

Magisterský diplomový seminář

Basic Guide

Timeline for academic year 2021/2022

Autumn semester 2021/2022 – get in contact with your supervisor and choose together your master thesis topic. To successfully pass this course you have to have a confirmation from your future supervisor that he/she will supervise your thesis

Spring semester 2022 – write a 5 page methodological part of your thesis on a near finish level. This part will become a part your methodology chapter in your thesis.

Methodological essay must include:

- Content:
 1. Abstract
 2. Methodology
 - Explain your methodological approach
 - Describe your methods of data collection
 - Describe your methods of analysis
 - Evaluate and justify your methodological choices
 3. Literature Review – choose most relevant 4-6 key sources for your master thesis and analyze them

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Detailed Explanation below

What is a methodology?

1. Explain your methodological approach

Begin by introducing your overall approach to the research.

What research problem or question did you investigate? For example, did you aim to systematically describe the characteristics of something, to explore an under-researched topic, or to establish a cause-and-effect relationship? And what type of data did you need to achieve this aim?

Depending on your discipline and approach, you might also begin with a discussion of the rationale and assumptions underpinning your methodology.

- Why is this the most suitable approach to answering your research questions?
- Is this a standard methodology in your field or does it require justification?
- Were there any ethical considerations involved in your choices?

2. Describe your methods of data collection

Once you have introduced your overall methodological approach, you should give full details of your data collection methods.

Quantitative methods

In quantitative research, for valid generalizable results, you should describe your methods in enough detail for another researcher to replicate your study.

Explain how you operationalized concepts and measured your variables; your sampling method or inclusion/exclusion criteria; and any tools, procedures and materials you used to gather data.

Surveys

Describe where, when and how the survey was conducted.

- How did you design the questionnaire and what form did the questions take (e.g. multiple choice, Likert scale)?
- What sampling method did you use to select participants?
- Did you conduct surveys by phone, mail, online or in person, and how long did participants have to respond?
- What was the sample size and response rate?

You might want to include the full questionnaire as an appendix so that your reader can see exactly what data was collected.

Existing data

Explain how you gathered and selected material (such as publications or archival data) for inclusion in your analysis.

- Where did you source the material?
- How was the data originally produced?
- What criteria did you use to select material (e.g. date range)?

Qualitative methods

In qualitative research, since methods are often more flexible and subjective, it's important to reflect on the approach you took and explain the choices you made.

Discuss the criteria you used to select participants or sources, the context in which the research was conducted, and the role you played in collecting the data (e.g. were you an active participant or a passive observer?)

Interviews or focus groups

Describe where, when and how the interviews were conducted.

- How did you find and select participants?
- How many people took part?
- What form did the interviews take (structured, semi-structured, unstructured)?
- How long were the interviews and how were they recorded?

Participant observation

Describe where, when and how you conducted the observation or ethnography.

- What group or community did you observe and how did you gain access to them?
- How long did you spend conducting the research and where was it located?
- What role did you play in the community?
- How did you record your data (e.g. audiovisual recordings, note-taking)?

Existing data

Explain how you selected case study materials (such as texts or images) for the focus of your analysis.

- What type of materials did you analyze?
- How did you collect and select them?

3. Describe your methods of analysis

Next, you should indicate how you processed and analyzed the data. Avoid going into too much detail—you should not start presenting or discussing any of your results at this stage.

Qualitative methods

In qualitative research, your analysis will be based on language, images and observations (often involving some form of textual analysis). Specific methods might include:

- Content analysis: categorizing and discussing the meaning of words, phrases and sentences
- Thematic analysis: coding and closely examining the data to identify broad themes and patterns
- Discourse analysis: studying communication and meaning in relation to their social context

4: Evaluate and justify your methodological choices

Your methodology should make the case for why you chose these particular methods, especially if you did not take the most standard approach to your topic. Discuss why other methods were not suitable for your objectives, and show how this approach contributes new knowledge or understanding.

You can acknowledge limitations or weaknesses in the approach you chose, but justify why these were outweighed by the strengths.

What is a literature review?

A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research.

Writing a literature review involves finding relevant publications (such as books and journal articles), critically analyzing them, and explaining what you found. There are five key steps:

1. **Search** for relevant literature
2. **Evaluate** sources
3. **Identify** themes, debates and gaps
4. **Select** key sources for your Master Thesis
5. **Write** your literature review

A good literature review doesn't just summarize sources—it analyzes, synthesizes, and critically evaluates to give a clear picture of the state of knowledge on the subject.