

# Guidelines for writing a bachelor's thesis

As part of the single-subject bachelor's program of Sociology at the University of Potsdam, the Bachelor's thesis must amount to 12 ECTS/LP + 6 ECTS/LP colloquium. In the dual-subject bachelor's program the thesis must amount to 6 ECTS/LP. You need to meet certain criteria in order to register your thesis. The formal guidelines for the single- and dual-subject bachelor's programs of Sociology can be found below – for all other programs, please consider your study regulation.

The students are expected to work on a topic independently. The skills to do that are acquired in the course Introduction to scientific working and writing (incl. self-reflection and self-management) (BSKSOZ110). We also recommend attending the colloquium for the writing of final theses (BKOSOZ110) of Prof. Dr. Verwiebe. There, you will have the opportunity to share and discuss your ideas and outline.

## ***Choice of Topic***

You can propose a topic yourself or choose from options given by your counselor or their academic unit. Please propose your topic by filling out our [form on the homepage of the chair](#). Empirical assessments can be part of a bachelor's thesis. If more writing time is needed because of empirical research, it can be applied for at the examination board (e-mail to Dr. Kletzin including a statement of agreement by the counselor). The extension lasts one month. Two and more students can write a bachelor's thesis together only if responsibilities for each part are explicitly stated. The students are assessed individually. The work load increases with every additional student.

## ***Subject Areas (selection)***

- Social inequality, social change
- Poverty, deprivation, income inequality
- Labor market, professions, atypical employment
- Migration, forced migration, spatial mobility, transnational mobility
- Health and quality of life
- Urban sociology and change
- Change of values and attitudes, social recognition
- Digitization, social media
- Discrimination and social exclusion
- Family, change of family structures
- Change of Gender roles
- Global inequality, comparison between countries
- Religious identities
- Life and work circumstances of released prisoners

## **Counselors**

Dr. Nina-Sophie Fritsch, Dr. Licia Bobzien, Steffen Hagemann, M.A. and Prof. Dr. Verwiebe are responsible for supervision. Furthermore, Steffen Hagemann can be chosen as an external second reviewer.

## ***Your way to a place for the supervision of your thesis at the Chair of Social Structure Analysis and Social Inequality - Flowchart for the supervision of theses***

### **1. Submission of a short exposé to the chair**

If you are interested in having your thesis supervised by the chair, please apply using the appropriate form on the chair's homepage.

Submission of the synopsis via the [chair's internal form on the website](#):

Submission of the exposé via the chair's internal form on the website:

Summerterm 2025:	06.01.2025
Winterterm 2025/2026:	19.06.2025
Summerterm 2026:	06.01.2026
Winterterm 2026/2027:	19.06.2026

### **2. Commitment to supervision at the chair**

The decision about the supervision of the thesis at our chair will be made after the application deadline. You will be informed about the decision via email. In parallel, please observe the formal guidelines of the corresponding study and examination regulations in the respective degree programs. You will find important information on the pages of the examination office of the WiSo Faculty. The contact person is Dr. Birgit Kletzin. (Formal registration at the responsible examination office).

After receiving the binding confirmation and holding the first meeting, you can discuss your research topic, its realization and possible support more closely with your counselor (who is usually your first reviewer). The confirmation is limited to six months – approximately the time needed to finish a bachelor's thesis. If you need more time, terms need to be arranged with your counselor.

4 consultation appointments are planned:

1. Appointment for the initial meeting after acceptance for a place of supervision and determination about the final topic of thesis.
2. Appointment for the preparation of the writing phase.
3. Appointment for the writing phase.
4. Appointment for the final phase.

### 3. Consultation dates for the official registration

You will receive a 1st appointment with the first reviewer, who is usually also the supervisor.

This usually takes place via Zoom. You agree with him/her on the final topic of your thesis. This cannot be changed after registration.

The first examiner recommends the second examiner.

You submit the topic assignment form with your personal data as well as your signature via e-mail to the chair secretary's office at [sozialstruktur@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:sozialstruktur@uni-potsdam.de). The signatures of both reviewers will be verified there.

There the signatures of both reviewers will be obtained.

#### Deadline for submitting the topic assignment form to Dr. Kletzin:

Summerterm 2025: 03.02.2025

#### Example for the summerterm 2025:

- Use of form on the homepage until 06/01/2025.
- Information on acceptance and supervisor by 10/01/2025.
- Generation and submission of the topic assignment form by 24/01/2025.
- Obtaining the signature of the second reviewer by the chair's office and forwarding to Dr. Kletzin by 03/02/2025.

Afterwards, the topic assignment form will be forwarded to the examination board via mail, you will receive a copy. The contact person for further organizational questions is now Dr. Birgit Kletzin.

### 4. Consultation appointments during the writing phase

Make another appointment with your supervisor during the writing phase.

#### Final discussion

Three weeks before submitting the final paper, arrange a binding meeting with your supervisor to finalize the paper. This is followed by the author's fine-tuning of the final paper. This meeting is just as important as the initial meeting.

### 5. Submitting the thesis

You submit the thesis to the examination office.

When writing your bachelor thesis, make sure that you cite your sources correctly. Theses are automatically subjected to a plagiarism check when they are uploaded by "Turn-it-In". The plagiarism

check procedure is based on the guideline for ensuring good scientific practice at the University of Potsdam (Plagiarism Guideline) of October 20, 2010.

A declaration of independence must be included in every paper and signed by the student himself/herself. Additional information (e.g. group work) on the submission of the thesis can be found in the respective study or examination regulations. With this declaration, the student assures that he/she has behaved in an academically correct manner and that the thesis has been written by him/her independently and that he/she has not used any sources other than those specified.

have been used. For more details, please refer to the Senate's Plagiarism Policy (PDF).

### **Registration of the thesis at the Office of Student Affairs/Office of Examinations**

With the confirmation of the topic by the examination board, the registration of the thesis can be done:

- Within one week after confirmation by the examination board, the thesis must be registered in the study office/examination office.
- Late registration will result in a new topic having to be assigned.
- If the registration is made in person during office hours in the study office/examination office, this can be noted immediately in the examination system.
- The deadline for submission will be set and communicated.
- The original topic assignment sheet with registration date and submission date will be handed over to the student.

## ***Writing the bachelor's thesis***

### **Formal Guidelines**

#### Single-subject-bachelor of Sociology

„(1) Once the student has attained 126 ECTS/LP, she or he is entitled to the immediate allocation of a topic for her or his bachelor's thesis. (2) The bachelor's thesis amounts to 12 ECTS/LP. A disputation is not planned. Thirty pages DIN A4 should not be exceeded. Furthermore, § 26 BAMA-O applies.“

translated and paraphrased from: Auszug aus den Amtlichen Bekanntmachungen Nr. 11 vom 21.6.2017 – pp. 338 – 352

#### Dual-subject-bachelor of Sociology

„(1) Once the student has attained at least 120 ECTS/LP, she or he is entitled to the immediate allocation of a topic for her or his bachelor's thesis. Should the appointment of ECTS/LP be delayed, it is sufficient to both have attained 90 ECTS/LP and be enrolled in examinations that according to § 9 Abs. 4 or Abs. 5 BAMA-O total another 30 ECTS/LP. (2) The bachelor's thesis amounts to 12 ECTS/LP. A disputation is not planned. Thirty pages DIN A4 should not be exceeded. Furthermore, § 26 BAMA-O applies. (3) Students majoring in sociology who write their bachelor's thesis in their minor subject can attend another course from an elective module instead of a colloquium.“

translated and paraphrased from: Auszug aus den Amtlichen Bekanntmachungen Nr. 16 vom 11.9.2014 – pp. 1197-1220

Remember to adhere to the Chair’s citation guidelines. All theses are checked for plagiarism through the software Turn-it-In. The screening for plagiarism follows the corresponding guidelines of the University of Potsdam from October 20, 2010.

A **statement of authorship** has to be included in every university work and has to be signed by the student. You can find further information (e.g. regarding team work) in your study and examination regulations. With this statement the student affirms that she or he has acted in scientifically correct manner, has written the thesis independently and only used the references listed in the bibliography. More information can be found in the plagiarism guidelines (abridged version in English).

### ***Evaluation of the bachelor’s thesis***

The bachelor’s thesis will be evaluated within four weeks. The following content-related and formal criteria are referenced in evaluation.

Content-related criteria	Formal criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accomplishing the goal of the thesis (answering the research question)</li> <li>- Independence (developing and arguing for a distinct position)</li> <li>- Good structure, straight reasoning (common thread)</li> <li>- Proper use of professional terminology and sound choice of sources</li> <li>- If applicable: quality of empirical research (knowledge and use of methods, analysis and interpretation of findings)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completeness (title page, table of contents, bibliography, if applicable list of tables, illustrations and appendix)</li> <li>- Clarity (general structure, structure of chapters)</li> <li>- Linguistic and orthographic accuracy</li> <li>- Proper use of sources</li> <li>- Adhering to the citation guidelines</li> </ul>

The examination office forwards your thesis to your reviewers. They examine the thesis, grade it and provide written explanations and feedback. If the second reviewer approves of the first assessment, she or he will sign it. If both assessments differ by more than 2.0 or if one assessment is worse than 4.0, a third reviewer is assigned by the examination board.

### ***Submission of the bachelor’s thesis***

The thesis is to be **handed in both timely and threefold** bound as a hardcover (either at the examination’s office during office hours or via mail – the stamped date counts). Further it is to be handed in on an electronic medium (e.g. CD, USB stick) both in word and PDF format. If the thesis is written in any other language than German (for which the consent of both reviewers is needed), a short summary in German is to be included.

**Due to the pandemic** final theses can be send as an e-mail only to the examination office (no other handing in is needed).

***Tips and helpful links:***

- Information about how to work academically (from generating ideas to research, citation etc.) can be found on the website of the central study board
- Please use the University Library for your research
- Relevant documents can be found at the examination office of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences