

Degree programme	Type	Course
Public Administration	OB	0

Contact lecturer

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Prerequisites

Students that take this module must have passed the rest of the modules of the program

Group languages

You can consult this information at the [end](#) of the document.

Objectives

The objective of this module is to help students to design and elaborate a final master's thesis (TFM) characteristic of research in social sciences. It is an autonomous academic work. It will place the emphasis on rigour in the definition of concepts, the aims of research and the selection of the most appropriate methodology. It will be work in depth the ability to design the research project itself, both in the case it has a mainly theoretical interest and if its focus is placed on empirical cases.

The TFM is a research work that has to delve into some aspect dealt with in one of the other thematic modules studied of the master's degree. The objective is to develop a public management topic relevant from an analytical and empirical point of view. The Master's Thesis must have the formal and contingent characteristics of research in social sciences. It will have to include the definition of a relevant and approachable research question, the proposal of an appropriate focal theory, a methodological research strategy and the design of the project. Eventually, it is possible to complete the analysis through the corresponding empirical evidence.

Learning outcomes

1. Address complex public intervention situations, possibly involving ethical dilemmas, on the basis of proposals founded both on explicit values and on conceptual and methodological rigour.
2. Design technical projects and reports using the appropriate research methodology.
3. Evaluate projects, reports and analyses produced by others, with appropriate methodological and argumentative criteria.
4. Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
5. Present conclusions before critical audiences.
6. Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
7. Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
8. Recognise theoretically-defined variables in empirical reality and characterise these.
9. Identify the relationships that are formed between these variables at an empirical level.
10. Interpret these relationships and explain them in terms of the analytic instruments being studied.
11. Situate a research problem within an academic debate by identifying what is currently known about it and the limitations of previous work.

12. Define the main concepts involved in the problem and the limitations of their corresponding operationalisation.
13. Identify the key questions of a research project within an empirically and analytically significant framework.
14. Identify the limitations of the conclusions of a research project.
15. Apply the principal theories for analysing processes of preparation, implementation and evaluation of public policies, independently of the sectorial area.
16. Identify the appropriate techniques to respond to the research problem that has been formulated and apply these to the available data.
17. Access the appropriate data sources for the analysis of political science.
18. Process and prepare the data compiled for analysis using the corresponding software.
19. Identify a research problem, justifying its political and academic importance.
20. Design an appropriate research strategy to address the problem that has been formulated.
21. Identify the appropriate techniques to respond to the research problem that has been formulated and apply these to the available data.

Contents

Master's Thesis (Master's Final Project)

Topic Selection

Selecting a topic is the first step in developing the Master's Thesis. Students are encouraged to choose a topic that is of personal interest, academically or professionally relevant, and feasible within the available time and resources.

Stages in the Preparation of the Master's Thesis

The preparation of the Master's Thesis generally involves the following stages:

Reviewing the relevant academic literature on the selected topic.

Defining a clear, focused, and feasible research question or analytical problem.

Planning and structuring the thesis by organizing ideas and available materials.

Collecting and analyzing data, where appropriate.

Preparing successive drafts of the thesis.

Revising, editing, and preparing the final version for submission.

Suggested Structure of the Master's Thesis

The following structures are intended as general guidelines and may be adapted to the specific characteristics of each project in consultation with the thesis supervisor.

The recommended length of the Master's Thesis is between 8,000 and 10,000 words.

Proposal 1: Carrying out a research.

1. Presentation of the problem or object of study.

Definition of the object - Empirical interest and analytical interest

Research question

Theoretical framework

Hypotheses

2. Methodology (approach, types of data, techniques to collect them, analysis techniques)

3. Presentation/Description of the data (quantitative or qualitative) / Construction of the case (justification of the selection of cases).

4. Analysis and discussion

5. Conclusions.

Proposal 2: Design of a research project.

1. Presentation of the problem or object of study

2. Definition of the object - Empirical interest and analytical interest.

3. Theoretical framework.

4. Research question and hypotheses.

5. Methodology (approach, types of data, techniques to collect them, analysis techniques).

6. Range and types of conclusions that are foreseen.

Proposal 3: Consultancy report.

1. Presentation of the problem to be analysed and justification of its interest (Context of the subject, comparable practical bones, etc.).

2. Aims of the analysis -questions to be answered.

3. Methodology (approach, types of data, techniques to collect them, analysis techniques)

4. Analysis

5. Conclusions

6. Recommendations (if applicable).

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Tutoring, presentations and discussion of progresses	75	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
Lectures	25	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
Elaboration of the thesis	150	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

In order to carry out the TFM, the student will have individual tutoring by a master's professor. The follow-up scheme will include a minimum of four meetings:

1. Discussion of possible topics and approaches for the work.
2. Discussion of the structure.
3. Discussion of the evolution of the work.
4. Discussion of the draft.

In addition to these meetings with the tutor, all students will attend periodic collective tutoring and discussion sessions with the coordinator of the module and/or other teachers of the Master. In these sessions each

student will present their TFM project once. Therefore, in these sessions, the student will receive comments from the teacher in charge of the session, and also attend presentations of ongoing research by the rest of the students and their corresponding methodological discussions.

Annotation: within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Presentation (research design) and collective tutorials	10%	0	0	11, 12, 19, 20
Master's Final Thesis	70%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
Defence of the Master's Final Thesis	20%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

The student must strictly adhere to the delivery schedule uploaded at the Campus Virtual

The evaluation will be carried out by a commission formed by two teachers of the master and will include an oral defence of the TFM by the student. The work must address a specific research question of analytical and empirical relevance. The commission will therefore assess:

1. critical understanding of existing theoretical debates on the subject,
2. the ability to define a concrete and approachable question,
3. the ability to link theory and empirical analysis through appropriate methodology,
4. the ability to publicly present the results of the TFM.

In the final grade of the module the TFM will represent 70% of the grade, the oral defense 20% and the presentation and participation in group tutorials 10%. The final grade can be:

Excellent (9-10 of 10): A TFM with very good definition of the analytical and empirical relevance of the topic, solid conceptual and methodological coherence and consistency, and good written and oral presentation.

Good (7-8 out of 10): A TFM with an interesting question/problem and good definition of the main concepts and methodological tools, but with an improved link between these aspects, as well as between them and the results.

Pass (5-6 out of 10): A TFM with ideas that are not particularly original and in which each of the above aspects can be improved.

Non pass (0-4 out of 10): Problems of structure or content that demonstrate insufficient use of the subjects

dealt with in the master's degree.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in the preparation of the Master's Thesis shall be governed by the Guidelines for the Use of AI in the Master's Thesis, which will be provided at the beginning of the course.

These guidelines establish the permitted and prohibited uses of AI tools, as well as the principles of transparency, citation, and academic responsibility that students are expected to follow throughout the thesis preparation process.

All students will be required to read, acknowledge, and sign these guidelines before beginning their Master's Thesis. By submitting the thesis, students declare that they have complied with these requirements. Failure to adhere to the principles set out in the guidelines may constitute a breach of the University's academic integrity policy and may result in the sanctions established under the applicable regulations.

Bibliography

The bibliography will be suggested by the tutor / a of the Final Master's Thesis, depending on the subject matter to be analysed and the methodology used.

References on research design:

McCauley, A., Ruggeri, A., 2020. From Questions and Puzzles to Research Project, in: The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations. SAGE Publications Ltd

Della Porta, D., Donskaya, Y. and Michael Keating 2008, *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences*, Cambridge: CUP

Hanké, Bob 2009, *Intelligent Research Design*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hay, Collin 2002, *Political Analysis: A critical introduction*, Houndmills: Palgrave

Johnson, J. and R. 1995 *Joslyn Political Science Research Methods*, Washington: CQ Press, 3rd ed.

King, G., R. O. Keohane and S. Verba 1999, *Designing Social Enquiry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

Software

The software used will depend on the methodology of each Master's Thesis.

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this [link](#). To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TFMm) Treball de fi de màster	1	Unknown	Undefined	morning-mixed
(TEm) Theory	1	Catalan/Spanish	second	morning-mixed

PROVISIONAL