Master’s Thesis

Please note: Read carefully the “Degree Programme and Examination Regulations” (FPOHR) and the “Detailed Description of the Modules” which you can find on this webpage:
http://humanrights-master.fau.de/basic-facts.shtml

Formal regulations:

In general:
- The third semester of the master programme is devoted to the Master’s thesis. 30 ECTS credits are awarded for the thesis.
- The thesis is intended to show that you are capable of dealing with a problem in the field of human rights independently and according to academic methods within a set period and presenting the results in an appropriate form (see Section 27 (1) FPOHR).
- The thesis shall be written in English (see Section 27 (7) FPOHR).

Timeframe and deadlines:
- The period between the allocation of the subject and the submission of the thesis is 6 months. The period for thesis work starts upon the formal allocation of the subject with your supervisor (exceptions, see Section 27 (2) FPOHR).
- According the regular period of study (3 semesters), the final date for the formal subject allocation is 30 September (the end of your second semester). Final deadline for the submission of your thesis is 31 March (the end of your third and final semester) (exceptions, see Section 7 (1)).

Supervisor:
- Approach one of the programme directors of the M.A. Human Rights you intend to choose as a supervisor of your Master’s thesis. You may also approach another professor of the Faculty of Philosophy or of the Faculty of Law. In exceptional circumstances, the Examinations Committee may also allow accept another supervisor (see Section 27 (4) FPOHR). If you have agreed on your subject he/she will suggest a second reviewer of your thesis.

Consultation:
- Please consult with your supervisor throughout the writing or the thesis as often as it seems necessary. He/she may ask you to submit a draft table of contents. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask. Please take any advice given to you seriously.

Scope and Formatting:
- 20,000 to 25,000 words (60-80 pages)

1 If you enrol a fourth semester you will have to pay 42 € student union fees and 65 € semester ticket.
Submission:
- The thesis has to be submitted in time (see “Timeframe and deadlines”) to the supervisor in duplicate as well as in a machine-readable, electronic version.
- The thesis has to correspond with the sample title page (see appendix 1).
- The thesis has to include a Declaration of Authorship, a declaration by the student confirming that the thesis is an original work and that no other sources and materials than the ones stated were used (see appendix 2).

Advises for writing a Master’s thesis:

Subject selection:
- Possible range of areas of the thesis is the basic subjects of Human Rights Politics, Philosophy of Human Rights and Human Rights Law. The subject can be based on a seminar paper.
- Your chosen topic has to be clear and should focus a concrete subject matter or problem.
- The subject has to show the academic and human rights related relevance which results from academic voids and controversies.
- The topic and concern should already be clearly visible in the title of the Master’s thesis.

Question:
- Subsequent to the topic selection you will have to formulate and specify your question.
- The question is the key point and leitmotif of the Master’s thesis and has to relate directly to the chosen topic/problem.
- The question has to be precise and comprehensible.
- The question can follow an own thesis which has to be accountable and justified.
- The question has to run through the Master’s thesis as leitmotif/central thread.
- The question has to be taken up, verified and, if necessary, modified in the conclusion.
- The following lead questions could be helpful for formulation your own question:
  o What are the problems, contradictions or controversies concerning the selected topic?
  o Are there any academic voids or research gaps?
  o What can the paper contribute to the discussed problem?
- Please be aware: Questions are most likely too broad at the beginning and have to be circumscribed and narrowed down.
Structure, Literature and Citation:
- The structure has to be traceable, clear and already comprehensible in the table of contents.
- Choose a customary citation. If in doubt, consult an academic article suggested to you in the seminars and use that citation style.
- Layout, formatting and citation have to be uniform. Be consistent throughout your Master’s thesis!
- Grammar and spelling has to be correct.
- Consider the relevant academic/specialist literature.
- Quotes (only) support your own argumentation/statement and must not be pivotal.
- Ensure that you reference the work of others correctly. Copying from papers or articles without proper reference or literal quotations without using quotation marks is considered plagiarism and may result in a rejection of the thesis.

Content:

Introduction:
- Topic, concern, aim, research question and working thesis
- Introduction and definition of central terms/conceptions/theories
- Overview of the current state of discussion
- Short and concise explanation of the structure and your own proceeding

Main part:
- Logical and clear structure /chapters
- Traceable derivation and justification of your thesis and argumentation
- Confine your own and others thesis and arguments.
- Coherent argumentation, leitmotif, own formulations
- Balanced weighting of the different parts
- As for empirical analysis, base your propositions/conclusions on empirical evidence

Conclusion:
- Short summary
- Interpretation and evaluation of the results
- Taking up and answering the question / take a stand
- Own evaluation, conclusion, solution approaches and, if applicable, prospect

References:
- Alphabetic order and uniform according to the chosen customary citation
- Clear and complete

List of tables and figures (if applicable)
Appendix 1:

(Title)

(if applicable subtitle)

Master’s Thesis

in the master programme

Master of Arts HUMAN RIGHTS

at the

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Theology

at

Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg

Supervisor:

(Title and name)

Second reviewer:

(Title and name)

submitted by

(First Name)
(Address)
(Student registration number)
(E-Mail)

(Location), (Date)
Appendix 2:

Declaration of Authorship

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted is my own unaided work. All direct or indirect sources used are acknowledged as references.

I am aware that the thesis in digital form can be examined for the use of unauthorized aid and in order to determine whether the thesis as a whole or parts incorporated in it may be deemed as plagiarism. I am aware that a false assurance fulfils the fact of a fraud in terms of § 16 ABMStPO/Phil and has the results called there.

This paper was not previously presented to another examination board and has not been published.

________________________________________________________________________
First and last name                                             city, date and signature