

## Guidelines for writing a Master's Thesis in the Neurosciences study program

(in line with the Examination Regulations, dated June 2015)

### Module Master's Thesis

The module Master's Thesis (30 credit points) comprises the Master's Thesis with 27 credit points and an accompanying seminar with 3 credit points. Graduation of the accompanying seminar requires a non-graded performance record; graduation of the Master's Thesis requires completion of the thesis itself and passing the Colloquium.

### Requirements for admission to the Master's Thesis

Application for admission to the Master's Thesis requires the achievement of 60 credit points in the compulsory and optional courses of the master study program, as well as the fulfillment of the requirements of the compulsory and optional modules of the first study term (cf. Appendix 1).

### Registration

The application form for admission to the Master's Thesis can be downloaded from the Master's homepage. The filled-out form, including signatures from both examiners, has to be forwarded to Mrs. Köhler from the examination office (Prüfungsamt FB2), accompanied by an up-to-date certificate of enrollment.

### Examiners

The Master's Thesis will be graded by two separate examiners, a first and a second examiner. In accordance with the Bremer Hochschulgesetz (Higher Education Act of the State of Bremen) Art. 62, § 3, examiners can be: Professors (Honorary Professors, Assistant Lecturers) who teach the examination topic full or part-time, or Lecturers who can provide evidence of at least three years of experience in teaching the examination topic on their own. Lecturers who do not meet these criteria must apply to the Master Examination Board and provide a CV and proof of their teaching activity over a period of three years in order to be accepted as an examiner.

At least one of the examiners must be a lecturer of the Bremen Neurosciences program; the other examiner may be external. **She/he has to come to Bremen for the colloquium.** Travelling costs are not reimbursed by Bremen University!

In case an external examiner cannot come to Bremen for the colloquium, an application can be made to nominate an additional examiner from Bremen University. Usually this happens once the thesis is submitted, but it is recommended to clarify beforehand who could be the potential second examiner from Bremen. The grading of the thesis in such a case has to be done by both examiners mentioned on the application for admission to the Master's Thesis, whereas the grading for the colloquium is made by both examiners from Bremen.

### **Topic of the Master's Thesis**

In the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> term (lab rotations), students usually know in which lab they would like to write their Master's Thesis. The topic has to be discussed with the first examiner. The Master's Thesis also is to be written in English. In exceptional cases, with approval from the examination board, it may also be written in German.

### **Checking the application**

Sylvia Köhler will check whether students fulfill the preconditions for application (sufficient CP's, all grades provided, etc.). Prof. Michael Koch, the program coordinator, who then signs the form.

### **Admission**

No later than two weeks after the application, a corresponding confirmation will be sent to the student, indicating the topic, examiner and deadline for submission of the Master's Thesis.

### **Deadline and submission**

The time frame for a Master's Thesis is 24 weeks. In case students want to finish their Master studies within 2 years, they must have submitted their application no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>. Students, however, are free to apply at a later date or they may indicate a later commencement date on the application.

**Keep in mind that it is forbidden to start working on the thesis prior to submitting the application.**

### **Submission extension**

Upon application, the examination board may grant a single extension of maximally four weeks for reasons related to the thesis (technical problems, delay of experiments, etc.). The application for extension has to be signed by the supervisor and the program coordinator. In case of illness, however, students must submit a doctor's certificate to Mrs. Köhler no later than 3 days after having become sick. You may send a scan first and hand in the original later. The deadline for the thesis will be extended accordingly.

### **Size/design of the Master's Thesis**

Please ask your examiners about the formal requirements for the thesis (layout, cover, format, etc.). Three (four in case the external examiner cannot come to Bremen for the colloquium) copies of the thesis with adhesive binding and an additional version on a CD must be submitted to Mrs. Köhler. Note that the stamp's date is relevant, if sent by mail.

The thesis must contain declarations as per attachment.

### **Master's Colloquium**

A Master's Thesis colloquium of maximally 60 minutes (30 minutes for the presentation of the Master's thesis and maximum 30 minutes for questions) will be conducted. Besides the two examiners, a nonvoting student observer should be present during the colloquium and subsequent consultations. The student usually takes over the task of writing a protocol which is passed on to the examination office. The colloquium is open to everybody. According to article 16 § 3 of the General Part of the Examination Regulations for Master Study Courses in their respectively valid version, one single grade is given for the Master's Thesis and the colloquium, to which the Master's Thesis contributes 75 % and the colloquium 25%.

Before the colloquium, students have the right to inspect the thesis' examination reports in Mrs. Köhler's office which may help to explain issues which the examiners criticized during the colloquium.

### **Grading**

The grades of the Master's Thesis and the colloquium together make up 40% of the overall grade. The remaining 60% is composed of the grade for the courses of the relevant modules, weighted according to the number of credit points, and the courses with the marked examinations. Non-graded study results are not considered in the calculation.

The grades usually are available four weeks after having submitted the Master's Thesis. This period can be extended in case that the examiner has to deal with a large number of theses.

### **Certificate/official Master's document**

The Master certificate and the official Master's document will be issued once all relevant results have been forwarded to the examination office (Mrs. Köhler) which is usually the case after the transcript of the colloquium has been submitted. Once the signature of the Chairman of the Examination Board (for the certificate) and the Dean of the Faculty (for the official Master's document) are available (usually 14 days after the colloquium), students will receive the documents by mail. Students, as well as the Secretary for Students (SfS), are informed about the successful completion of the program. In case students need a confirmation beforehand, they can contact Mrs. Köhler by e-mail.

### **Semester/enrollment**

Students must be enrolled in the corresponding study program when applying for admission to the Master's Thesis. Enrollment is not mandatory in order to submit the Master's Thesis and during the time of grading, as long as **all exams have been passed**.

Suppose a student does not pass an exam in the winter term 2016/2017, he/she can repeat it. One exam is offered for each semester. Should the student still not have passed the exam within the four semesters following, thus in this case March 30, 2019, he/she runs the risk to be exmatriculated. It is thus highly recommended to finish all the exams prior to starting with the Master's Thesis.

Students who do not pass the Master's Thesis successfully are entitled to repeat it once by applying for it within three months after having been informed about the result. In order to reapply, enrollment is mandatory.

### **Leave of absence from studies**

Regarding all relevant information regarding bonus-semester (holiday semester) please follow the link:

<http://www.uni-bremen.de/en/studies/studien-pruefungsverwaltung/formalitaeten-im-studienverlauf/leave-of-absence-from-studies.html>

Remember that **no exams can be taken** during that time, whereas the thesis can be written provided that all exams are passed and the Master's Thesis is the only work pending. A corresponding confirmation ("scheinfrei") can be issued by Mrs. Köhler.

## Links

Examination regulations (General Part, only available in German):

[https://www.datenbankstudium.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/dokumente/ordnungen/pruefungsordnung/AT-MPO-07-17\\_Lesefassung\\_gesamt.pdf](https://www.datenbankstudium.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/dokumente/ordnungen/pruefungsordnung/AT-MPO-07-17_Lesefassung_gesamt.pdf)

Examination regulations (Master of Neurosciences, German):

[https://www.datenbankstudium.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/dokumente/ordnungen/pruefungsordnung/MPO-Neurosciences-06-15.pdf](https://www.datenbankstudium.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/dokumente/ordnungen/pruefungsordnung/MPO-Neurosciences-06-15.pdf)

Examination regulations (Master of Neurosciences, English):

[http://www.masterneuro.uni-bremen.de/attachments/article/507/ExaminationRegulations\(English\).pdf](http://www.masterneuro.uni-bremen.de/attachments/article/507/ExaminationRegulations(English).pdf)