Information session
Master’s thesis
September 2017

Prof. P. Kuppers & Prof. M. Simons
Fabienne De Ryck
Attention

- This session is for students of:
  - Master of Psychology: Theory and Research (120 ECTS)
  - Master of Educational Studies (60 ECTS)
Overview

1. Master’s thesis
2. Start of Master’s thesis
3. Working on the Master’s thesis
4. Completing and submitting the Master’s thesis
5. Defence and evaluation of the Master’s thesis
6. To do
7. Questions
Master’s thesis
Description

= a research study in which you demonstrate your ability to
  • compile a state-of-the-art literature review on a research
topic in a particular discipline
  • apply the discipline-specific research method
  • formulate relevant and research-based conclusions

= the culmination of the master programme
Time investment of a Master’s thesis

= 600 to 720 hours
= 4 month full-time work
= 5 courses

24 ECTS (MES)
= part-time job
= average 18 to 22 hours a week
= 32 weeks

10 + 14 ECTS (T&R)
= 1 day a week
= 7 to 8,5 hours a week
= 84 weeks, every week

!!START ON TIME!!
Objectives

After completing the Master’s thesis, you should be able to

• conduct independent research within a (sub)discipline of psychology or educational sciences
  o provide a theoretical foundation for your research
  o formulate a research question
  o select, apply and evaluate an adequate research method
  o draw valid conclusions and offer critical reflections
• report on your research in an academic style
Objectives

By working on the Master’s thesis you…

• develop and form autonomous and critical thinking and judgement capacity, including the ability to produce new insights
• develop and form an attentive attitude to new (international) evolutions
• give evidence of an ethical and academic attitude to approaching research and practice problems and processes
• take responsibility for your thoughts and actions
• show willingness to collaborate with others
Actors

Student

• What is expected?
  o responsible for progress and handing in
  o ability to work autonomously
  o good organisational skills
  o sense of initiative

• 2 or more students, 1 Master’s thesis
  o one and the same topic
  o different aspects of a specific problem
  o if you collaborate, set clear ground rules
Actors

**Supervisor**
- ZAP or ABAP with a PhD!
- Responsible for the **supervision**
- Assists you in planning, designing and reporting
- Gives suggestions about the research project
- Verifies that you act with discretion
- Reviews text (within reasonable period)

**Co-supervisor**
- Additional expertise

**Day-to-day coach**
- Assists supervisor
Actors

Examiner
- Supervisor, co-supervisor (if appointed) and 2 examiners
- Assesses the product, the supervisor(s) also assess(es) the process

The chair of the defence
- Steers the defence and deliberations in the right direction
- Writes the defence report, including the outcome
Characteristics of the Master’s thesis

Topic and objective

• Relates to one of the degree programmes the Faculty offers
• Not linked to the programme or the major
• ≠ theme/purpose of the internships
Characteristics

Research @ PPW

• Occupational & Organisational Psychology and Professional Learning
• Brain and Cognition
• Education, Culture and Society
• Parenting and Special Education
• Health Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Centre for the Psychology of Learning and Experimental Psychopathology
• Methods, Individual and Cultural Differences, Affect and Social Behaviour
• Education and Training
• School Psychology and Child and Adolescent Development
• Social and Cultural Psychology
Renewal website
Recently a new corporate style applied to the KU Leuven websites. We use this opportunity for restructuring our faculty website. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience.
Jeroen Stouten

jeroen.stouten@kuleuven.be

Occupational & Organisational Psychology and Professional Learning
Dokstraat 2 - box 3725
3000 Leuven

Google map
room: 01.48
tel. +32 16 32 58 30
or +32 16 3 26092

Unit

- Work, Organisational and Personnel Psychology

Belongs to (according to the corporate view):
- Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences

Functions

- associate professor Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences
- programme director of POC Master Psychologie - Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences

- council memberships

Curriculum Vitae

- Research topics
- Research projects
- Research expertise
- Teaching
- Publications
- Personal links
Start of Master’s thesis
Prerequisites

• The Master’s thesis is a full-year course unit. This means that this course can only be selected in the ISP in the first semester. You cannot start with the Master’s thesis in the second semester.

• It is impossible to take any of the Master’s thesis units in under an examination contract or a credit contract.

• Students who did not obtain their certificate of the preparatory/bridging programme or bachelor programme cannot start the Master’s thesis.
Order of enrolment

For technical reasons, students entering the Master’s in Educational studies/Master of Psychology: theory & research with a degree obtained from another institution than KU Leuven can select the Master’s thesis in their ISP but may be unable to submit their ISP for approval.

- Submit ISP without including the Master’s thesis
- Submitting the ‘Overruling prerequisite requirements’ form, which is available on the Master’s Thesis Portal

OVERRULING PREREQUISITE REQUIREMENTS

Due to an error on prerequisite requirements, the student may be unable to upload some courses in the ISP and to submit their ISP.
If the student intends to fulfill the prerequisite requirements, he/she selects all courses he/she wishes to include in the ISP, except for the courses for which an error message appears, and submits the ISP.
The student then completes this web form before the end of the ISP-deadline.
The student administration of the faculty PPW will add the requested courses to the ISP (if the student effectively meets the requirements).

Student number

Your E-Mail Address
Topics

- Procedure: the topics from the Faculty can be consulted on https://ppw.kuleuven.be/apps/masterproef/
- You can also propose a topic
Onderwerp-voorstel in 2016-2017

Het coderen van narratieve coherentie

Type onderwerp
Onderwerp van de promotor

Meer uitleg over de ondersteuning bij het schrijven van de masterproef kan je vinden in het reglement van de masterproef: https://ppw.kuleuven.be/masterproefportaal
Welcome on the Master's Theses Application

Welcome at the new Master's thesis' platform of the faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. In 2016 it will fully replace the old Master's thesis' website.

You can already use this new platform to submit your title of your Master Thesis or to consult the titles from part 1.

Questions and remarks can be sent to ppw.masterproef@kuleuven.be

Start by the timeline below

2016-2017

1. Your student info for 2016-2017 in the Master's Theses application
2. You follow the MES traject

Proposal

By student-proposed topic

Enter your student-proposed topic for 2016-2017 (Possibility will end on 4 October 2016 at 12:00 in the afternoon)

By proposed subjects

Voting round 1

You can now vote for round 1 (Possibility will end on 30 September 2016 at 12:00 in the afternoon)

Lottery results will be announced on 4 October 2016 at 14:00pm.

Voting round 2

Make your choice
Procedure

Master’s thesis tool – Lottery procedure

• Lottery procedure
  o All students of the Faculty choose from the same topics
  o If a particular topic has been chosen by more students than the maximum number allowed, the topic will be assigned by lottery

• Enrolment in the programme is a condition to choose a topic
### Supervisor-proposed subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Added</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning to manage conflict in families with business</td>
<td>Martin Euwerna</td>
<td>10-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive and negative contact experiences: Minority perspectives</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic engagement in the face of discrimination</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual identity</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do parents shape the acculturation preferences of minority adolescents?</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do acculturation preferences of minority adolescents change over time?</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can friends change your views on acculturation?</td>
<td>Karen Phalet</td>
<td>09-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of transient receptor potential (Trp) channels in learning and synaptic plasticity - a literature study.</td>
<td>Detlef Balschun</td>
<td>03-09-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice 2 ▼</td>
<td>Mannen, vrouwen en stereotypen - Men, women and stereotypes</td>
<td>Loes Meeussen</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Work-life balans: Hoe je omgeving je kan steunen of hinderen - Work-life balance: How your social environment can hinder or support you</td>
<td>Loes Meeussen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice 3 ▼</td>
<td>Literature review: Comparison of dual process models for explaining actions</td>
<td>Agnes Moors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Investigating the influence of high vs. low control on the tendencies to fight vs. flee with reaction time tasks</td>
<td>Agnes Moors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice 4 ▼</td>
<td>Fostering student entrepreneurship at KU Leuven</td>
<td>Eva Kyndt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Group, team, or something in between? Comparing the “teamness” of teams</td>
<td>Eva Kyndt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview of your choices:

- Choice 1: Vechten tegen stereotypen: Presteren en je plaats vinden als gestigmatiseerd groepslid [Fighting against stereotypes: Performing and belonging as stigmatized group member]
- Choice 2: Mannen, vrouwen en stereotypen - Men, women and stereotypes
Overview of your choices:

- Choice 1: Succesvol bij de examencommissie?
- Choice 2: Behandeling van kanker en risico op infertiliteit: psychologische aspecten
- Choice 3: Het coderen van narratieve coherentie
- Choice 4: Delibererende klassenraden
- Choice 5: Pester op school: maken relaties met leerkrachten een verschil voor slachtoffers?

More information about support when writing a Master's thesis can be found here: https://ppw.kuleuven.be/thesis
Procedure

• Information for each topic
  o language: English and/or Dutch
  o obligatory course related to this topic?
  o is the topic suitable for one-year Master’s theses?
  o is the topic suitable for outgoing Erasmus students?
  o brief explanation of the topic
  o type of research (see also: type of Master’s thesis)
  o type of data collection
  o research and analysis methods and techniques
  o special conditions (e.g. time of data collection, ethical issues,…)
  o which programmes/options have priority?
  o how many students can choose the topic?

• Information for each supervisor
  o supervision
  o contact
Procedure

Master’s thesis tool – Lottery procedure

• Lottery procedure to ensure equal opportunities for all students (+/- 500 each year)
• Lottery procedure
  o the system takes in account degree programme/major
  o and your order of preference
• Several stages
• Equal opportunities (not first come-first served)
• Submission of 5 preferences in first round,
• min.3 and max. 5 in second round
Procedure

Examples Lottery procedure

• A topic with priority for students of the MES
  o Student T&R puts topic at the first place
  o Student MES puts topic at the third place
    • Student MES has priority

• A topic with priority for students of the MES
  o Student MES puts topic at the first place
  o Another student MES puts topic at the third place
    • Student 1 is more likely to get the topic
Procedure

Examples Lottery procedure

- A topic with no priorities
  - Student MES puts topic at the first place
  - Student T&R puts topic at the first place
  - Each student has the same chance of getting the topic
Timing

• PHASE 1: **INTRODUCTION** to the proposed topics (from mid-September)

• PHASE 2: **INFORMATION**
  - A general information session (now)

• PHASE 3: **FIRST SELECTION ROUND** (Wednesday, September 27th)
  - Fill out 5 preferential topics on the web application
  - No later than Tuesday, October 3rd at 12 am (noon)
Timing

• PHASE 4: RESULT FIRST ROUND + SECOND SELECTION ROUND (Tuesday, October 3\textsuperscript{th})
  o Second round for students who have not been assigned a topic yet
  o Proposing min. 3 and max. 5 topics on web application
  o No later than Friday, October 6\textsuperscript{th} at 12 am (noon)

• PHASE 5: RESULT SECOND ROUND (Friday, October 6\textsuperscript{th})
  o Students without topic are contacted by the Faculty. A solution will be found.
Procedure: student-proposed topic

- Suggesting a topic is possible, if it is
  - Related to the students’ programme
  - Within the area of expertise of a supervisor
  - Different from the topics in the faculty list in terms of content

- What to do?
  - Prepare a proposal (1-2 pages)
  - Find a supervisor
  - Indicate you will submit your own topic via the web application at the start of the academic year (deadline October 3rd)
  - If a supervisor agrees to supervise, you submit the request for the topic in the application. In this request you indicate that there is an agreement with the mentioned supervisor.
Procedure: student-proposed topic

• Approval by Tuesday, October 3\textsuperscript{th}
• Approval based on the following elements:
  o The supervisor has submitted topics for the agreed upon number of students (5 for full-time ZAP, 2 for part-time ZAP) in the application
  o The proposed topic differs sufficiently in terms of content from the topics proposed by the supervisor in the application
  o The student’s motivation clearly indicates that the topic was put forth at the student’s request and that the work of the Master’s thesis has not yet been initiated (e.g. at the time when the prerequisite requirements have not been met yet)
• If the proposed topic is refused, the student can still participate in the second selection round
Working on the Master’s thesis
Examples of Master’s theses

- Search for English titles and look them up in LIMO
- List of Master’s theses (min. 15/20)

Cooperation

- [Checklist](#) initial Master’s thesis meeting
- Problems?
  1. Discuss problems with the other party
  2. Contact the ombudsperson
Ombudsperson

Why contact the ombuds?
- Tips for or mediation in communication
- Tips for or support on planning your Master’s thesis
- Support on or mediation in collaborating with fellow students
- ... just a listening ear

Who?
- Kristien Vanheusden

How?
- You can make an appointment via email
- These appointments can take place in a separate room on your demand
Aids

Writing skills

- TOLEDO Community: enroll in Information Literacy Tutorial
- Workshop Study Advice Service
- Academic Writing Assistant
- Writing Centre
- Preventing plagiarism
- Academic writing course

Methodological aids

- Check your methodological courses
- Java Applets for Visualization of Statistical Concepts
Completing and submitting the Master’s thesis
Completing and submitting the Master’s thesis

Submitting the Master’s thesis

- Your own responsibility (discuss this with your supervisor)
- All submission deadlines and instructions can be found on the Master’s thesis Portal
- Master’s theses that are uploaded after the deadline will not be accepted

Regulations for the January exam period

- Standard: examination attempts in June and September
- Students who can graduate in January submit their Master’s thesis in the first exam period of January, instead of the second examination period
Defence and evaluation of the Master’s thesis
Evaluation

Master’s thesis part 1 Psychology

- Assessed by the supervisor
- The specific modalities are agreed upon by the student and the supervisor
  - Ask questions to clarify expectations
  - Set clear ground rules (deadline, product, …)
- Pass/Fail
  - The student’s potential to complete a Master’s thesis
Oral defence

Oral defence
  o Keep all announced moments available
  o You need to be present

20 minutes
  o Summarise the essence of the Master’s thesis without (technical) aid devices (2 min)
  o Answer any questions (8 min)
  o Deliberations between the members of the evaluation committee, after you have left the room (10 min)
Evaluation

Evaluation criteria

- Quality of the research
  - Theoretical framework
  - Research question
  - Research method
  - Conclusions and critical reflection
- Academic characteristics
- Characteristics in terms of language and form
- Process
Plagiarism control

KU Leuven definition:

Plagiarism is any identical or lightly-altered use of one’s own or someone else’s work (ideas, texts, structures, images, plans, etc.) without adequate reference to the source.

Prevention?

- Sign an honour code in the application
- Information Literacy Tutorial
- Plagiarism policies @PPW – Preventing plagiarism KU Leuven
Plagiarism control

Detection

• TurnItIn
• The faculty’s plagiarism expert (Prof. Bert De Smedt) reviews reports

Suspicion of plagiarism

• The student will be heard by the select examination committee
• If the assumption of plagiarism is maintained …

… Sanctions

Plagiarism = irregularity → the possible sanctions:

• an appropriate mark or zero
• no marks for any of the examinations
• the loss of the right to enroll in the next academic year or the two next academic years
Retaking exams

- Students are entitled to **4 exam attempts** (per Master’s thesis unit), with a maximum of 2 exam attempts per academic year.
- For each academic year that the Master’s thesis unit is included in the ISP, two exam attempts are registered (also if the title and/or Master’s thesis has not been submitted twice).
To do
To do

• Inform yourself
• ppw.kuleuven.be/thesis
• Follow the procedure
• Look up and write down all deadlines in your agenda
• Evaluation MT, part 1
  o Make clear arrangements!
• Read Regulations Master’s thesis
• Use aids for the Master’s thesis
• Contact: ppw.masterproef@kuleuven.be
Questions?

Next: infosession Master Thesis Workshops MES-E + Master’s programme