

Regulations and procedures

Thesis Seminar, MA in International Relations

For the 2023/2024 academic year

What this information note is about

In this document you will find the following information:

- General information regarding thesis writing seminars
- A step-by-step description of the thesis research process
- Information on contact persons, useful websites, etc.
- Guidelines for thesis work
- The thesis evaluation sheet
- Checklists on Thesis Seminars I and II

General information

In the third academic year, each student shall participate in a special course (seminar) to prepare their theses, under the guidance of the thesis supervisor. Students must register on Neptun for Thesis Seminar I (Fall semester) and Thesis Seminar II (Spring semester). Theses must be submitted between 6 May 2024, 10:00 and 17 May 2024, 12:00; see the [University schedule for the 2023/2024 academic year](#). The thesis must be written in English.

Schedule

The main steps of the procedure are as follows.

Application for and allocation of topics

In the Spring semester of the first academic year, students shall apply electronically via Neptun to the thesis topics announced by the lecturers of the Department.

Signing up for the Thesis Seminars I and II in Neptun

Students shall sign for the respective Thesis Seminar in Neptun in both semesters. Thesis Seminar I is open for registration only in the Fall semester of the academic year. Accomplishment of Thesis Seminar I is a requirement for Thesis Seminar II. Thesis Seminars I and II cannot be completed in the same semester.

Change of topic

If you want to change the topic of your thesis after the allocation procedure, the suggested steps are as follows. First, consult with your current supervisor, s/he might be prepared to accept slight adjustments in the original topic.

If you still wish to have another topic, consult with a prospective supervisor, whether s/he is able to accept you and your suggested topic. If so, apply for a topic change through Neptun until the fifth week of the Fall semester. Please note that there is a charge for such a request; see the [Regulation on Student Fees and Benefits](#).

Decision on your request is made by the Programme Director, in consultation with the Head of Department. The decision is made within 15 days from the submission of the request. The student is notified of the decision via Neptun.

Please note that a change of topic is an option only in exceptional, well-justified cases.

Methodology lecture (held jointly for all students)

A joint methodology lecture is held in September or October 2023, the exact date to be announced later via Neptun message a week before the scheduled date, for all the students attending the Thesis Seminar. Participation is mandatory, students cannot sign up for Thesis Seminar II in case of non-attendance.

In case of justified absence (e.g. Erasmus scholarship, sickness), there will be a make-up class at the beginning of the second semester.

If the student cannot participate in the lecture due to one of the reasons mentioned above, the documents justifying their absence (in case of sickness, the original copy of the doctors' certificate) should be submitted to the Department's Secretariat.

Research and consultations

Students shall consult with the supervisors on their research progress at least four times per semester (in person, online or via e-mail, as agreed with the supervisor), i.e. four meetings during Thesis Seminar I and four meetings during Thesis Seminar II.

Additional consultation sessions may be required if the thesis supervisor deems necessary, or the student would like to have more consultations.

Progress reports / Thesis Seminar I

In the first semester (Thesis Seminar I), students are required to submit two reports via Moodle, to provide evidence on their progress.

First progress report

- Deadline for submission: 12.00 am, 14 November 2023
- Content: a detailed description of the (planned) structure of the thesis (outline, 2–3 pages) and a bibliography.

Second progress report

- Deadline for submission: 12.00 am, 12 December 2023
- Content: one chapter (minimum 20 pages) of the thesis; the outline; a bibliography, and a literature summary (to be drafted according to the specific instructions of the supervisor).

Research / Thesis Seminar II

In the course of Thesis Seminar II, there will be no requirement for progress reports in the strict sense. The main deadline to observe is the submission date of the final version of the thesis via Neptun by 17 May 2024 at the latest.

Although this arrangement secures more freedom to proceed with the research, it also involves great individual responsibility in the planning and scheduling of your work. Supervisors will provide guidance as needed, but students are expected to work as independently as possible.

Thus, it is vital to stay in close communication with the supervisor throughout the semester, following his/her instructions and guidance, and submitting draft versions as requested.

Please note that according to Section 79 para. (1) of the [Study and Examination Regulations](#), students must present their theses to the supervisor for approval by the deadline set by the supervisor, but no later than ten working days before the submission deadline.

The supervisor is authorized to reject the Thesis before submission if it was prepared without consultations and/or if it does not meet the minimum requirements of an MA thesis. In this case, the student is to submit his/her modified thesis in the next semester with the supervisor's approval.

The *Guidelines* on the thesis content and format can be found on p. 5 of this information note.

Assessment of Thesis Seminars I and II

Students receive a mark at the end of each semester from the thesis supervisor based on their performance and meeting of the course criteria. The grade of Thesis Seminar II is thus *not* the grade of the thesis.

For the completion of *Thesis Seminar I*, students shall electronically submit the two progress reports, participate in the methodology lecture, and attend at least four consultation sessions per semester.

For the completion of *Thesis Seminar II*, students shall proceed with the research and submit draft versions as required by the supervisor, through regular consultations (at least four per semester).

In the event of failure to comply with all these preconditions, the course is not passed.

The supervisor shall acknowledge compliance with these requirements electronically upon submission of the thesis via the Neptun system.

Submission of the thesis

Theses must be submitted between 6 May 2024, 10:00 and 17 May 2024, 12:00, through Neptun.

As already noted, Section 79 para. (1) of the Study and Examination Regulations provides that students must present their theses to the supervisor for approval by the deadline set by the supervisor, but no later than ten working days before the submission deadline

The same rules shall apply to students holding an Erasmus scholarship.

More information



Questions relating to administrative issues (deadlines, submissions, issues with Neptun or Moodle, etc.)

Secretariat of the Department of International Relations

Gabriella Bertalan

Head of Secretariat

✉ gabriella.bertalan@uni-corvinus.hu

Zsófia Határ

Institute Referent

✉ zsofia.hatar@uni-corvinus.hu

Questions relating to topics, supervisors, and other substantive issues

Adrienne Komanovics

Thesis Seminar Coordinator

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Useful links

General information on writing a paper

[BA / MA - Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem \(uni-corvinus.hu\)](#)

<http://www.diplomacia.hu/>

General information for thesis writers

[Thesis writers - Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem \(uni-corvinus.hu\)](#)

Further links

[Thesis Writer's Guide I – Sources](#)

[Thesis Writer's Guide II – References](#)

[Zotero user guide – basic](#)

[Zotero user guide – advanced](#)

[References FAQ](#)

[How to use Eurostat – video](#)



Rules of netiquette

Instructors often receive a high number of emails per day. To receive timely responses to requests for help, follow these guidelines.

- Check the syllabus or the website to determine if the answer is already there.
- Exchanging information with your classmates can be useful regarding simple practical questions.
- If your question is lengthy or complex, schedule an appointment to discuss the answer.
- Use your official University mail.
- Identify yourself by course / programme as well.
- Include a subject heading that reflects the content of the message.
- Be careful not to use all capital letters – this is equivalent to shouting.
- Use professionalism in your emails: address the instructor appropriately, use proper punctuation and grammar.
- Never write in an email anything you would not say to the instructor in person.

Guidelines for thesis work

The objectives of the thesis work

Students are required to submit a written work (master's thesis, MA thesis) as part of their MA degree. The MA thesis may only be submitted in the programme to which the students are admitted (International Relations). The general objective of the thesis work is to ensure and demonstrate that students can implement research at academic level with supervision. The courses and related individual work on a MA thesis should enable students to write an independent presentation on an IR-related subject within a framework of an academic year.

Requirements I: content-related matters and general assessment

By writing the final paper, the student demonstrates the ability to recognize relevant IR issues within the broader academic discourse and to analyze the motives and actions of the actors involved.

Emphasis during the assessment (marking) will be placed on students' ability (i) to formulate clear, specific, answerable research question(s) in the context of earlier research, (ii) to select the appropriate research methods, to describe and discuss the chosen methods and (iii) to write up the research results by demonstrating independent thinking and analytical skills. The thesis itself shall be written for IR scholars that may or may not have an in-depth knowledge on the specific thesis subject, but who look for a methodologically rigorous analysis that is written in a clear and concise language.

For a tentative structure see Annex 1.

Requirements II: format

The main body of a MA-thesis may contain a maximum 135,000 – 175,000 characters spaces, footnotes included. Fringe sections (abstract or preface, table of contents, indexes, summary, reference list and appendices) are not included. Theses below the minimum limit will not be evaluated.

Format requirements:

- The thesis should be printed (pdf) with adequate (2,5 cm) margins.
- Font: “Times New Roman” size 12 pt, line spacing 1.5.
- Footnotes should be at the bottom of the page, not at the end of chapters or the thesis.
- Referencing styles: in-text references are preferred (Harvard referencing style), but the most important is that the style is consistent across the text.
- Please scroll down for a cover template (Annex 2: Cover page)

Annex 1. Tentative structure of an MA-thesis

Title and title page

Table of contents (max 3 levels break-down with ordinal numbering)

Index of tables, figures (if applicable)

Abbreviations (if applicable)

Introduction (approx. 5–10%), mandatory elements:

- Clear and concise problem statement and related purpose statement
- A structured introduction of the context (earlier, most relevant research)
- Research gaps or puzzle
- Research objective (ie. purpose statement)
- Research question(s)
- Methods (by question): description and discussion of the decisions concerning data collection and analysis (what methods you choose, by which logic and why)
- Structure of the paper (findings)
- Limits if the research

Theoretical-conceptual work (in independent chapter, if applicable)

Main Body: research findings (approx. 80%)

- Findings answering the research questions and their analysis
- Ideal number of main chapters: 3 to 5 (split into subchapters)
- The structure should reflect coherence

Conclusion (approx. 10-15%)

- Repeat briefly the research questions and the methods applied
- Summarize the main findings and draw conclusions
- Reflect on the limits of the research (concerning both methods and results)
- Potential suggestions for further research

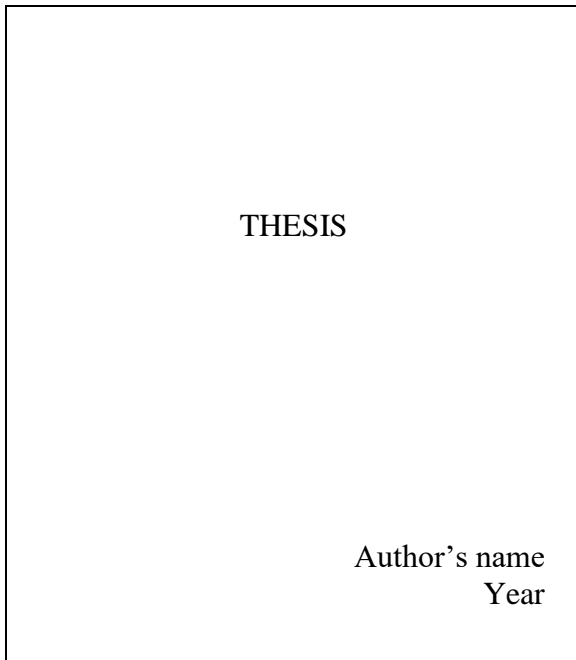
List of references (only sources cited in the thesis)

Appendices (optional)

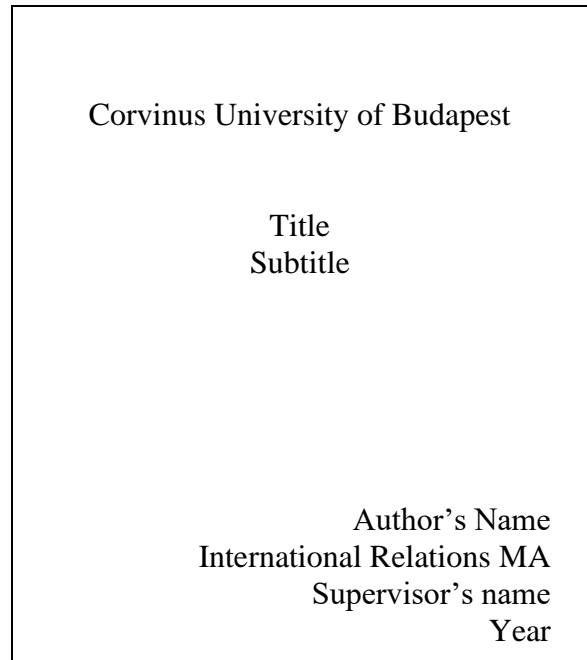
Annex 2. Template for cover page

The main cover and the inner cover should look like as illustrated below:

Cover



Inner cover



Thesis Evaluation Sheet

Criteria of acceptance

Criteria	Passed/Failed
The thesis does not contain part(s) based on other sources, which are not referenced properly.	
The thesis does not contain long blocks where the Author references one sole source through several pages.	
Referencing is professional.	

In case the Opponent deems that the Thesis does not meet any of the above criteria, the Thesis cannot be accepted

Evaluation

1. Topic selection and introduction (total 11 points)

The topic outlined in the Introduction is in accordance with the topic outlined in the title. (0-2 points)	
In the Introduction, the Author clearly defines the aim and the main question of the thesis. (0-3 points)	
In the Introduction, the Author discusses the most important sources (primary or secondary sources, key thinkers, etc.). (0-2 points)	
The Author outlines the structure and logic of the research. (0-2 points)	
The introduction contains the necessary delimitations and research methods. (0-2 points)	

2. Methods (total 10 points)

The chosen method(s) are relevant and appropriate for the research. (0-4 points)	
The Author detailed the chosen method(s) appropriately. (0-3 points)	
The Author applied the chosen method(s) consistently throughout the thesis. (0-3 points)	

3. Academic quality (total 12 points)

The argumentation is clear, the structure is logical, the Author attempted to add his/her own opinion. (0-4 points)	
The Author analyzed the chosen topic appropriately and reached the aim of the research. (0-3 points)	
The Thesis is professionally appropriate, does not contain factual errors. (0-5 points)	

4. Review and utilization of the relevant professional literature (total 10 points)

The thesis reviews the most significant professional literature. (0-5 points)	
The Author analyzes and assesses well the most significant professional literature. (0-5 points)	

5. Overall quality (total 11 points)

The structure, logic, discussion of the subtopics and the weight given to them in the text are appropriate. (0-5 points)	
The cohesion and overall quality meet the requirements. (0-3 points)	
The Thesis reaches its goals, draws appropriate conclusions and contains the Author's own views. (0-3 points)	

6. Language and style of the Thesis, references (total 6 points)

The language and style of the paper, including use of terminology and spelling, is of high quality, the Thesis is easily understandable. (0-3 points)	
Referencing is professional. (1-3 points)	

Total:
Grade:

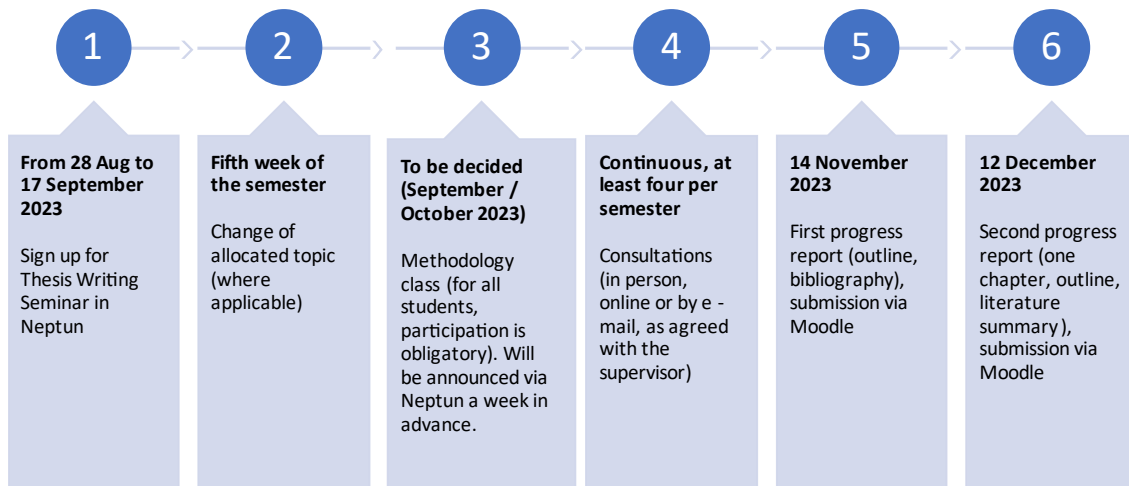
Grade points/grades:

- 54 – 60 points: Very good (5)
- 47 – 53 points: Good (4)
- 38 – 56 points: Satisfactory (3)
- 30 – 37 points: Pass (2)
- 0 – 29 points: Failed (1)

Final assessment [Written assessment of the thesis]
Questions for the defense Question no. 1 Question no. 2

Checklists

Thesis Seminar I checklist (Fall semester)



Thesis Seminar II checklist (Spring semester)

