

Master's Thesis FTC

(MCMV22008)

Introduction

The Master's thesis is an individually written scholarly text in which students are expected to contribute, on the basis of independent research, to a specific scholarly debate within the field of Film and Television Studies. In the thesis, students demonstrate their ability to research and analyze a topic of their own choice and report on the findings.

The writing of the thesis will be supervised by a staff member of the programme who will be assigned to the project in period 2.

Word count: between 7.000 and 10.000 words, depending on the type of research.
Exceptions can be discussed with the thesis supervisor.
NB. The word count excludes elements such as table of content, abstract, preface, bibliography, and appendices.

Language: English
NB: It is possible to write in Dutch when discussed on time with the thesis coordinator and the thesis supervisor.

ECTS: 15 credits

Learning goals

In the master's thesis, students demonstrate that they possess the ability to

- carry out largely independent academic research on a self-chosen topic
- report, in the form of the thesis itself, about this research at a level that complies with generally accepted disciplinary norms.

Content

The master's thesis contains the following elements:

- an abstract of the research project;
- a research question (or thesis statement) and formulation of a problem;
- a short description of and critical reflection on the academic current state of affairs with regards to the chosen question or problem, based on relevant literature and other sources;
- a critical justification of why particular theoretical and/or historiographical frameworks and sources have been chosen;
- a description and motivation of the chosen research method(s) or/and methodological tradition;
- an extended argument through which the research material is analysed in a clear, logical, and convincing manner with reference to the original research question or problem;
- a conclusion of which the central focus is an answer to the original research question or problem plus a critical reflection on the outcomes and chosen methods, and which includes suggestions for further research;
- a bibliography that complies with the Chicago Manual of Style (notes and bibliography) or MLA conventions (**the supervisor can ask the students to work with either CMoS or MLA**);
- if Chicago Manual of Style (notes and bibliography) is used: footnotes that comply with the Chicago Manual of Style (notes and bibliography) conventions;
- if applicable: a list of images and/or other audio-visual material used in the thesis.

Overview thesis trajectory (exemplary, individual trajectories may differ!)

Period 2	Pre-trajectory: research proposal
	Start period 3
Week 1	Deadline proposal
Week 2	Discuss research proposal with supervisor and second evaluator (meeting 1). Rewrite if necessary (= in case of a fail), or: discuss plan of action with supervisor (meeting 2), start writing draft of first chapter (can be theoretical framework or analysis, depending on project). If desired, meeting 2 can also be an additional feedback meeting with the supervisor, in the days after the proposal presentation, to discuss the feedback on the proposal further.
Week 3	Work on draft of first chapter, submit draft (if possible), start working on next step (according to plan of action) If applicable: deadline resit research proposal (five working days after discussion of research proposal/feedback on proposal).
Week 4/5	Discuss chapter drafts/first results analysis; (re)evaluate research question and plan of action (discuss with supervisor, meeting 3). Continue to work on drafts of individual chapters.
Week 5/6	Deadline drafts of chapters
Week 6/7	Discuss drafts of chapters, progress, and further thesis trajectory with supervisor (meeting 4).
Week 7/8	Deadline first thesis draft.
Week 8/9	Discuss first thesis draft with supervisor (meeting 5).
Week 9/10/11	Rewrite thesis based on feedback
Week 1 of period 4 Friday 26-04-2024	Deadline thesis before 17.00h
	Resit trajectory
Week 4 of period 4 13-05-2024 - 17-05-2024	Discuss assessment and feedback with supervisor
14-06-2024	Deadline resit before 17.00h

Supervision

Writing a master's thesis is an individual trajectory supervised by one of the lecturers of the FTC programme. The supervisor is assigned to a student's research project in period 2 depending on their expertise and the student's preferences. A second reader is also appointed by the thesis coordinator of the programme. The second reader assesses the research proposal and the thesis but is not involved in the supervision process.

In case of questions or a complaint about the supervision process, students can contact the thesis coordinator or study advisor.

Research proposal

The research proposal describes a fully developed research project, including a plan of action and discussion and justification of the research method. Handing in a complete research proposal is a compulsory part of the thesis trajectory.

A complete research proposal consists of:

- a *brief introduction* to the subject, including a justification of its relevance;
- a clearly formulated *research question/problem* and a number of additional *sub questions*;
- a presentation of the scholarly literature used in the preliminary research process;
- a critical discussion of the proposed theoretical or historiographic framework as it relates to the research question, taking into account core concepts, arguments, authors, and theoretical traditions;
- a description of the proposed research method(s) as it relates to the research question, including a methodological reflection and literature;
- a substantiated indication of the envisioned research material and of the considerations that play a role in determining and limiting it (how much, how long, what and why, and what not), taking into account the accessibility of the prospective material.

The assigned supervisor and second reader will assess the research proposal. After discussing the research proposal and assessment with the supervisor and second reader in week 1/2, the student has the right to hand in a rewritten version (five days after the discussing the proposal, only applicable in case of a fail).

Note: As soon as supervisors and second assessors approve a thesis proposal, students upload this approved proposal in *Osiris Student > Cases* (please only upload PDF-files named: your family name_your first name_thesisproposal.pdf). Their supervisor then receives an e-mail and checks whether the file is correct, registers the agreement, and enters the name of the second assessor. The second assessor in turn receives an e-mail and also registers the agreement. *Osiris Student > Cases* is not used for giving further feedback on the proposal, as there is no possibility to do so.

Thesis assessment

At the end of the trajectory, the thesis will be assessed. It is the responsibility of the student to submit a **digital version** of the thesis in **Osiris Student** via *Cases > My Cases* **and** on **Blackboard > Assignments**.

Osiris provides students with an evaluation progress as well as their final grade. On Blackboard, all theses will be checked for plagiarism.

The first part of the assessment concerns the mandatory formal requirements (correct use of language, completeness, notation and list of sources, layout) of the research project. If one or more of these requirements are not met, the thesis' content will not be assessed.

The assessment of the thesis is based on the following aspects:

1. research question and sub questions
2. theoretical framework & academic relevance
3. method
4. analysis
5. conclusion
6. use and citation of sources
7. structure of the argument
8. composition and style
9. initiative (to be filled in by the supervisor)

The assessors determine whether the thesis meets the mandatory content requirements. Categories 1 to 6 must all be assessed *pass* when handing out a passing or higher grade.

The supervisor and second reader both assess the thesis independently from each other within **10 working days** to reach a joint final assessment and grade. If the supervisor and second reader do not reach an agreement, a third reader will be appointed by the supervisor. As this will require extra time, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to inform the student.

The final grade will be registered by the supervisor in Osiris, as well as send to the student via e-mail. If the student received a satisfactory grade, they will need to upload their thesis' final version in Utrecht University's thesis archive via *Osiris Student* > *Cases* (choose *Archive & publish thesis - Follow-up Case*). Uploading the thesis is mandatory.

Resit

If the thesis is assessed as 'insufficient', the student has the right to partake in the resit trajectory, unless the thesis was assessed with a 4.0 or lower. The resit trajectory takes place in period 4 (see *Overview thesis trajectory*).

The resit trajectory starts by discussing the assessment of the failed research project. After this extensive feedback meeting, **no further supervision will be offered**. The student has four weeks to work independently on a revised version.

At the end of the resit trajectory, the thesis will be assessed again. It is the responsibility of the student to submit a **digital version** of the thesis in **Osiris Student** via *Cases* > *My Cases* **and** on **Blackboard** > *Assignments*.

Osiris provides students with an evaluation progress as well as their final grade. On Blackboard, all theses will be checked for plagiarism.

The resit will be assessed using the same assessment criteria as mentioned above.

If the research project still proves to be insufficient, the insufficient grade will be registered in Osiris and the student will have to start another research project in the following academic year. This might result in the assignment of a different supervisor and second reader.

Fraud and plagiarism

When submitting their work, the student declares to have carried out all parts of the research project themselves, without plagiarising another author's work. For more information on fraud and plagiarism, see:

<https://students.uu.nl/en/practical-information/policies-and-procedures/fraud-and-plagiarism>

Note that the use of ChatGPT (or similar) for graded assignments is considered fraud!

Covid

In case of restrictive measures or scaling up education students will be informed by the thesis coordinator via Blackboard and email about the consequences for the thesis trajectory.

The guidelines for reporting sick and the cancellation form for tests can be found [here](#).

Course evaluation

Quality management is important to our programme. The team is constantly working to improve all MA FTC classes and implementing student feedback plays a huge role in that. Feedback on the thesis trajectory can be provided by making an appointment with the thesis coordinator Hanna Surma (h.b.surma@uu.nl) or by email.

If you have any other feedback about the courses, or the programme in general, please get in touch with the coordinators of the programme: Marijke de Valck (m.devalck@uu.nl), Judith Keilbach (j.keilbach@uu.nl) and Hanna Surma (h.b.surma@uu.nl). You may, of course, also contact the other teachers at any time.