

Master's Dissertation

Code: 42920
ECTS Credits: 15

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313774 Land Ecology and Biodiversity Management	OB	0	2

Contact

Name: Ana Morton Juaneda

Email: Ana.Morton@uab.cat

Teachers

Josep Piñol Pascual

Laia Guardia Valle

Use of languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)

Prerequisites

It is necessary to take one of the following Modules: Project Design and Methodology in Terrestrial Ecology or Projects Design and Methodology in Fauna and Flora Management.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The objective of the Master's Dissertation is that students learn and carry out for themselves the scientific method in the thematic area of the master or that they participate in the professional activities that are realized in the same scope. To do this, they must participate in the design, implementation and presentation of the results of a project.

Skills

- Apply research methodology, techniques and specific resources to solve problems and produce innovative results in a particular area of specialisation.
- Autonomously plan, design and carry out original technical or research work in the field of environmental biology.
- Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Communicate, give presentations and write articles in English.
- Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- Use advanced modelling and statistical tools in the field of terrestrial ecology and conservation of biodiversity.

Learning outcomes

1. Analyse and interpret data on the basis of previously formulated hypotheses or objectives.

2. Assess and integrate different viewpoints and sensibilities when conducting a particular study in the field of environmental biology.
3. Develop original ideas to solve specific problems in the field of environmental biology.
4. Identify and correctly use the most appropriate measuring technique for a particular objective, keeping in mind its limitations.
5. Present the results of a study to assess the landscape of a particular area.
6. Support the conclusions of a study with a rigorous quantitative analysis of the data.
7. Use scientific evidence in support of conclusions drawn.
8. Write and present a specialist paper in English.

Content

1) This is an individual work carried out with autonomy by students under the direction of one or more directors. The contents of work will depend on each case, since this work is a tutored training in a specific field selected by each student.

2) The student will carry out the final master's work in a research group or in a company or institution that develops projects directly related to the master's subject.

Methodology

Master Dissertation (Master's Final Project):

- Students should participate in the design, implementation and presentation of the results of a project.
- The result of the Master's Final Project work will be a **written report** and the **oral defense** in front of an Evaluation Committee.

1) Written report

A) The format of the written report may vary according to the specific characteristics of the work and the institution where it is carried out. However, it must contain the following sections:

- Cover with the title of the work, the name of the Master and specialisation, the name of the student, the name of the director / tutor, the date and name of the Department, and name of the company or institution where the work was carried out.
- A second page with information of the data when the student started the work and the exact contribution of the student to different components of the work.
- Summary of the work.
- Introduction and objectives.
- Materials and methods.
- Results.
- Discussion.
- Conclusions.
- References.

The report will be presented as a scientific manuscript, following the instructions and the format of an SCI journal in the field of Ecology, Animal Biology or Plant Biology, chosen by the student (the name of the journal should be indicated).

B) The report may not exceed 8,000 words (including abstract, the main text, references, tables and footnotes, but excluding the cover page, the second page and annexes, if any).

C) Language: The report can be presented in Catalan, Spanish or English. However, it must necessarily be presented in English if oral defense is done in Catalan or Spanish.

D) Three copies of the report will be delivered to the office of the Departament de Biologia Animal, Biologia Vegetal i Ecologia (office C1-023) at the Faculty of Biosciences of UAB, within the time frame established in each academic course. Likewise, an electronic copy will be sent to the coordinator of the module. Reports submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

2) Oral defense

A) The oral defense will consist in presenting, the work presented in the written report in a summarized way, to an Evaluation Committee, for a maximum of 15 minutes. The members of the Committee may ask and discuss with the student the aspects that they consider appropriate about oral defense and report memory. The oral defense of the Master's Final Project is a public event.

B) Language: The defense can be presented in Catalan, Spanish or English. However, it must necessarily be done in English if the written report was submitted in Catalan or Spanish.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Type: Directed			
Project work	300	12	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 2
Type: Supervised			
Written Report	75	3	1, 3, 5, 8, 6, 7

Evaluation

Evaluation:

1) The evaluation committee will evaluate (from 0 to 10) the Master dissertation based on the written report and the oral defense of the work.

2) The committee will evaluate the work by assessing:

- **Written report:**

- The scientific-technical adequacy of the language used as well as the syntactic and orthographic quality.
- Formal quality of the document (tables, figures, bibliographical references, etc.) and adaptation to the established length.
- Report contents:
 - Conceptual clarity of the approach.
 - Adequacy of the methodology.
 - Clarity and concision of presentation of results.
 - Capacity to discuss and to interpret the results.

- **Oral defense:**

Clarity, conciseness and rigor in the oral expression.

Quality of audiovisual presentation.
Adequacy to the established time.
Ability to respond the questions of the committee.

3) If some plagiarism or similar malpractice is detected in advance, the director of the work and the student will be informed and the defense of the work will not be permitted.

Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Oral Defence	30	0	0	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 6, 7, 2
Written Report	70	0	0	1, 3, 4, 8, 6, 7, 2

Bibliography

Cargill, M. and O'Connor, P. 2009. Writing Scientific Research Articles. Estrategy and Steps. Blackwell Publishing. UK. 173 pp.

Day, Robert A. and Gastel B. 2006. How to write and publish a scientific paper. OPS. Cambridge University Press. 302 pp.