

KARL-FRANZENS-UNIVERSITÄT GRAZ
UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ



Master Thesis Colloquium

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Course # 320.918

Today's Program

- Organization of colloquium
- Formal stuff
- Research idea
- Research idea and outline

Organization of our colloquium

■ Milestones / dates

- ▶ Presentation of your **research idea**
 - March 15, 2016
- ▶ Presentation of your outlines
 - April 12, 2016
supervisors should join
- ▶ Presentation of your draft versions
 - June 21; 28, 2016
supervisors should join
- ▶ Dates & duration
 - probably more that 45 min / meeting
 - probably more dates (TB arranged for during class meetings)

Organization of our colloquium

■ Presentations / two roles

Presenter of research idea; outline; draft version

Discussant of those presentations

■ Assignment of referee duties

Idea of refereeing others' works

Referee list (mutual)

exchange your works in time & **prepare discussion**

Organization of our colloquium

■ Grading

- Presentation of research idea: 20 %
- Presentation of outline: 20 %
- Presentation of draft version: 40 %
- Referee duties: 20 %

■ Grades

86% - 100%: Sehr gut (A);

73% - 85%: Gut (B);

60% - 72%: Befriedigend (C);

50% - 59%: Genügend (D);

0% - 49%: Nicht genügend (F).

Formalities

- <http://sowi.uni-graz.at/de/studium/masterstudium/einreichung-von-masterarbeiten/>

- The single **most important step**

Theme & Supervisor (Thema & Betreuungszusage) **prior to Easter holidays**

- ▶ Form: “Antrag auf Genehmigung eines Masterarbeitsthemas”
(to be authorized by dean of studies)

- ▶ Let me know who your supervisor is (email)

- Further steps

Complete data in UGO – “Abschlussarbeiten”

Form: “Beurteilung der Masterarbeit”

Research idea

- Check out our website for the colloquium

- Ingredients
 - Appropriate idea
 - Descriptive working title

- ▶ What is an appropriate idea?
How to present it?

- ▶ What is an appropriate (working) title?

Research idea

Not every idea qualifies as *research* question.

■ Demands on *research* question

▶ Clarity: Be specific and focused

What *exactly* are you analyzing?

Non-examples:

“My thesis analyzes new developments in microeconomics.”

“I investigate why government debt has increased by so much.”

Examples:

“We study the optimal provision of social security in a dynamically efficient economy using a continuous-time overlapping-generations model in which consumers have short planning horizons.”

“The paper studies the dynamic allocation effects and intergenerational welfare consequences of environmental taxes.”

Research idea

▶ **Originality: Provide a contribution**

Know the literature related to your research idea.

Which gap in the literature does your research question fill?

In which specific way does your research question ...

- ... contribute to the existing literature?
- ... differ from the existing literature?

▶ **Significance: Give reason for importance**

Research idea must pass the “so what” test.

Give explicit arguments for importance ...

- ... to researchers
- ... to practitioners

Research idea

■ Thesis

▶ Research question

Clarity
Originality
Significance

▶ Master thesis

Provides answer to research question

Research idea and outline

■ Presentation (of both)

1. Research question

Summarize **in 1 single sentence**

“This thesis is concerned with...”; “The purpose of this thesis is...”

2. What does the thesis and what about the method?

3. In which way is thesis different from existing literature; what is the contribution?

4. Why is the thesis important?

5. What are the main results?

▶ Perform “hostile referee” exercise before presenting your work