

Master's Dissertation

Code: 43146
ECTS Credits: 12

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313769 Anthropology: Advanced Research and Social Intervention	OB	0	2

Contact

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Use of languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)

Prerequisites

There are no specific requirements.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The goal of this module is to apply the theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge acquired during the Master degree in the Master thesis, which can be ethnographic, comparative, theoretical or oriented to sociocultural or socio-environmental intervention. It is the final test of the academic competences obtained during the Master program. The learning results coincide with the drafting of different parts of a research report: The proposal of a research problem and research questions, the development of an appropriate theoretical framework, the identification of the most appropriate research design for answering the question(s), the selection and application of these methods, the analyses of the data and obtention of results, and the discussion of these results in the context of prior scientific work in the thematic area. The student presents this in his or her thesis and defends it orally for the Master thesis committee.

This module is part of all specialisations and it is scheduled during the second semester. The team is composed of all the lecturers of the Master program who are available for supervising theses.

Skills

- Carry out ground-breaking, flexible research in anthropology by applying theories and methodologies and using appropriate data collection and analysis techniques.
- Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Defend arguments clearly, precisely and appropriately within the context, and at the same time value the contributions made by other people.
- Identify, in ethnographic fieldwork, different outlooks corresponding to ethnic, class, gender and age inequalities and identities.
- Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
- Systematically link up concepts, and theories within the discipline so as to analyse specific ethnographic contexts.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
- Use information and communication technologies efficiently to acquire, create and spread knowledge.

Learning outcomes

1. Apply the appropriate arguments in the preparation of the final master and justify them with clarity and precision, so appropriate to the context and values ??the contributions of other authors.
2. Apply the knowledge acquired to problem-solving in new or unfamiliar intervention contexts of work on anthropological documents.
3. Choose and suitably combine the different techniques for compiling and analysing data in an anthropological research project.
4. Find original ways to combine ideas, based on the knowledge acquired, within research work on anthropology and social intervention.
5. Identify important elements in institutional documents and/or scientific texts that help to formulate judgments and reflect on social and ethical responsibilities in anthropology.
6. Identify, in the work of an ethnographer, different outlooks corresponding to ethnic, class, gender and age inequalities and identities.
7. Identify particular social and cultural situations and their relation to global phenomena in specific anthropological research work.
8. Integrate primary and secondary ethnographic data from varying sources.
9. Present conclusions and intervention proposals in the context of research
10. Propose the appropriate theoretical-methodological intervention or research design for the chosen ethnographic context of an anthropological study.
11. Recognize, define, combine and use effectively information technology and communication according to the context of ethnographic research and / or intervention chosen.
12. Systematically link up concepts, and theories within the discipline that fit in with the specific ethnographic research context.

Content

The students are expected to apply the theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge acquired during the Master to the performance of an investigation, which can be ethnographic, comparative, theoretical or oriented to sociocultural or socio-environmental intervention.

Methodology

The Master thesis is based on autonomous work of the student under the individual supervision of the thesis advisor. This process is started at the beginning of the academic year, once students have had a first chance to get to know the research lines of the lecturers of the Master program in one of the coordination sessions, and it will continue over the course of the year. In the first stage, the student is expected to present his/her idea for a Master Thesis ("MT", or in Spanish and Catalan "TFM") to a lecturer of the Department whose research has a good fit with the selected theme. The goal is to count on a thesis advisor by mid-November. The coordinator of the Master will ask the students to communicate a preliminary title and the name of the thesis advisor by the third week of November. In case a student has not found a thesis advisor by that time, the Committee of the Master Program will allocate an advisor. From this date onwards, each student should meet with his or her thesis advisor at least once a month to present his or her progress as previously discussed. The thesis advisor can help the student to delineate the research topic further, suggest literature, oversee the research design, and suggest improvements on the basis of the drafts that the student presents in written form at least a few days before each meeting.

The final version of the thesis should be submitted to the advisor at least one week before the deadline, in order to obtain his or her approval. The thesis will be submitted before the 9th of July at 13.00 and publicly defended on the 19th of July. For the guidelines for submission and the structure of the thesis defense, please see the section "Evaluation".

- Tutorials: 50 hours, 100% on-site
- Individual tasks of reading and/or fieldwork, analysis and writing: 250 hours

Students discuss the pacing of the progress with their thesis advisors, according to the following guidelines:

DATES	ACTIVITY	PLACE	MATERIAL
before the 17th of November	Choice of thesis advisor and theme of MT	Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology	Online communication
Once a month	Tutorial with thesis advisor	Office of the thesis advisor	Ongoing work
before the 2th of July	Submission final version MT to thesis advisor	Per e-mail to thesis advisor	Final version MT (digital version in Word format)
9th of July (before 13.00)	Submission of the MT	Secretary (printed version and digital version) and coordination (digital version)	MT (both a printed version and digital versions in Word and PDF formats)
19th of July (between 09.00 and 18.30)	MT defense	Classroom	Oral presentation with IT support/ ppt presentations

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials with supervisor of Master Thesis	50	2	1, 9
Type: Autonomous			
Elaboration and defense of Master Thesis	249	9.96	2, 4, 9, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12

Evaluation

This section of the Study Guide contains all information related to the process of evaluation of the module.

Assessment of the module:

In order to be evaluated, the students must meet the following **formatting requirements and dates and indications of presentation**:

- Language: Master theses can be presented in Catalan, Spanish or English. In each case the student is responsible for the linguistic accuracy.
- Size: The Master thesis will have an extension of 16.000-20.000 words max., excluding the references and the index. The students can place additional information in an appendix or appendices if the work requires it and at the judgment of the thesis advisor. Appendices are also excluded from the word count.
- Title page: The title page must include the title of the thesis, the name of the student and the name of the supervisor. It must indicate that it is a Master thesis and mention the name of the Master program (Master in Anthropology: Advanced Research and Social Intervention), the Department and either the precise date or the academic year in which it was presented.

- **Format:** The format follows the recommendations for the presentation of conference papers: left and right-hand margins 3 cm, superior and inferior margins 2,5 cm; spacing 1,5; Arial 12 or Times New Roman 13 for the text and Arial 10 or Times NewRoman 11 for footnotes. Tables and figures have to be numbered and accompanied with a title and the source. Footnotes are used rather than endnotes, to facilitate reading and correction. The thesis has an index and a list of references.
- **Submission:** Three copies of the thesis must be printed double-sided, spiral bound and deposited at the Secretary of the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology before the deadline (9th of July at 13.00), signed by the thesis advisor. Also, the document needs to be sent in both WORD and PDF format by email to the Coordinator of the Master program with a copy to the Secretary of the Department (d.antropologia@uab.cat) before the same deadline.
- **Defense:** the thesis is orally defended on the 19th of July before a thesis committee. The defense is open to the public. The thesis committee is appointed by the Committee of the Master program and consists of three members (one of the members is the coordinator of the Master program, who acts as secretary). Students will be notified about the precise time and place of the tribunal at least one week prior to the thesis defense. The structure of the thesis defense is as follows:
 - Presentation of the candidate (with IT support / ppt presentation): 10-15 minutes
 - Evaluation of the committee: 10 minutes each member (20 en total)
 - Reply of the candidate: 10 minutes
 - Deliberation, decision and reporting by the committee: 5-10 minutes.

Theses that do not meet these formal requirements, as well as theses that do not have the approval ("el visto bueno") of their thesis advisor will obtain the qualification "Not assessable". Students can contact with their advisors and/or with the coordinator if they have any doubts or questions regarding these requirements.

The **grading of the TFM** takes into account both the **quality of the written Master's thesis (80-90%)** and the **oral defense (10-20%)**. In the evaluation the following criteria are considered:

The relevance and delineation of the problem definition

- The student is expected to show his or her capacity to define a relevant and pertinent research problem, aside from the social problems that may have motivated its selection or that are related to the problem.
- If the student intends to continue the research line started in the Master thesis for the Doctoral degree, it is appreciated if the student explains the overall research problem and the part of the overall research problem that his or her Master thesis covers.

The originality of the Master thesis

- The Master thesis must be designed and argumentally constructed by the student, even if it forms a part of a larger research project, such as a posterior Doctoral thesis, which must be mentioned in the introduction.
- Originality is understood as the contribution of new (unpublished) knowledge. This can take different forms in this initial stage of the research:
 - A bibliographical revision not performed to date
 - An empirical work not performed before
 - Use of existing materials from a new perspective or interpretation
 - Application of a known research design to a reality not studied before

The quality of the research performed

- Search and use of bibliographical sources, adequate for the stage of familiarization with the defined research problem or research theme. All included references must have been read and the text needs to reflect this directly or indirectly.
- Definition of the study object and the project goals.
- Theoretical orientation and perspective from which the theme is studied within the discipline.
- Antecedents of investigation and theoretical framework developed according to the study object and goals. Adequate conceptual treatment and clarity of the defined research questions.
- Specification of the hypothesis/research questions, even though the student does not contrast these hypotheses in the Master thesis.

- Delineation of the studied group, definition of the unit of analysis and the units of observation and the specification of the sampling strategy or case selection strategy, if the type of work requires this.
- Identification and justification of the used sources.
- Justification of the appropriateness of the applied techniques and instruments.
- Clarity in the construction and use of categories for the analysis of the collected data and consulted sources.

The appropriateness of the conclusions and, if applicable, proposals for future research

- The capacity to summarize the work, to synthesize the findings in terms of the research goals/research questions, and to identify support for the specified hypotheses is positively valued, as is:
- The recognition of weaknesses (gaps, risks, imbalances) of the presented work and the proposal to overcome these weaknesses in future work,
- Caution in the exposition of conclusions and in the redefinition of initial questions, and
- The specification, if applicable, of prospects to continue the work and of the proposed work plan.

The organization of the narration

- The Master thesis needs to be a document organized with a logical index that reflects the sequence of the investigation and/or the progress of the thematic development.
- The language needs to be clear and to follow the conventional expressive register of a socially scientific document, allowing for fluent reading.
- Bibliographical sources as well as figures and images need to be adequately cited to avoid plagiarism, please see <http://www.uab.cat/web/recursos-de-informacion/citas-y-bibliografia-1327563058209.html> and <http://www.bib.uab.cat/infoguies/tfmes/>. For organizing the references, it is advised to use Mendeley or other systems recommended by the Library of the Faculty of Arts (courses and online access: <http://www.bib.uab.es>).

The defense

- Finally, the quality of the oral presentation is taken into account: the clarity of the presentation and the extent to which the student has provided a response to the most important critique or doubts of the committee members.

General norms

Assessment is understood as a **continued process** throughout the term.

The qualifications are made on a **scale from 0-10** with one decimal. To pass the subject, a **minimum final grade of 5.0** is needed, as a result of the assessment procedure explained above. Once the subject is passed, **it cannot be subjected to a new evaluation**.

The programming of assessment activities cannot be modified unless an exceptional and well justified reason exists for this, in which case a new program is proposed during the lective term.

When a student performs an **irregularity** that can lead to a significant variation of the qualification of an assessable activity, **the activity will be qualified with a 0**, independently of the disciplinary process that might follow. In the case that various irregularities in the assessable activities are performed within the same module, the qualification of the module will be 0.

The qualification **"not assessable"** in the final records of evaluation implies the **exhaustion of rights inherent in the enrolment to the module**, although the "not assessable" module will not figure in the academic transcript.

The **copying or plagiarism of material**, both in the case of papers as in the case of exams, constitutes an **offence** that will be sanctioned with the **qualification 0 on the activities, the loss of the right of reevaluation, and being suspended from the module**. "Copying" a paper refers to a student reproducing the whole or part of a paper of another student. Plagiarism is presenting the whole or a part of the text of another author as if it were the student's own, without citing the references, on paper or digitally. Please see the documentation of the UAB about plagiarism on:

http://wuster.uab.es/web_argumenta_obert/unit_20/sot_2_01.html. Please also see
<http://www.bib.uab.cat/infoguies/tfmes/>

Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Dissertation (Master Thesis)	90%	0	0	1, 2, 4, 9, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Oral defense Master thesis	10%	1	0.04	1, 9

Bibliography

The thesis advisor can suggest literature of interest to the student, according to the topic of research.

Furthermore, the following book is recommended:

Yvonne N. Bui (2014). How to Write a Master's Thesis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.