

# Guidelines for Students Seeking MA Thesis Supervision

Christian von Scheve

Freie Universität Berlin

I am happy to supervise MA theses, provided they broadly fall within my areas of expertise. To ensure a good fit and a productive supervision process, please carefully read the following guidelines.

## 1. Topic Fit

- I can **only supervise topics I am broadly familiar with**.
- Typically, these are topics covered in my **seminars and lectures** as well as areas I work on in my **own research** (see my publications for details and the “Supervision Topics” overview on the Institute’s website).
- Most of the students I supervise have at least attended one of my seminars during their studies and take inspiration from the literature covered during this (or other) seminars. This, however, is not a precondition for supervision.
- If you have a particular topic in mind, please first **check which faculty members** are working on this topic in their teaching and/or research.
- **Only in exceptional cases** can we discuss supervision of other topics.
- I am happy to supervise projects using **qualitative** or **quantitative** approaches.

## 2. First Contact and Exposé

When enquiring about supervision, please prepare and send me a **short exposé (1–2 pages)** that contains:

1. **The broader research subject** and a **general research question**.
2. A **very brief review of existing research**, identifying gaps you seek to address and formulating the **more specific research question**.
3. **Ideas for data and methods to be used in the thesis**.
4. 5–10 references to **high quality sociological** journal articles (or books) you have actually read, of which:
  - **1–2 should be model case studies** (empirical studies that can serve as inspiration or methodological models).

If you are still at an **earlier stage**, you may also reach out with only rough ideas. We can then discuss and refine these during an office hours appointment.

## 3. Formal Supervision Agreement

- I will only formally agree to supervise your thesis once we have **jointly developed an exposé (3–5 pages)**.
- This exposé should function as a **miniature version of your thesis** and demonstrate the potential to become a strong MA thesis.

## 4. The Revision Process

- Typically, it will take **2–3 rounds of feedback and revision** before the exposé reaches an agreed final version.
- This process usually requires **4–8 weeks**, depending on the topic and methods, your responsiveness, and my schedule.
- Please **plan well ahead** so that the exposé and supervision agreement are finalized in time for registration.


## 5. Writing the thesis

- If you are on a tight schedule, you can already start working on thesis even before the official registration (and hand it in even before the deadline)
- Supervision during the research and writing process continues based on your individual needs. You can always reach out to me if you have particular questions or are facing unexpected obstacles or challenges. However, I do not read and comment on entire chapters or sub-chapters.
- When you hand-in the thesis, you need to upload primary data you collected (e.g., recorded interviews, transcripts, raw survey or experiment data) and any R or Stata Scripts to the secure FU cloud.

## 6. Key Takeaways

- Choose a topic within my research and teaching expertise.
- Send a **1–2 page exposé** (or rough ideas, if you are just starting).
- Expect **2–3 feedback rounds** before supervision is agreed.
- Allow **at least 4–8 weeks** for this process.

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 *Following these steps ensures that your thesis project is both feasible and rewarding, and that we can work together effectively toward a successful MA thesis.*

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