

Political Geography Unit, GIUZ

Guidelines for Master students

Political geography is the study of the co-production of space and power. Our research unit (Political Geography Group, or “PGG”) is particularly interested in this dynamics at the margins of a globalising world. We study the spatial production of political order, uneven development and governance in Africa, Southeast Asia and Europe. We combine grounded research with discourse analysis.

These guidelines are meant to welcome and channel you through the various steps of the MA thesis that you have decided to take on with us.

Feel free to ask any practical questions to our MA tutor, Shona Loong (shona.loong@geo.uzh.ch). She is the one you should keep informed about the various formal steps you are taking in the completion of your MA thesis, so please don't forget to get in touch once you've decided on your topic.

Overall we ask our MA to participate in the “MA colloquium” and “PGG seminar”, and to fulfill the formal steps to complete the MA thesis. Even without formal registration (so once you've settled on a topic with your supervisor) you can actively start participating in the unit.

Here are the different elements to your MA thesis project.

(1) Decide on a topic and get in touch with us

Please get in touch with a potential supervisor by checking our web pages (<http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/pgg/about-us/staff/> and <http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/pgg/>) propose a research that is related to the general topics of the unit. You can have a look at our proposed topics (<http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/pgg/research/master-theses/announced-master-theses/>), but we also encourage you to come up with your own topic, provided it is related to our research.

You do not have to have a fully planned out project at this point, and you are welcome to ask your supervisors questions about methodology, feasibility, and theory. However, we ask that you sketch out some ideas before you speak with us.

(2) Propose a concept draft

Once you have gotten in touch with a potential supervisor, they will ask you to write a “concept draft” (1-3 pages, see also http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/studying/consecutive_master/master_thesis_exam/procedure.html). Once you agree with your prospective supervisor on your concept, you should fill the Consecutive Master's Thesis Agreement form and get it signed (find the form there: <http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/studying/downloads.html>).

(3) Enroll in the unit

Once you've done this, write to Shona (shona.loong@geo.uzh.ch) to introduce yourself and to ask him to put you on our mailing list. The mailing list will keep you up-to-date with our events, including the “MA colloquium” and “PGG seminar”. Once you've done this, ask Jasnea (jasnea.sarma@geo.uzh.ch) to place your topic online (and please put Shona in copy).

(4) Sign up for GEO511

Once this Agreement has been signed, kindly enrol in the Master module 511. Please read the information sheet carefully: https://www.geo.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:8fd0ac84-cb62-43d0-a57a-35b79cbafb73/HS20_Merkblatt_Masterarbeit_Masterpr%C3%BCfung_30.pdf

(5) Participation in the PGG Seminar

The PGG seminar is an informal platform for academic exchange and debate within the political geography unit. Each semester, we have a different theme for our discussions. We hope that participating in these seminars will enrich your studies, and also help you get to know our faculty members.

As a Master student enrolled in the political geography unit, you should participate in a minimum of **3 seminars** over the period of your MA project (have a look at our PGG seminar programme at <http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/political-geography>, or email Shona if you cannot find it).

(6) MA colloquium

To bring your research close to existing research in our unit, we also organize a colloquium where Master students are expected to present their own project. Presentations will take place on a date that will be set in advance. Please contact Shona to arrange a date. Your presentation should contain the following elements:

- **Tentative Title**
- **Research Topic** (theme, issue, debate, problem statement etc.)
- **Research Question** (main and sub-questions, research objectives)
- **Contribution** (geographic and broader relevance)
- **Methodology** (selected methodological tools for data collection and analysis, re- search field, sampling etc.)
- **Schedule** (exploration, background reading, data collection and analysis, writing-up, submission)
- **Budget** (only in case of relevance)
- **Problems** (address the difficulties you face at the moment, where do you need help?)
- **Milestones** (clarify your next steps)

At the colloquium, attendees will ask you questions and provide feedback in the hopes of clarifying your Masters thesis. You are also welcome to come with questions and concerns for the rest of the PGG group. We look forward to hearing about your research!