submission,
- InfoTools Guide,
- faculty of the University of St.Gallen with whom a Bachelor’s or Master’s thesis can be written,
- declaration of authorship,
- declaration of discretion,
- faculty contacts.

### 11.2 Contact

For any communication, please contact the relevant level of the Dean’s Advisory Office by e-mail ([bachelor@unisg.ch](mailto:bachelor@unisg.ch) or [master@unisg.ch](mailto:master@unisg.ch)).

## 12 Effectiveness

This fact sheet was put into effect by the Dean of Studies on 1 February 2019<sup>1</sup>. The schedule overview for Bachelor’s and Master’s theses is adjusted by the Dean’s Advisory Office every three months. In principle, the fact sheet that is in effect at the time of application is applicable. If the fact sheet is modified or adjusted in a way that is intended to make it applicable to work in progress, students will be informed personally by e-mail.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to Art. 123 of the University Statutes (Consolidated Statute Book of the Canton of St.Gallen No. 217.15, US), only the German version of this fact sheet is legally binding in cases of disputes regarding translation and interpretation.