

Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts

Internal Directive No. 1/2021

**The Directive of the Rector of the Bratislava International
School of Liberal Arts**

**Concerning the Prerequisites for Fulfilling the Conditions of
Admission to the Bachelor Thesis Defense at the Bratislava
International School of Liberal Arts**

Amended September 19, 2022

Bratislava 2021

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Contacts

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Selection of Thesis Topic and Advisor

Student chooses a thematic field of the Bachelor Thesis (BT) from the list of topics offered by internal and external faculty. This process takes place during the third semester of studies. Student reports the chosen topic to the Studies Coordinator (kusa@bisla.sk).

In January, the **Academic Council meets and recommends thesis advisors for the selected topics.**

In exceptional cases, if student's preferred topic does not fall within the range of topics offered, student can suggest their own topic or thesis advisor. However, an exception is subject to approval of the Academic Council, as is the approval of all advisors and topics.

During the **J-Term**, the student develops the thesis prospectus.

By February 20, student submits a brief preliminary proposal for the thesis (thesis prospectus), consisting of abstract, introduction, overview of key sources of literature, methodology, and expected findings.

By **the end of the Reading Week**, the Academic Council deliberates on the thesis proposals and approves them for research or recommends changes to be made.

During the Spring semester, **student and the thesis advisor meet at least twice** in order to specify the topic of BT, to define the primary scope of literature and choose methodological approach, and to agree on the work process during the summer months.

Topic and Scope of Research

Topic of BT must relate to the field of study of political science and related disciplines (humanities and social sciences). At the same time, a direct link between the specialization of the thesis advisor and the topic chosen must exist.

If a student is declaring a minor in some discipline, the bachelor thesis should correspond with the selected minor. However, bachelor thesis is expected to build on the subjects, topics, literature studied in the various courses taken at BISLA.

A bachelor thesis must have a **theoretical foundation**. Student is to manifest knowledge of the literature in the studied field and ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical examples. Empirical thesis should also conduct **original research**, accompanied by **interviews, surveys, discourse analysis, archival research, field observation, etc.**

Each student is expected to carry out interviews/consultations as part of their research. Empirical studies demand interviews with experts, policymakers, or subjects of research. Theoretical works invite interviews with scholars and experts on the topic. **Theoretical theses should consult at least two such scholars other than the thesis advisor, and empirical theses three or more experts or practitioners.**

Length of BT is between 30 to 40 norm pages (1800 characters per page with spaces). For detailed information concerning the format of BT see The Directive of the Rector of BISLA Regarding the Format of the Bachelor Thesis on www.bisla.sk (in Slovak language).

Cooperation of thesis advisor and the student

During the Fall semester of the second year of studies, student chooses the topic of BT from the list of suggested topics offered by faculty. Based on this selection, **the Academic Council assigns a thesis advisor**. Afterwards, student reaches out to the advisor, and, having agreed on cooperation, student contacts the Studies Coordinator and registers the thesis advisor and the topic of BT.

During the Spring semester of second year, student assembles relevant literature and completes other tasks stemming from the agreement with the thesis advisor. By **February 20, a preliminary prospectus** of the thesis is submitted to the Academic Council for review, describing the problem, the relevant theory, key sources of literature, methodology, expected findings, and relevance of the research project for approval.

Precise title of the BT, signed by the thesis advisor, is submitted by the student to the Registrar Office **by the end of the Fall semester of the final year of studies.**

Binding date for the submission of BT is February 15. Thesis is submitted to the thesis advisor and Registrar's Office in a PDF version. Hard cover bound copy should be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the end of February.

Rights and Duties of Thesis Advisor

Thesis advisor is the main superintendent of student in the process of writing BT. Thesis advisor consults both content and structure of BT with the student. They direct the student methodologically in the process of research.

Meetings with the student

- During the Fall semester of the third year, the thesis advisor and student meet **once a week**; In case student fails to attend the meetings twice, thesis advisor informs the Studies Coordinator. In case it is not possible for the thesis advisor to meet with the student once a week, or in case of a longer-term absence caused by travel commitment or heavy workload etc., thesis advisor indicates an alternative plan of cooperation, which has to be consulted with the Studies Coordinator.
- Guiding the student in **choosing and specification of the thesis topic**;
- Helping with the **selection of literature**;
- Guiding student in **choosing methodological approach** and in the process of collection of primary and secondary sources and data;
- Continuous **evaluation** of the student: student marks the dates and takes a brief note on the content of meetings during the Fall semester of the third year, using the attached Attendance Form.
- It is the **student's responsibility to carry the attendance sheet** and make sure it is being filled out, signed, and submitted to the Registrar's Office along with the thesis.
- In case student does not keep the time table of meetings or of the binding terms for meeting the criteria of admission to the defense of the BT (See Appendix 1), thesis advisor has the right to withdraw from the cooperation, after consulting this step with Coordinator of Studies;
- Advisor checks the authenticity of BT and guides student on the usage of citations and sources;
- Advisor is remunerated for leading the BT according to a work agreement signed between BISLA and the advisor. It is signed after BT is submitted to the Registrar's Office in its final form;
- After BT is submitted, **Advisor writes evaluation of the bachelor thesis**, which is submitted to the Study Department **no later than March 31**.

The Rights and Duties of the Student

- **Student bears full responsibility for keeping the time table** and for meeting the requirements of admission to the defense of BT;
- **It is the student's responsibility to meet with the thesis advisor regularly**; in case it is not possible for the student to come to a meeting, student agrees with the advisor on an alternate date; in case the advisor is not available – if advisor cancels a meeting twice or more, or if they are abroad for a long-term period and do not communicate with the student, student contacts the Studies Coordinator;
- Student is responsible for filling out the Attendance Sheet (attached) – making a brief note on the content of the meetings, which will be reviewed and signed by the thesis advisor before turning the sheet in with the bachelor thesis to the Registrar Office.
- Meeting the time table set by the thesis advisor and in this Directive; Fulfillment of partial tasks according to agreement with the thesis advisor;
- Student must **carry out an original and extensive research** of literature and data under the direct supervision of the advisor;
- **Student is responsible for the final product (BT)** and carries any pertinent disciplinary action in case of not meeting the set criteria or breaking the given decrees.

The Format of Citations and the List of References

An overview of the basic rules of formatting and citation in the APA style (American Psychological Association), which is required at BISLA, is stated in the Directive on the Format of BT or at Purdue Online Writing Lab: [APA STYLE](#)

Plagiarism

The work of the student must be authentic and must respect the copyrights of the printed, electronic or audiovisual sources used. The BISLA Plagiarism Directive pertains to BT, disciplinary action included (up to the dismissal from studies at BISLA). BTs are checked multiple times in the process of writing. The work is subject to the check by the thesis advisor, by the Registrar's Office when the draft is handed in and by the Central Registrar of the Bachelor Theses when entered into the database of the Ministry of Education after completion of the work.

Theses are uploaded to **the Central Registry of Bachelor Theses** at the Ministry of Education, which processes all theses through a plagiarism detection software and generates a document stating the originality of the text. If more than **10%** of the text is identical with other sources, the advisors writes a brief statement recommending the next course of action – recommendation to forward the thesis towards the thesis defense, or to convene a Disciplinary Commission to investigate a potential case of plagiarism.

Binding deadlines

By the end of the third semester of studies	Selection of the thematic field of the thesis and preliminary topic
January <i>Fourth semester</i>	Academic Council assigns thesis advisors. Student registers thesis topic and advisor with the Studies Coordinator.
By Feb 20 <i>Fourth semester</i>	Submission of a brief thesis prospectus (consisting of problem statement, key sources of literature, methodology, expected findings, relevance). Prospectuses are then approved by the Academic Council by the end of the Reading Week. Thesis Advisor and student meet to agree a study plan for the summer
By 15 September <i>Fifth semester</i>	Specification of the thesis topic, submission of the preliminary thesis title to the Registrar's Office
By 15 December <i>Fifth semester</i>	Final wording of the Bachelor Thesis title submitted to the Registrar's Office (fill out the form <i>Zadanie záverečnej práce</i>)
By the end of the Fall semester	Student completes and submits a full draft of the thesis to the thesis advisor.
By February 15	Student submits a PDF version of the bachelor thesis to the Registrar's Office Student fills out and submits the license agreement and agreement with the publication of the bachelor thesis to the Registrar's Office.
By February 28	Student submits <u>one copy of the bachelor thesis in hard cover binding, one copy in soft cover binding to the Registrar's Office.</u>
February	Advisor and opponent of BT submit evaluations of the BT to the Registrar's Office (you will receive a form by e-mail).
Min. 3 days before the defense	Student receives thesis evaluations from the advisor and the opponent (via Registrar's Office) not later than 72 hours before the defense.
May (usually during the second week of May)	<u>Bachelor Thesis defense</u>

BACHELOR THESIS CONSULTATIONS: Student Attendance Sheet

Date	Náplň stretnutia / Meeting contents
September	
Signature _____	
October	
Signature _____	
November	
Signature _____	
December	
Signature _____	

