FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES OF THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY IN KRAKÓW

BA in International Relations and Area Studies

BA THESIS GUIDLINES
2018/2019

I. DIPLOMA THESIS SEMINAR AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Students need to attend Diploma Thesis Seminar in their fifth and sixth semesters (60 hours, 10 ECTS).

2. Students earn 2 ECTS points in their fifth semester and 8 ECTS points upon submission of their BA thesis in their sixth semester.

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS for the completion of the programme (graduation):

a/ Completion of all courses and modules in accordance with the IRAS Curriculum. Students are required to earn a total of ECTS points appropriate to their specialization.

b/ Submission of a **BA thesis** accepted by the supervisor and reviewed by one reviewer.

c/ Final examination (defence)

The final grade on the diploma includes the following elements:

- the evaluation of the thesis, which is 3/8 of the final grade,
- the evaluation of the defence of the thesis (examination), which is 1/8 of the final grade
- the weighted average of grades awarded during the whole course of studies, which is 1/2 of the final grade on the diploma.

All diplomas provide a supplement that lists all courses taken and grades earned during the whole course of studies.

II. BA THESIS GENERAL GUIDELINES

All undergraduate students must submit and pass a BA thesis to complete the requirements of their degree otherwise they will not be able to graduate.

As part of your BA degree in International Relations and Area Studies, you are required to submit a dissertation of **12,000-14,000 words** (**including** footnotes and references, but **excluding** appendices) on a topic of your choice, developed in consultation with a supervisor. The dissertation represents the culmination of your undergraduate studies and it needs to be based on your own work and analysis of various sources. The aim of the dissertation is to show that at the end of your degree, you have the capacity to think and work independently. You must not replicate work that you have done in another course, but you can develop a topic that you have previously encountered. If in doubt, ask your supervisor.

The thesis should meet all required standards as indicated in this guideline.

II. Procedures and Deadlines

Thesis supervisors are responsible for running a BA seminar (also called Diploma Thesis Seminar) in the fifth and sixth semesters of the programme. It remains the student's responsibility to regularly attend the seminar of their choice and to make contact with their supervisor via email if they are on Erasmus exchange programme.

Friday 16 November 2018: deadline for submission of coursework including dissertation title, dissertation proposal (350-500 words) and preliminary bibliography.
Each student is required to submit one hard copy and upload an electronic copy to the module's page/email it to the supervisor.

Wednesday 16 January 2019: deadline for submission of the first chapter of the dissertation.

Friday, 14 June 2019, 3 p.m.: submission deadline for all dissertations.
The dissertation must be submitted no later than this deadline if you want to graduate in June 2018. Late submission results in diploma examination postponed until September 2018.
You are required to provide **three** hard copies and **one** electronic copy to be uploaded onto the APD online platform: www.apd.uj.edu.pl

Late submission and poor performance

Late submission results in postponed diploma examination. If submitted after 15 June your dissertation can be defended only in September, after the summer break.
If your dissertation is late for reasons that were unforeseen and beyond your control, you can apply for **mitigating circumstances.** If you feel that you have underperformed in your dissertation for reasons that were unforeseen and beyond your control, you can apply for mitigating circumstances. Your Supervisor and Programme Director can help you make an application.

If you are experiencing serious ongoing work, personal, or health problems that are affecting your work, you **must** speak to your supervisor and Programme Director. If, for any reason, you think that you may not be able to submit a thesis in this academic session, you **must** speak to the Programme Director. The earlier you speak to us, the easier it will be for us to help you.

III. RESEARCH AND WRITING

1. Topic

Choice of topic should be made in consultation with your supervisor. The topic should be one that can be treated effectively within the word limit of no less than 12,000 words and no more than 14,000 words, and with material reasonably available. Source material may be from archives, documents, printed sources, secondary literature, interviews, etc. All dissertations should show knowledge of priary sources. The topic should also be related to the field of International Relations and your chosen specialization. It must be accepted by your supervisor before the end of winter semester of your third year.

2. Title

The title of your dissertation should be brief and to the point. Formulate the title as a statement, not a question. Avoid using quotations in titles. It is also advisable, where possible, to state the dates within which the topic falls, as part of the title. The title must be accepted by your supervisor as well as any revision of such

3. Plan ahead

An undergraduate dissertation requires good planning and organization. You need to thoroughly discuss your topic in seminar class including a detailed plan of your work before you start writing. Once your topic has been accepted, establish a feasible research/writing up timetable (in consultation with your supervisor) in order to avoid a last-minute crisis.

To help you build your bibliography, you should explore the numerous online catalogues and databases available via the Jagiellonian University Library online resources www.bj.uj.edu.pl

Always remember to save your work and back it up in more than one location: we cannot guarantee that mitigating circumstances claims for lost work will be accepted.

4. Building your bibliography

In order to build bibliography you need to use available library resources including the Jagiellonian Library and various Faculty libraries (depending on your topic). It is also essential that you use online resources available to all JU students via the Jagiellonian Library electronic database. This should include journal articles as well as electronic books. Internet sites can be used when needed, but only if they contain academic content, official documents or official data. Please consult your supervisor if you are not sure which websites can be used for the purpose of your research.

As you do your research, be sure to keep accurate notes and references for all the material you consult. Make a note of all the publication details of books and articles that you use and keep an accurate record of pages consulted. You should also keep a detailed record of any primary sources you use. This will help you to avoid plagiarism (see below).

5. Structure of your dissertation

A dissertation must have a clear structure that should be discussed with the supervisor. You need to start with an **Introduction** which explains the topic, gives reasons why you decided to write on it and states your **research question** and the methods you are going to use in order to achieve your **research objectives.** Often, the best dissertations ask a specific question, which gives the argument direction and focus. This is not mandatory and addressing a statement can work just as well. You may also wish to include a short section on your **sources** in the introduction: why you have chosen them, what they can tell us, and any problems they may present for a social scientist.
Divide the main body of the text into three or four **chapters or subsections**, addressing different aspects of the topic in a clear order. The last part of the dissertation is called **Conclusion** and it should briefly recapitulate the specific problem considered in your dissertation and reflect upon your key findings. It is here where you can present your own evaluation of the topic. Do not introduce any new material or concepts here. Make sure that your conclusion relates to the findings presented in the dissertation and summarises logically the points you have already made. Any **tables or images**, must be included in the main text or in an appendix. The last, but very important part of your dissertation is **Bibliography.** Make sure that your Bibliography/References includes only the works that you have actually consulted and that are included in your footnotes/in-text references. They should normally be divided into two sections: 1) Primary sources 2) Secondary sources. The difference between them and different types of both categories will be discussed in your Seminar class.

Before you hand in: check your final draft for errors of fact, spelling, punctuation, footnote/in-text references, numbering and typing as well as stylistic errors. Spell-check facilities on your computer are no substitute for your own proof-reading. If you are not confident with your writing in English you should ask someone for help with proof-reading. Careless presentation will be taken into account by the supervisor and reviewer.

Plagiarism Policy
All dissertations legitimately make some use of work done by others. But plagiarism must be avoided.
Plagiarism is the publication or presentation of borrowed thoughts and work as your own and it is the most common form of examination offence encountered in universities. Some students plagiarise unintentionally, through ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism. Yet, even if unintentional, plagiarism will still be considered a serious offence. Common forms of plagiarism include:

- copying the whole or substantial parts of an essay or dissertation from a source text (such as a book, journal article, web site or encyclopedia) without proper acknowledgement;
- paraphrasing another person's work very closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained;
- procuring the whole or parts of an essay or dissertation from a company or an essay bank (including websites);
- submitting another person's work as one's own, with or without that person's knowledge;
- submitting an essay or dissertation written by someone else and passing it off as one's own;
- re-submitting work that has been previously submitted for another course (i.e. self-plagiarism). See more on www.plagiarismadvice.org

Plagiarism arises from the failure to indicate, in the text or the footnotes, that you are using, quoting or closely paraphrasing someone else's ideas, argument, data, words or material. All quotations or paraphrases must be individually acknowledged by giving a precise reference to the source and additionally word-for-word quotations must be placed in quotation marks. The full reference, including page number, should be given for each such quotation. In addition, all paraphrased material should be appropriately used and referenced. The requirement to provide an acknowledgement applies equally to published and to unpublished writings, and **includes materials available on the internet.**

Theses based on sources in other languages than English are acceptable provided that such sources do not comprise more than 20% of all sources used. Where foreign language sources are used, students are obliged to translate them into English.

Procedures and penalties
While submitting your thesis you will need to sign a declaration that you have not engaged in plagiarism.
Any form of plagiarism will not be tolerated and is treated as a serious disciplinary matter. Action will be taken wherever plagiarism is suspected (please remember that plagiarism is not difficult to detect). In these cases, students will receive a formal letter from the department, outlining the disciplinary proceedings for dealing with cases of suspected plagiarism, as well as possible penalties. If plagiarism is confirmed, penalties will be imposed according to our University Study Regulations. Students have a right of appeal in all cases.

IV. GUIDELINES ON CITING SOURCES

There are two acceptable methods of citation. The first provides references in the form of footnotes or endnotes and is known as the Oxford System. The second incorporates references into the main text using brackets and is called the Harvard System. Choose one style and be consistent. Do not merge features of the Oxford and Harvard citation methods. Be sure to enter citations as you write up your thesis.

V. USEFUL TEXTBOOKS (available in the Politics library):

1. J. Clanchy, B.Ballard, *How to Write Essays: A Practical Guide for Students*, London,1998.
2. S. Cottrell, *Critical Thinking Skills: Developing Analysis and Argument*, New York, 2011.
3. Kate L. Turabian et al., *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, eighth edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013 – the most often used manual at universities).
4. S. Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1997.
5. C. Lamont, *Research Methods in International Relations.* London: SAGE, 2015.
5. William Strunk and E. B. White *The Elements of Style*, fourth edition (London: Longman, 1999).
6. Inc. BarCharts, *APA/MLA Guidelines (Quick Study: Academic)* (2011).

Useful websites:
Study Guides and Strategies. A large site with general advice on studying, time management, exam preparation and essay writing. Includes links to many other helpful sites http://www.studygs.net

Advice on Academic Writing comprehensive site from the University of Toronto http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice

Bedford Research Room page from Colorado State University