



Course curriculum for EDSD Independent Research - (Master Thesis/Degree Project)

1. General information

1. Name: Independent Research- Thesis course
2. Level: Doctoral level
3. ECTS Credit points: 15.

2. Course placement within the educational system

1. Subject: Demography
2. Independent research with the completion of a thesis for the European Master in Demography.
3. The course is offered in English.

3. Learning outcomes

On a general level the student will acquire skills and abilities for independent research in demography. More specifically, students will be able to:

- identify a relevant research question
- apply quantitative and/or qualitative approaches on issues considered within the master's programme
- choose adequate theoretical and empirical methods for the research issues
- transform theoretical models into testable empirical models and conduct the appropriate empirical research
- analyze and interpret the findings of advanced theoretical and empirical applications
- present a written report, in accordance with academic standards, describing their research
- discuss, on the basis of academic standards, research reports

4. Course content

The student has to define a research issue, carry out research and write the thesis independently, although with support from a supervisor. At an early stage a supervisor will be allotted to the student on the basis of her/his area of interest. Well before the actual period of the thesis work a series of preparatory seminars will be held, where the students present ideas and plans for the research. It is the task of the supervisor to support the development from idea to plan, and thereafter to stimulate and criticize the student's work.

A thesis (15 credit points ECTS) should consist of an original, independently executed work. The general structure of the content should be: (1) Introduction of the issue with a discussion of the literature in the field, (2) methods and data, (3) narrative, (4) results, and (5) conclusion. Of course the general structure has to be adapted and refined according to each thesis.

While the size of the thesis is not stated, successful theses must adequately cover points 1 - 5 and provide an original contribution to the current state of research.

5. Teaching and assessment

Teaching takes place primarily through individual supervision and discussions in the student group at seminars, at different phases of the project, led by the examiner. Throughout the writing process the student can consult her/his supervisor for advice, feedback and criticism. The examiner and not the supervisor is responsible for the grading of the thesis. If a thesis does



not pass the first examination, the examiner and the supervisor will specify the required improvements that have to be made and the student will be given the opportunity to hand in a revised version for assessment.

The University views plagiarism very seriously, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious academic offence. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.

6. Grading scale

Grading on the programme is based upon the ECTS scale. This means that in order to pass a certain course or assignment a student has to get the mark A, B, C, D or E, where A is the highest possible mark. Students who fail an assignment will get the mark F. In very general terms, the different grades represent the following quality of work:

A	Excellent	The achievement clearly distinguishes itself and is excellent with regards to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
B	Very good	Very good. The work shows a very good ability of theoretical depth, practical application, analytical skill and independent thought.
C	Good	The achievement lives up to expectations and is of a good standard when considering theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
D	Satisfactory	The result is satisfactory on most levels, but has some weaknesses with regards to the above mentioned aspects.
E	Sufficient	The performance satisfies the minimum requirements, but not more.
F	Fail	The result is not satisfactory enough.

7. Prerequisites

General prerequisites for the European Master in Demography