



Aalto University
School of Arts, Design
and Architecture

Seminar II: Research Practice

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Course Outline

Seminars

- seminars will be held every second week
 - online using Zoom, at least until the end of 2021
- you need to attend as many seminars as you can
 - at least 80% of class attendance is required

Presentations

- you need to give two presentations
 - one in the first half: beginning of your thesis
 - one in the second half: progress/completion of your thesis
- you must register for your presentations on *MyCourses*
 - limited numbers for each seminar

Master's Thesis Guide

- under “Completing your master's thesis”
- check this link
 - <https://into.aalto.fi/display/envcdm/Completing+your+master%27s+thesis>

Master's Thesis Plan

- topic and tentative title of the thesis
- student name, programme and major
- thesis supervisor and thesis advisor(s)
- extent of thesis
- goals set for the research of the thesis
- description of the artistic component
 - if the thesis has an artistic work
- definition of the thesis scope
- methodological choices
 - meaning a tentative plan on the ways of seeking solutions to the research questions or a description of the starting points and goals of artistic work
- language of the thesis
- planned timetable for thesis completion
- financing plan if required by the topic of the thesis

Master's Thesis Evaluation

— it is included in the Master's Thesis Guide

Master's thesis three parts

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Thesis plan and theoretical framework

- Thesis plan
- Artistic / scientific goals
- Conceptual framework OR Artistic component
- **Marked Pass / fail**
- **Supervisor approves**

Methodology, production and preliminary results

- Discussion of the topic
- Interpretation
- Artistic component OR conceptual framework
- **Marked Pass / fail**
- **Supervisor approves**

Final version of the thesis

- Finalizing the thesis, conclusions
- Description and analysis of the process
- Reflection
- Overall impression
- **Grade 1–5 on the whole work**
- **Thesis Committee decides**

By Mari Partanen

Evaluation criteria

Choice of topic and of the artistic and/or scientific goals for thesis

Relevance of the topic for the field

Definition of topic

Setting of artistic and/or scientific goals for thesis

Command of topic and use of sources

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The topic has significance for the field.
The definition of the scope is clear and supports the discussion of the topic.
The student has set scientific and/or artistic goals for the thesis and justifies them.
The thesis demonstrates the student's command of the topic and its context or theoretical framework as well as of the previous research.
The sources used in the thesis are essential for the topic and the use of sources demonstrate good command of the subject area. Sources have been evaluated.
Good command of citing and referencing techniques.

Discussion of the topic, conclusions and interpretation

Choice of methods and techniques

Ability for analytical and research-oriented work

Ability to draw conclusions and think independently

Conceptualisation of the topic and linking it to a broader context.

Evaluation of thesis reliability

Quality of the artistic component

Idea and execution of the production component

Artistic thinking or design vision

Understanding the broader context of the work Documentation of the production

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The choice of methods or techniques supports the discussion of the topic.
The student has good command of the methods. or techniques selected.
The student demonstrates ability for analytical and research-oriented work.
The student draws justified conclusions or, in an artistic work, demonstrates independent thinking in relation to the topic discussed. The student understands the broader context of the thesis.
The student analyses the reliability of the key aspects of the thesis.
The execution of the production component supports the idea of the work.
The student demonstrates ability for artistic thinking or design vision.
The production has been sufficiently documented. The production can be assessed based on the documentation

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Evaluation according to thesis evaluation criteria and evaluation procedure

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By Mari Partanen

Appendix 1 Thesis evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria below apply to the master's theses of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture. The final grade is given for the thesis as a whole using those evaluation criteria which are relevant for the thesis. Emphasis may be put on those criteria that are relevant for that particular thesis: if the student defines his or her work as theoretical or applied research, the criterion *Quality of the artistic component* may be ignored. In such cases, weight is put on the criterion *Discussion of the topic, conclusions and interpretation*

The oral presentation given in the examination session and the skill in answering the questions posed by the examiner may raise the grade of the thesis.

In the grades 3–5 of the chart, the previous standard of quality is included in the next.

Evaluation criteria and matters evaluated	Grounds for failing the thesis	1	2	3	4	5
Choice of topic and of the artistic and/or scientific goals for thesis Relevance of the topic for the field Definition of topic Setting of artistic and/or scientific goals for the thesis	The thesis topic has not been approved and it is not related to the programme or major of the student. The lack of any definition of scope significantly complicates the discussion of the topic. The goals of the thesis are not explicated.	The topic of the thesis has been approved but it is poorly linked with the field. A lacking definition of the scope complicates the discussion of the topic. The scientific and artistic goals of the thesis are vaguely presented.	The topic is related to the field but has little relevance for it. Unclear definition of the scope complicates fluent discussion of the topic. Some scientific and/or artistic goals are apparent, but the arguments for them are weak.	The topic has significance for the field. The definition of the scope is clear and supports the discussion of the topic. The student has set scientific and/or artistic goals for the thesis and justifies them.	The definition of the scope is justified and supports the discussion of the topic very well. The student analyses the choice of the scientific and/or artistic goals of the thesis.	The topic is demanding. The definition of the scope demonstrates in-depth understanding of the topic. The student evaluates the choice of the scientific and/or artistic goals of the thesis.
Command of topic and use of sources Command of the topic Use of sources	The student is not familiar enough with the topic to discuss it in the thesis. The key sources relevant for the topic have been ignored. The text repeats the contents of the sources without providing references (plagiarism).	The scope of the topic has been recognised but knowledge of subject area is superficial. The sources are not relevant or evaluated. There are shortcomings in citing and referencing techniques.	The topic has been described. The thesis makes use of sources that allow the discussion of the topic but source evaluation is lacking. The student has fair command of citing and referencing techniques.	The thesis demonstrates the student's command of the topic and its context or theoretical framework as well as of the previous research. The sources used in the thesis are essential for the topic and the use of sources demonstrate good command of the subject area. Sources have been evaluated. Good command of citing and referencing techniques.	The thesis demonstrates the student's very good command of the topic and its context or theoretical framework as well as of the previous research. The thesis demonstrates very good command of key sources. The sources are evaluated and weighted purposefully.	The thesis demonstrates the student's in-depth knowledge of the topic and its context or theoretical framework as well as of the previous research. Finnish and international sources are used extensively. The sources are critically evaluated and their choice and weighting supports the discussion of the topic excellently.
Discussion of the topic, conclusions and interpretation Choice of methods and techniques	The goals set for the thesis are not achieved with the methods or techniques selected.	There are shortcomings in the command of the method or technique selected that affect the results.	The choice and command of methods and techniques support the attainment of the goals in a satisfactory manner.	The choice of methods or techniques supports the discussion of the topic. The student has good command of the methods	The student has excellent command of the methods or techniques and applies them very well. The student demonstrates	The student applies and critically evaluates the selected methods or techniques. The student examines the topic analytically and critically
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Overall impression Overall description of thesis Connection between the thesis components	The thesis has a great deal of major shortcomings. The thesis components are not interconnected and the student does not justify the choices made.	The thesis has major shortcomings, but meets the minimum criteria for a thesis. The thesis components do not form an integrated whole and the choices regarding the thesis components are not justified.	Despite shortcomings, the work fulfils all the criteria set for a thesis. The thesis components do not form an integrated and coherent whole, and the choices regarding the thesis components are poorly justified.	The thesis fulfils the criteria set for a thesis well. The thesis components form an integrated whole or the student justifies the choices regarding the components well.	The thesis fulfils all the criteria set for a thesis, and has particular merits in some areas. The thesis components form an integrated coherent whole. The student analyses his or her solutions regarding the thesis components.	The thesis has particular merits as a whole and in almost all areas. The thesis components form an integrated whole and support each other excellently. The student justifies and evaluates the solutions regarding the thesis components.

Master's Theses Archive

<https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/23>



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