



CBU FOR JOINT THESIS SEMINAR, 3 ECTS (updated 5 January 2016)

GUIDELINES

The aim of the thesis seminar is to learn about scientific research processes, and to receive academic peer feedback on your MSc thesis work. You will get familiar with written and oral research reporting. **One part of the course is held as an online seminar, and it consists of the following parts: participation in at least 3 online thesis seminars, presentation of your final MSc thesis, and reflective report on your MSc thesis process.** All these parts need to be completed for the passing this course in addition to the monthly face-to-face thesis seminars (face-to-face seminars are only for the students whose home university is UEF). You can participate in the online seminars even though you would not have yet started your MSc thesis research. The discussions will take place in Moodle <https://moodle.uef.fi/course/view.php?id=10327> (Key code 3513080)

MSc thesis is typically the first independent research work that is done during academic career. Monthly thesis seminars and the online thesis seminar offer a possibility for you to receive and give academic feedback on MSc thesis work. Critical evaluation of research is an inseparable part of science, and of producing new scientific knowledge. You will have a chance to critically evaluate not only your own research but also your colleagues' research. Reflecting on your own work and choices is an inseparable part of learning process not only in academic life but also in working life.

COURSEWORK

- 1. ONLINE THESIS SEMINAR.** Online thesis seminar runs through the academic year. You need to give presentation on your final MSc thesis. **In addition, you need to actively participate to at least 3 different seminars (your own presentation is not included in these). Active participation means that you will listen to the presentation, participate to the discussion by making comments and suggestions, and asking the presenter at least three questions** related to different aspects of the presented research plan: the background of the research, relevance of the research, research material, research questions, methods, analysis of the results etc. When asking the questions, put the focus both on scientific and practical aspects of the research. **Each presentation will be open for discussion in Moodle for two weeks after the CBU staff has put it online**
- 2. PRESENTATION OF YOUR FINAL MSC THESIS.** The presentation of your final MSc thesis typically takes place when you have submitted your MSc thesis to the faculty. The presentation has to include six different parts: introduction, research questions, material, methods, discussion, and conclusions. As you have already presented introduction, research questions, material, and methods in the presentation of your MSc thesis research plan, you

need to only briefly describe these parts just to give the relevant background for the listeners. If the original research plan has significantly changed, describe it in brief. **You have maximum 15 minutes for your presentation. Your presentation will be open for discussion in Moodle for two weeks after the CBU staff has put it online.** For successful completion of the presentation of your final MSc thesis work, you need to answer all the questions asked in Moodle. Note that your response may raise further questions that you need to answer as well.

Remember to invite your supervisor(s) and other relevant parties to listen to and comment on the online presentation of your final MSc thesis research.

- 3. REFLECTIVE REPORT OF YOUR THESIS PROCESS.** After submitting your MSc thesis work to the faculty, have a critical self-evaluation of your MSc thesis research process. Write your reflection in four different phases: problem articulation, problem analysis, hypothesis generation and action stage. The length of the report has to be between 10 to 15 pages (Times New Roman, font size 12, line spacing 1.5). The report should be a proper representation of the time spent on the thesis process, online discussions and presentations of research plan and final MSc thesis.

Use the following questions as a guide for your reflection: write the report in an essay form, do not only answer the questions but reflect on them. **Reflect on your Master's thesis, your Master's thesis research process, yourself as a researcher, the public discussion on your final MSc thesis and any other issue related to your thesis process that you find relevant to reflect on.** Later in your professional life you can use reflection for instance in learning from past experiences and planning for the future.

Problem articulation

- What do you consider having done especially well during your thesis research?
- What type of feelings did the research process brought up in you?
- What do you think in general about the thesis process?
- What type of issues occurred during the research process?
- What type of researcher you were?
- What type of problems can you identify in your thesis research (background material, selection of research questions, material, methods of data collection and analysis, use of time, writing process, ethical issues etc.)?
- What did you learn?

Problem analysis

- Why do you think you think as you do about the above mentioned issues?
- Why do you think you feel like you do about the research process, online discussions, giving and receiving academic feedback etc.?
- Why do you think you made the different choices as you did?
- Why do you think your research process went as it went?

Hypothesis generation

- How would you improve your MSc thesis research process now?
- How could you have done your thesis differently?
- How are the issues you raised similar to or different from other issues for instance in your professional life (past, present and future)?

- How could you improve yourself as a researcher?
- How can you do issues differently in future?
- How you can use the learned information in your present or future life?

Action stage

- What type of alternatives could you have used (background material, selection of research questions, material, methods of data collection and analysis, etc.)?
- If you would start your thesis research now, what would you do differently?
- What type of researcher would you be in future?
- What type of implications can you derive from the learning outcomes for future?
- What have you learned from the research process, the online discussions, giving and receiving academic feedback etc.?
- What have you learned from writing this reflective report?
- Which of the learned issues can you apply to your studies, to your current or future work, or any other aspect of your life (past, present or future)?

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECORDING AND SENDING YOUR ONLINE THESIS PRESENTATION

SCREENCAST-O-MATIC

- Go to <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/>
- Press “Start recording”
- For few seconds, you will get the message “Downloading the latest version”. A small plug-in is being downloaded (only the first time you use the website).
- You will get a square with some menu options. Define there the screen size (as full screen), and activate the webcam. (Microphone should already be active, but if needed, simply choose the one.)
- Load your Power Point and maximise the view of the slide to the full screen. Please note that the presentation slides will be partly covered by the camera picture. The size and place can be adjusted after recording but enough space should be left in one of the corners of the slides.
- Press the red button (rec) and start talking after the countdown. The program will record your voice, image (if the webcam is on) and the different slides as you go through them.
- Esc (escape), Control+p or clicking in the box at the menu at the bottom of your screen are the three alternative ways to pause the recording. After that, you can either continue (“restart”) with the recording or simply finalize it (“done”).
- Once done with the recording, select the option “Publish to video file”. Choose the “Windows media” file as the video file, and “save video”, choosing a name and a place to save it.

SENDING THE FILES

Once your video is ready, you may use any of the following alternatives to send it by email to Marjoriitta using any of the available free services, e.g.:

<https://filesender.funet.fi/> (works with your UEF username and password, choose “Haka-login” and then University of Eastern Finland (Itä-Suomen yliopisto) from the list)

<https://www.yousendit.com/>

<https://rapidshare.com/>

EVALUATION OF THE THESIS SEMINAR

The thesis seminar will be evaluated after completing all compulsory parts as Pass/Fail.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON REFLECTIVE REPORTS ETC.

Daudelin, M. 1996. Learning from experience through reflection. *Organizational dynamics* 24 (3): 36-48.

Rosier, g. 2002. Using reflective reports to improve case method. *Journal of management development* 21 (8): 589-597.

Seibert, K. 1999. Reflection-in-action: tools for cultivating on-the-job learning conditions. *Organizational dynamics* 27 (3): 54-65.

Ylijoki, O. 2001. Master's thesis writing from a narrative approach. *Studies in higher education* 26(1): 21-34.