

Final theses supervised by the IUP working group

Landscape Planning and Ecosystem Services



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General notes on the document

The following information is intended to help you prepare your thesis under the supervision of the Landscape Planning and Ecosystem Services working group in a structured manner, keep an eye on formal deadlines and complete the work in the time available. The recommendations apply to both Bachelor's and Master's theses.

1 Time schedule

You are free to choose the registration time for your thesis. However, we recommend the registration times recommended in Appendix I (Bachelor) and II (Master) in order to avoid additional semester fees for the following semester by submitting your thesis on time. If you are planning to study for a Master's degree in the following semester, the transition will be successful due to the recommended registration times, as no workload for completing the Bachelor's thesis falls into the first Master's semester. Please note that the evaluation of your thesis may take another 4-6 weeks after submission.

2 Key questions for finding a topic

Content

To find a topic for your thesis, look in Stud.IP in the Bachelor's or Master's course under "Files" in the folder with the topics offered. If you would prefer to work on your own topic, ask yourself the following questions about the content:

- Which courses or topics appealed to me during my studies, aroused my interest or curiosity?
- What are the current or politically exciting topics?
- On which topics have I already done projects, excursions or an internship?
- What research projects are currently underway in the [Landscape Planning and Ecosystem Services working group](#)?
- What should be specifically considered/ done in your own thesis?
- Should a specific planning process or instrument be analyzed/evaluated, actual planning carried out, a specific protected asset/landscape function considered, existing methods applied or new ones developed?

For Bachelor's theses, we recommend using the “Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten für Planer:innen” to prepare the content and/or methodology of the Bachelor's thesis.

Methodological

In addition to the content, the methods to be used also play an important role in scientific work. Ask yourself before you start:

- Which methods am I interested in or which methods might I already have prior knowledge of that I can build on?
- Would I rather use social science methods (surveys, interviews), work mainly on the basis of literature, carry out GIS modelling or map biotopes?
- Is there data on my topic that I can base my analysis on?

3 Find a supervisor

You decide on a thematic focus for your thesis and look for a supervisor at the IUP. You may know someone from teaching and/or find a person who fits the topic according to their profile on the IUP website. You can find the team of the working group Landscape Planning and Ecosystem Services on this [website](#).

Secondary supervision can be requested from the entire Faculty of Architecture and Landscape or, if necessary, by external experts.

Once you have found a person, send him/ her an email to ask whether supervision is possible. State the topic and a rough objective as well as the planned start date of your thesis. Talk to the first supervisor first and agree with him/her who would be suitable as a second supervisor before contacting other people.

4 Scope of supervising

The amount of supervision required for theses can vary slightly depending on the topic. However, lecturers usually supervise several theses at the same time, have other teaching commitments and are usually involved in research projects. In order to organize the supervision well, we therefore ask you to observe the following information.

To ensure a good start for the thesis, we offer one to two preliminary meetings (see timetable) to concretize the topic and objectives, as well as up to three supervision appointments during the thesis writing period. There is also a final colloquium. During the supervision appointments, we always provide feedback on the objectives and research questions and also offer a discussion on the planned approach and methodology.

Please prepare the appointments well and send the required documents to the supervisors in good time, at least 3 working days before the appointment, with a reference to the questions to be clarified. Arrange meetings with the supervisor(s) well in advance (at least 2 weeks in advance). As soon as you have drawn up a timetable at the beginning of your work, you can also arrange fixed meeting dates and should set the day and time for the colloquium together with the supervisor(s).

5 Exposé

Please prepare a short exposé of your thesis before registering your thesis. The exposé may consist of 3 to max. 4 pages and should include:

- a problem statement, ideally with the most important scientific references the work is based on (approx. ½ page),
- the intended objective and possible research questions (approx. ¼ page),
- planned work steps and methods to be used (approx. ¾ page),
- a (rough) timetable and
- a list of references.

You can also create a preliminary outline to pre-structure your thesis. We recommend the short videos WAPS(U)05 and WAPS(U)06, which you can find on Stud.IP in the Bachelor's and Master's course under the "Recordings" tab.

6 Scope of the thesis

As a general rule, write as much as necessary but as little as possible. All research questions formulated in the thesis must be addressed in full. Basic principles are only explained in as much detail as is absolutely necessary to understand the research question and the argumentation. Please note that your thesis is not a textbook and therefore does not aim to provide a broad presentation of general knowledge. The target audience of the thesis is an informed specialist audience, which is why essential concepts and technical terms should be clearly defined in the text, but not unnecessarily elaborated.

Expected scope incl. figures, tables and bibliography (without appendix):

- Bachelor thesis 30-50 pages (max. 17,000 words)
- Master's thesis 50-70 pages (max. 24,000 words)

Please discuss any deviations with your supervisor.

Master's theses can also be written in the format of a scientific article. For particularly high-quality theses, there is the possibility of submitting them to a scientific journal.

The colloquium for the thesis takes place within the writing/ processing time. We recommend scheduling it 2-3 weeks before the submission of the thesis in order to be able to incorporate discussion points from the colloquium into the thesis. Please arrange the date with the supervisors in good time (e.g. halfway through the thesis) and reserve a room. Send an invitation to fellow students and supervisors 1-2 weeks before the colloquium. For the colloquium date, make sure that the necessary technical equipment and, if necessary, other materials are available. For the presentation and the subsequent discussion, follow the guidelines below - discuss details with the supervisors:

- Bachelor 15-20 min presentation plus approx. 15-20 min discussion
- Master 20-25 min presentation plus approx. 15-20 min discussion

7 Notes on formalities

You can find further working aids for final theses and project work on the website of the Institute of Environmental Planning under [Studies>Work tools](#):

- Cover page template
- IUP citation rules incl. citation style for Citavi and Zotero
- Assessment criteria for student theses and projects
- Instructions for plan folding
- Guidelines for gender-equitable language

Please also note the information provided on Stud.IP in the Bachelor's and Master's course, in particular the examination regulations and checklist for final theses.

Attachment I: Recommendation for the time schedule of a Bachelor thesis (optional with prev. Ausarbeitung)

	Term	Preparation						Last term/ Bachelor thesis																							
	Week Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Module	Work step																														
Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten für Planerinnen und Planer	Conceptualize thesis topic	x	(x)																												
	Contact potential first supervisor		x																												
	Set start date with first supervisor			x																											
	Writing period "Ausarbeitung" (BM21)			x	x	x	x	Buffer																							
	Submission of "Ausarbeitung" (BM21)						x	Buffer																							
	Feedback to "Ausarbeitung" (BM21)								x	x																					
Bachelor thesis	Conceptualize thesis topic										x																				
	Write exposé and contact first supervisor											x	x																		
	Application for admission to thesis at examination office											x																			
	Preliminary meeting with supervisor before formal												x	(x)																	
	Formal registration an examination office													x																	
	Writing period														x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Buffer	Buffer
	Kolloquium																											x	x		
	Submission of the thesis to dean of studies (landscape) office																												x		
	Example for summer term 25	10.03.		24.03.			14.04.				12.05.				09.06.														19.09.		30.09.
	Example for winter term 25/26	08.09.		22.09.			13.10.				10.11.				08.12.														20.03.		31.03.

Attachment II: Recommendation for the time schedule of a Master thesis

	Term	Preparation						Last term/ Master thesis																							
	Week Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Module	Work step																														
Master thesis	Conceptualize thesis topic	(x)	x	(x)																											
	Write exposé and contact first supervisor			x	x																										
	Application for admission to thesis at examination office		x																												
	Preliminary meeting with supervisor before formal registration				x	(x)																									
	Formal registration at examination office					x																									
	Writing period					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Buffer	Buffer
	Kolloquium																											x	x		
	Submission of the thesis to dean of studies (landscape) office																													x	
	Example for summer term 25	10.03.				07.04.																							19.09.	30.09.	
	Example for winter term 25/26	08.09.				06.10.																							20.03.	31.03.	