

## MEME Thesis Guidelines

### Master's thesis project (26 ECTS-points)

The students carry out an independent research project. The topic of the project should be in the field of Evolution, Ecology or Systematics. Students read the relevant literature and become experts in the methods necessary to complete their research projects. Students will conduct statistical analyses of the data they have collected and will write a report (master's thesis) in the format of an academic journal article (Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Literature Cited). The total length should be 60,000–100,000 characters (40–60 pages including figures, tables, references, etc.).

### Goal

The students gain independence and confidence through the process of carrying out a larger research project that they designed themselves and for which they are responsible. They learn that plans need to be changed and updated. They conduct research and communicate their results in a report.

### Master's thesis defense (1 ECTS-point)

As part of their thesis work, students should present their research to their supervisor, co-workers, and fellow students and/or at the MEME summer school. The graded defense should be done within the group where the research was carried out. It begins with a presentation of the thesis (around 20 minutes) and is followed by questions and discussion. In total, the defense should not exceed 45 minutes.

The defense should take place within 2 weeks after submitting the thesis (it can occur before thesis submission).

### Guidelines

The thesis project may be carried out under the supervision of any professor, PD ("Privatdozent") or group leader within the LMU Faculty of Biology.

It is possible to carry out an external project at another institution or faculty, but in such a case there must be an internal supervisor from the LMU Faculty of Biology who is responsible for assigning the final grades. External projects must be applied for in advance through the MEME coordinator. This should be done through a formless application by e-mail that must include a brief project description (1–2 pages), the contact information of the supervisor(s) and a timeline indicating when the project will be performed. The application must include written confirmation from both the internal and external supervisors. Approval of the EES examination board must be obtained before the project begins.

Students must select the topic of their master's thesis during the second or third semester and hand in the *Registration for Master's Thesis* form to the MEME coordinator. This form must be signed by both the (internal) supervisor and the student.

In order to graduate by the end of the fourth semester, theses should be registered no later than September 15 (master's thesis in winter semester) or **March 15** (master's thesis in summer semester).

Once registered, the thesis must be completed within **24 weeks**. The exact due date will be provided by the MEME coordinator at the time of registration.

Please note that **late submissions are not accepted**. If the thesis is not submitted on time, ECTS points cannot be awarded. Extensions of the deadline are not granted in order to do more experiments or analyses, or to repeat failed experiments. An "interruption" of the thesis is only allowed in cases where the student is unable to work on the project for health reasons. In such cases, the student must apply to the MEME coordinator and provide medical documentation of the exact dates that he/she was unable to work. The deadline can only be extended for this period of time.

Two hard copies of the master's thesis with fixed, not spiral binding (one for the examination office, one for the internal supervisor) must be submitted either in person or, in case of external projects, by

post) to the MEME coordinator by the individual submission deadline according to the mandatory period of 24 weeks.

The following **must** be attached in the hard copies:

- **Statement of Originality**. It must be signed by the student
- **Master's thesis - Last page**. It must be signed by the (internal) supervisor

Please see "downloads" at <http://ees.bio.lmu.de/download/index.html>

The MEME coordinator will collect the signature of the chair of the examination board.

### **Grading of the thesis**

After the thesis is submitted, the (internal) supervisor will be contacted by the MEME coordinator and asked to provide:

- 1) A signed hardcopy of the thesis evaluation with the grade.
- 2) The date of the thesis defense.
- 3) The grade of the thesis defense.

For projects conducted externally, the external supervisor must send an evaluation of the student's work to the internal LMU supervisor within two weeks after the submission deadline.

Supervisors should contact their students directly to inform them of their grades and provide feedback.