

Health Policy, Planning and Financing 2021/2022

Thesis guideline

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1. Introduction

Basic information about the Thesis can be found in the university webpage: <https://www.uni-corvinus.hu/?lang=en>. Before reading the Guidelines please read the related Chapters of the Regulation. The Regulation is on the University website under the menu 'The university' subsection 'regulation and orders' (<https://www.uni-corvinus.hu/main-page/about-the-university/regulations-orders/?lang=en>). This Guideline aims to inform you about the procedure, the professional criteria and the specific evaluation criteria of the thesis work and the thesis in the MSc in Health Policy, planning and financing program.

The preparation and defense process can be divided into 4 parts:

1. Thesis seminar work
2. Preparing and handing in the Thesis
3. Evaluation of Thesis
4. Defending the Thesis

Students should keep in mind, in particular, the following two deadlines:

- 1) They have to apply for the Thesis Seminar before the end of September in the first Semester of Year II. The exact deadline is always defined by the Faculty.
- 2) They have to hand in the Thesis usually by 30th of April or the following first workday of the week – as defined by the Faculty. Please always consult the official Faculty website.

2. Thesis Seminar

2.1. Choice of Topic and Application

Each student is expected to choose a Thesis topic at the beginning of his or her final year (normally Year 2) of the Master's program. In general, we advise to choose a topic that fits into the Thesis Seminars of the Department's lecturers. However, any topic fitting into the profile of the Health Policy, Planning and Financing program can be proposed by the student. Thesis Supervisors can be academics working in other departments as well as, in justified cases, highly qualified practitioners. In either case they are expected to be sufficiently qualified to perform their task at a high professional level. An indicative list of topics of the Thesis Seminars offered by the Department is available on the website of the Department.

Students must have the chosen topic accepted by the lecturer of the given Thesis Seminar. The provisional title and a brief description (1000 to 2000 characters) of the planned written Thesis must be submitted by the student to the chosen thesis supervisor who signs it upon acceptance. The official Application Form is available on the website.

The brief description of the topic should contain following elements: 1. What is the phenomenon or question to be examined? 2. What is the planned theoretical approach? 3. What is the planned method? 4. What kind of results are expected?

As work proceeds during the academic year the theme, theory and the method may change with the approval of the thesis supervisor. Significant topical change should be approved by the Head of Program too. Nonetheless, the student is expected to be able to formulate a preliminary research plan as defined above, which should guide his or her work. The description of the topic is not a strict obligation it can be modified with the approval of both the thesis supervisor and the Head of Program during the academic year.

The Application must be handed over the Secretariat of the Department before the deadline defined by the Faculty.

Students with topics that do not fit into the structure of the Thesis Seminar or who want to work with an external thesis supervisor must obtain the approval of the Head of Program and have their Application signed by him. The external thesis supervisor must state in a written form that he is aware of and accepts the Thesis Guidelines.

The Application forms that were handed in at the Secretariat of the Department have to be signed upon acceptance by the Head of Program. With his signature he also confirms that the topic of the Thesis meets the basic content criteria.

2.2. Fulfilment criteria of the Thesis seminars

Fulfilment of Thesis Seminar I

The first semester of the thesis seminar must be concluded by the preparation of a detailed Thesis Proposal, which must be at least 10 pages long and provide information on the following aspects of the proposed thesis:

1. What is the research question (or questions) of the Thesis?
2. What are the main findings of the relevant literature that pertain to this question?
3. By what method will the thesis seek to answer the research question?
4. What results are expected?
5. Bibliography

The completion and grading of the seminar in the first Semester is conditional upon the acceptance of the detailed Thesis Proposal by the thesis supervisor. The grade must reflect the quality of the Thesis Proposal. The thesis supervisor ought to give detailed (oral or written) feedback about the Thesis Proposal.

Fulfilment of Thesis Seminar II

In the second semester of the Thesis Seminar, students must prepare a Draft Thesis one month prior the submission deadline. This Draft should already contain all major parts and the whole of the arguments of the thesis and should be at least 40 pages long. The thesis supervisor must provide the student with detailed (written) feedback within 10 days.

There are two important preconditions of completing Thesis Seminar II. as follows:

1. The Thesis Seminar II. cannot be fulfilled by students who do not hand in a Draft Thesis of acceptable quality in time. 2. furthermore, Thesis Seminar II cannot be fulfilled by students who do not hand in a revised version of Thesis that is ready to be handed in to their thesis supervisor (in an electronic form) by the official date for handing in the Thesis defined by the Faculty.

2.3. Consulting with the Thesis supervisor

During the two semesters of the Thesis Seminar students can consult their thesis supervisor as needed. Dates for the consultation have to be discussed between the thesis supervisor and the students.

The Thesis Seminar does not usually consist of regular weekly classes. Instead, the thesis supervisor offers regular opportunities for consultation. Therefore, it is based primarily on the student's initiative. Nonetheless, the thesis supervisor may decide that meetings should be regular (weekly or fortnightly), respecting the student's timetable.

The thesis supervisor grades the student's work in both semesters. The grade must reflect the student's efforts and activity throughout the semester, as well as the quality of the draft version.

3. Handing in the Thesis

The Thesis must be handed in until the deadline specified by the University (and announced on the Department's homepage), which is usually 30th of April. One written and one electronic copy must be handed in. In case of personal force majeure (eg. unforeseen hospitalization), the Head of the program may extend the deadline upon the written request of the student. This request has to be submitted before the deadline for handing in the Thesis.

Delayed submission is only possible before the extended deadline set by the Faculty and announced on the university website.

After this deadline, no further Theses will be accepted.

When handing in the Thesis the student must also provide a separate sheet declaring that the Thesis is based on his or her own work.

In addition, the student must fill in and sign a statement concerning the publication of the Thesis on the University Library's home page. The statement can be downloaded from the website of the Faculty. This is necessary in order that the Thesis can be uploaded on the University's website. If the student asks for a 'not for public' category, he/she must give detailed argument about the following: (i) nature of information that cannot be revealed (ii) reason for not making it public and (iii) is there another way to keep it unrevealed (e.g. anonymity).

4. Requirements Concerning the Thesis

4.1. Basic Requirements concerning content and format

The Thesis has a double aim: on the one hand, it presents that the students have acquired the background knowledge to cover and analyze the chosen topic. On the other hand the Thesis also proves that the student is able to acquire knowledge and get information independently, he/she can interpret it and build it into his/her own extant knowledge.

In the defense process, students also prove their knowledge by presenting their Thesis, answering questions of the reviewer, and answering questions they get from other Members of the Thesis Defense Committee.

Students have a significant freedom to choose their topic. However, we urge them to elaborate possibly a quite specific field that is not too common and to process it in a way that they also present some „added value” (e.g. small empirical data processing or creating a draft of a website). The topic of the Thesis can be any phenomenon of health policy or health economics.

Thesis is considered scientific work it must be adherent with scientific requirements. In case of empirical research ethical approval/permission is needed. From the academic year of 2019/2020 it is not possible to restrict the publicity of the whole thesis, only sensitive information can be encrypted in particular cases. (find the current regulation: <https://www.uni-corvinus.hu/main-page/about-the-university/regulations-provisions/regulations/rules-of-organisation-and-operation/?lang=en>)

Criteria about format and content of the Thesis are regulated in Chapter 5. Students have to follow these regulations, especially those about format and quotation. Content Criteria defined by the Regulation should be also followed so far the topic and methodology allows it. However, it is not a requirement to follow these descriptions strictly (e.g. the name of chapters do not have to be the same).

4.2. Thesis types

Beginning from the academic year of 2021/2022 students may choose out of 4 thesis types:

- research thesis – includes primary or secondary data collection and follows the structure of scientific papers (typically a literature overview, methodology, results, discussion is included).
- portfolio thesis – OTDK or journal article published with a systematic reflection about the programme added.
- artistic thesis – presentation of a creation, IT script, creative work, etc in a systematic manner. The film, software, IT system is included in the appendix of the thesis.
- project-type thesis – plan to solve a theoretical or business problem/case. The work consists of describing the phenomenon, critical analysis of the problem, while providing a viable solution (similar to case study reports).

4.3. Plagiarism

The content of Thesis – as it is defined among the criteria - is based mainly upon the knowledge and thoughts of other persons and only a smaller proportion of it is developed independently by from the student. However, it is a basic requirement to present own thoughts and ideas of the student so that it is clearly separated from thoughts and ideas of others. If this might not be the case, we are talking about plagiarism that is clearly condemned by the Department. Theses that obviously contain plagiarism will be graded with mark 1 (insufficient) without any further investigation. Further sanctions may follow according to the Regulation.

The most common case of plagiarism is to quote something from internet sites, books, or from other thesis works word by word without referring the source of them. Quotation is obviously not prohibited but it is strictly regulated: adequate notes, typically „quotation marks” have to be used and students have to give the source of reference with page number clearly. It often occurs that a significant part of the Thesis, - e.g. a whole Chapter of it – follows the reasoning of another person. In this case students shall proceed in a way that they refer to the material they will follow, e.g.: Hereinafter I will summarize the work of ... (reference of the work). Most important is that source of the reviewed shall be clearly indicated.

4.4. Evaluation of the Thesis

The Head of the Program asks for the evaluation of at least two persons. They are usually members of the Department or other Faculty members of the University. In justified cases reviewers may be experts outside of the University. Nonetheless, one of them should be member of the University and possibly member of the Department.

Both of them provide a written evaluation and a grade in a form sheet. In addition, they formulate two questions for the thesis defense. Students have to be informed about the content of the evaluation, but they should not be informed about the questions.

5. Evaluation criteria

Evaluators should consider following criteria during the evaluations:

1) Does the Thesis meet basic requirements? Is it handed in in an appropriate format, size and was it handed in in time?

2) Does it have basic inadequacies, especially:

- a. Title and content of the Thesis differ significantly.
- b. Contains plagiarism.
- c. Do not contain references to other works but only presents other works.
- d. Contains only the presentation of official documents and other primer sources (newspapers).
- e. The structure of the Thesis is not understandable.
- f. It contains such severe grammatical, spelling, semantic or stylistic errors that threaten the comprehensibility of the thesis
- g. It contains severe mistakes and errors in the matter of subject

If the Thesis doesn't meet the requirements settled in points 1 and 2, it should be graded with a mark 1 – insufficient.

3) Is the student well informed in the special field he/she presents? To what extent does the student present the relevant literature? Does the student refer to the most important literature, did he/she really read and understand the referred works?

4) Does the Thesis contain real and meaningful research question(s), does it have an adequate structure that is suitable for answering it?

5) Theoretical frames: is the student able to build a consistent frame of the Thesis? Does the student define and consistently use basic concepts and theoretical constructs?

6) Consistency of the research design/logic and argument: does the Thesis have a consistent design/does it have a clear logical structure? (It is a common mistake that no relevance between two consecutive text units – chapters', subsections or sentences – can be observed, or there is a discrepancy between them that remains unreflect by the student.) A good structure is of primary importance (e.g. overall theoretical framework, definition of topic within this framework, detailed argumentation, presentation of own research in the field, overview of the literature, putting a question, presentation of the applied method, answering the question)

7) „Additional value”. Does the student add something to our current knowledge? Does the Thesis contain own research, empirical investigation, or any other feature or idea?

8) Criteria of the format, especially:

- a. Clear format: table of content, well-structured chapters

- b. Style: adequate grammar and style, proper layout.
- c. must be understandable.
- d. must contain adequate visual means (pictures, diagrams)

The evaluator of the Thesis scores the work based on the evaluation form criteria. He/she gives a written evaluation and a mark for the Thesis. Find the evaluation form in the end of the document.

According to the Regulation:

- a) If the Thesis is refused by both evaluators, the candidate cannot be released to the Final Exam, and a new thesis should be submitted. This can take place only in the next final exam period.
- b) If the thesis is refused only by one reviewer, the Academic Director must assign it to a third reviewer.
 - b-a) If the thesis was also refused by the third reviewer, the candidate cannot be released to the final exam. A new thesis should be submitted in the next final exam period.
 - b-b) If the third reviewer does not refuse the thesis, the two highest grades given by the reviewers have to be taken into account when calculating the final examination result.
- c) If there is a great discrepancy (3 marks) between the results of the two evaluations, the Head of the Program transfers it to a third reviewer. In this case, the marks of the two evaluations that are nearest to each other will count into the result of the Final Exam. In case the third reviewer refuses the Thesis, the candidate cannot be released to the final exam. A new thesis should be submitted in the next final exam period.
- d) If the thesis was refused by any of the reviewers because of an ethical fault (plagiarism), a new thesis cannot be submitted sooner than the next final exam period, and the candidate cannot be released to the final exam.

5.1. Defense of Thesis, the Final Examination

The defense of the Thesis is part of the Final Examination. The conditions of releasing a student to the final exam are i) availability of the absolutory and ii) submission of the thesis and its approval by two reviewers.

The Final Examination involves the defense of the thesis, that means the student briefly (in a maximum of 15 minutes) presents the main results of the thesis, following by questions from Members of the Committee.

The mark of the Final Examination is the average result of the marks given by the reviewers, and the mark for the defense of the thesis. The Defense Committee consists of at least three

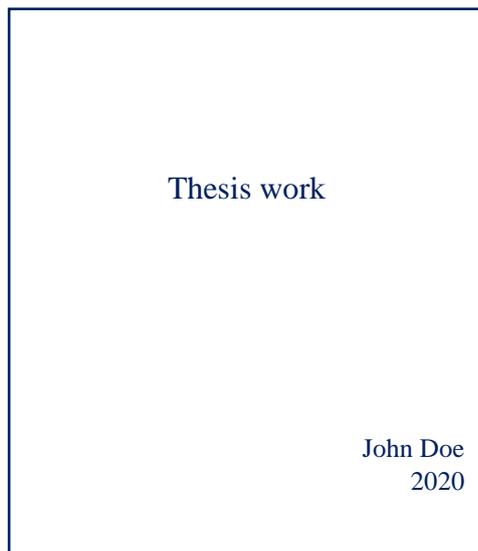
persons. The committee may include the thesis evaluators and the thesis supervisor as well but this is not compulsory requirement.

5.2. Format and content criteria

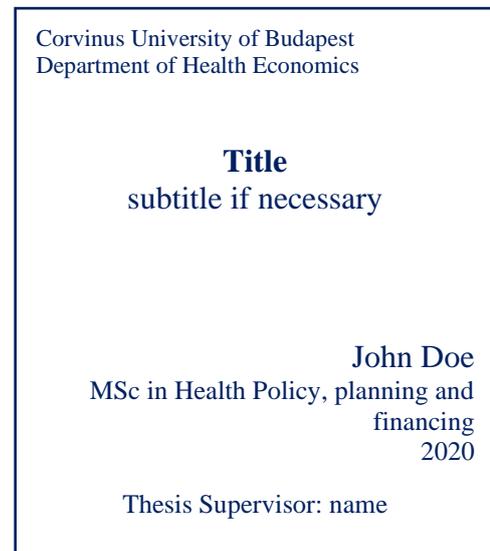
The Department strongly recommends the full volume of the Thesis in minimum of 50, maximum of 80 pages. The current Study and Exam Regulation sets no volume requirements, although the format is strictly regulated in the Study and Exam Regulation. The language of the Thesis is English. This voluminous limit applies to the main text of the dissertation, the front pages, the table of contents, the list of references and appendices are not included.

If the length of the dissertation does not reach or overreach the Departments recommendations, the dissertation will be justified by the reviewer(s) (they may deduct points).

The thesis file should be named as follows: NAME_NEPTUNCODE_THESIS_YEAR. Outer cover must not contain any information beyond: “thesis work”, authors name, year of submission. The title page (inside) should contain the following information: name of the University, name of the Department, authors name and MSc program, title of the Thesis, supervisors name and year of submission. An example is given:



1. Hard cover



2. Inside title page

The Thesis consists of the following main units and they must be included in the prescribed order:

1. Legal notice of authorship
2. Title page
3. Table of Contents

4. The chapters of the Thesis

5. References

The text is 12-point font, “sheriff” with 1.5 line spacing. All tables, figures and pages must be numbered and indicated on table of contents/list of figures. Appropriate reference list must be created, APA order is strongly suggested.

In case of portfolio and project type thesis works the same rules apply to the written document. The presentation’s first page must contain only the author’s name, title and year. The contents are highlighted on the second page. All pages, tables, figures must be numbered. Citations should be included along with a reference list using APA format. See the detailed formatting requirements below:

5.3. Appendix

The table of contents should list all the chapters and subchapters of the Thesis along with the page numbers. The required font is Times New Roman (12 points). In addition to the usual default 2.5 cm margins, a +1 cm binding margin is recommended.

Paragraphs in the main text should be formatted with (6 pt before/after) 1.5 line spacing (justified text alignment). It is important to format paragraphs in the Thesis, this goes for different levels of chapter and subchapter titles to format. Formatting and numbering of chapter titles of the same level should be consistent throughout the Thesis.

The pages of the dissertation should be numbered from the beginning of the main text and the page numbers should be numbered at the bottom and middle of the pages.

All tables and figures included in the main text of the dissertation must be numbered and titled (additional annotation / legend may be included under the title). All tables and figures inserted in the main text of the Thesis must be specifically referred to in the text: e.g. "The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 2."

The content of the sources used in the Thesis should usually be reworded in the form of a paraphrase presentation, highlighting the elements directly related to the topic of the Thesis, and the individual sources constantly comparing its content. Citation format should be APA 6th, author and year have to appear in text (e.g. Smith et al. 2019).

The proportion of citations in the Thesis should not exceed 5%. Materials that, due to their size, cannot be included in the main text of the Thesis can be placed in the appendix (photos, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews).

The Thesis have to be submitted (2 copies), in black hardcover. On the front cover only the text “THESIS”, the name of the student and the year can be included. In parallel with the submission of the hard copy, the Thesis must be uploaded in digital form to the Moodle.

An annotation of 500 words (approx. 1-2 pages) of the Thesis must be attached. The annotation should summarize relevant elements (objectives, methods, results).

6. Suggested Thesis Topics

- 1) Pharmacoeconomic modelling – Valentin Brodszky – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 2) Cost of illness analysis – Valentin Brodszky – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 3) Monetary valuation of life events – Valentin Brodszky – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 4) EQ-5D studies – Fanni Rencz – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 5) Patient-reported outcome measures: development, validation – Fanni Rencz – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 6) Health-related quality of life in chronic diseases – Fanni Rencz – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 7) Economics of skin diseases – Fanni Rencz – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 8) Informal care in chronic diseases – Zsuzsanna Beretzky – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 9) Work productivity and health-related quality of life – Zsuzsanna Beretzky – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 10) Resource allocation, capitation – Petra Fadgyas-Freyler – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 11) Challenges of health policy in the XXIth century – Petra Fadgyas-Freyler – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 12) Insurance spending of specific diseases, patient numbers and costs – Petra Fadgyas-Freyler – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 13) Health financing techniques, international comparisons – Petra Fadgyas-Freyler – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economic
- 14) Utility assessment by time trade-off method – Péter Balázs– Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics

- 15) Systematic literature review's in Health Economics – Péter Balázs– Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 16) Psychological aspects of marketing – Ariel Mitev – Institute of Marketing/Department of Marketing Management
- 17) Application of Artificial Intelligence in diagnosis and health care – Péter Racskó – Institute of Information Technology
- 18) Risk behavior among adolescents – Zsuzsanna Elekes – Institute of Communication and Sociology/ Sociology and Social Sciences Department
- 19) The first lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic – Peter Mihalyi – Institute of Economics
- 20) Patient-reported outcome measures: validation – Ákos Szabó – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics
- 21) Systematic literature review's in HRQoL questionnaires– Ákos Szabó – Institute of Economic and Public Policy/Department of Health Economics