



## Guidelines for BSc and MSc Theses

### Professorship of International Political Economy

The Professorship of International Political Economy at the Munich School of Politics and Public Policy and the Department of Governance welcomes students wanting to write their Bachelor's or Master's thesis in the areas of International and Comparative Political Economy.

If you would like to write your thesis at the Professorship of International Political Economy:

- Please send an email to our team, at [ipe.team@hfp.tum.de](mailto:ipe.team@hfp.tum.de). In your email, please identify a potential supervisor. You can find current members of the professorship on the department website, <https://www.hfp.tum.de/ipe/team/>.

Please indicate the topic you are interested in and share a short sketch of the research question, relevant literature, your hypothesis, and a research design. In your email, please also provide selected courses taken and other experiences that might be relevant to your thesis proposal. Please collect this information in one page, sent as a pdf attachment. This document serves as a basis for discussion in a first meeting.

- If we can supervise your thesis, we will schedule a first meeting. After this first meeting, your supervisor will ask you to write up a short proposal of up to two pages. Once you are ready to discuss your proposal, schedule a second meeting with your supervisor.
- Once your supervisor accepts the proposal as the basis of a thesis, they will sign and submit the supervisory agreement. The date listed on the supervisory agreement is the official start date of the thesis writing period. Bachelor's students have 3 months, Master's students have 6 months to complete the thesis (12 months for part-time Master's students).
- You should meet with your supervisor once a month to discuss the progress of your thesis. You should schedule these meetings with your supervisor proactively and in advance. For each meeting, you should prepare a short presentation (of at most four slides) to guide the meeting.
- We expect you to present your thesis in the research colloquium of the professorship to other students and faculty members in month 2 for Bachelor's and month 4 for Master's students (month 10 for part-time Master's students).



Your thesis should make a clear contribution to an existing body of knowledge. This requires you to identify and describe the existing body of knowledge, but such a literature review is not the main task. One of the most important criteria when evaluating the thesis will be whether a reader already familiar with the literature can learn something new from the thesis.

This contribution can take many different forms. For example, you might want to explain an outcome that has not been explained before, you might want to identify a new cause of an already known outcome, or you might want to explain how an already established relationship between two variables depends on or translates to a different context. In exceptional circumstances, we will consider purely descriptive theses. Generally, however, your thesis should identify a relationship between variables and seek to predict or explain an outcome.

We accept theses based on game-theoretic models or empirical analyses, including quantitative and qualitative analyses. More important than the specific method is that you explain and justify your chosen methods and research design. We are not able to supervise normative theses.

Unless agreed to otherwise, your thesis should follow the guidelines below:

- **Language:** The final thesis may be in German or English for Bachelor's students; it must be written in English for Master's students.
- **Length:** We recommend a length of 7,000-12,000 words (15-30 pages, excluding appendices) for Bachelor's students and a length of 10,000-15,000 words (30-45 pages, excluding appendices) for Master's students. If you expect to write a considerably shorter or longer thesis, you should consult with your supervisor and get their written approval.
- **Citations:** Follow a consistent citation format. Which format you choose is up to you, as long as it follows standard practice. Be consistent throughout. For example, for journal articles, include year, volume, issue, and page numbers throughout; and be consistent in whether you use full author names or abbreviate first names. If in doubt, consult with your supervisor early on. We recommend using citation management software.
- **Format:** Use a standard font with a size no larger than 12pt and 1.5 line spacing. You are welcome to use the thesis template provided by TUM, but this is not mandatory. Make sure to label all figures and to indicate a source for any figures and data used in the paper. Tables and figures should follow a consistent format throughout and be of publication quality.
- **Structure:** Your final thesis should have a clear structure consistent with research articles published in social science journals. Generally, and unless agreed to otherwise by your supervisor, this means the thesis should have an introduction, a brief literature review, a theory section that derives clear hypotheses and spells these out, an empirical section, and a conclusion, followed by a list of references and any appendices.