



Master's Thesis Concept Talks at the GIScience Center

The aims of the MSc concept talks are 1) to get useful feedback from researchers at the GIScience Center, aside from the direct MSc thesis advisors, and 2) to prepare candidates for the oral defense of their MSc project with their final Master's examination.

1. Students enrolled in the MSc thesis module are required to present their MSc thesis concept at the research colloquium of the GIScience Center. This also includes MSc students in ESS affiliated with one of the three units of the GIScience Center.
2. MSc concept talks are generally scheduled approximately 7–8 weeks after officially booking the MSc thesis module. Please make sure to **enroll before** the desired starting date.
3. MSc candidates must upload a **one-page (max.) written thesis concept to Leangate** when booking the MSc thesis module. This concept includes the working title/topic of the thesis, the names of the people who have agreed to supervise the thesis, and an abstract with a brief list of references. Include an AI statement (see next page). Once the module is booked, **send an email to <giscience-admin@geo.uzh.ch>** with your provisional thesis title and the names of the advisors. This information is needed to assign reviewers for the concept talk and to advertise the colloquium.
4. Presenting students are asked to develop the uploaded MSc concept further after enrolment. **Discuss with supervisors expectations on the format, the content, and the length of this written concept** (e.g., min. 3 to max. 8 pages). Send this document (PDF) via Email to the selected reviewer at the latest **1 week before** the delivery of the concept talk.
5. We recommend organizing a dry run of your talk at the latest **1 week before** you present in the colloquium. Presenters should make individual appointments if they wish to organize a dry run.
6. Each student is assigned one reviewer from the GIScience Center. This reviewer reads the written concept, attends the talk, and provides feedback after the talk on the written concept and on the oral presentation, in both form and content. This feedback and the dry run of the presentation serve as preparation for your future MSc exam. It is especially aimed at early identification of potential issues or challenges with your planned work.
7. The **expected content and structure** of an MSc written concept and talk includes:
 - a. Research gap/problem statement/motivation
 - b. Thesis goals and research questions to reach these goals
 - c. Related work: State of the art and research context
 - d. Planned methods
 - e. Expected outcomes and anticipated challenges
 - f. Brief timeline and planned milestones
 - g. Summary (and possibly open questions for the audience)
 - h. There is no need to put your references on the last slide
8. Concept talks have a maximum length of **15 minutes** and are followed by a discussion with the audience, lasting no longer than **5 minutes**. Each presenter moderates the talk of at least one other presenter in the session. Moderators should:
 - a. Briefly introduce the speaker
 - b. Keep time
 - c. Moderate the question-and-answer session, making sure the whole session lasts no more than 20 minutes
 - d. Be prepared to ask a question if necessary
9. Presenters should make individual appointments to get feedback from their assigned reviewer. Presenters **email minutes of their feedback** meetings to their supervisors and the reviewers.

10. GIScience MSc students are required to attend and participate in all GIScience Center colloquia during their enrollment in the MSc thesis module.

AI statement

Should you use any AI for your thesis concept, include a detailed AI statement. This may include a paragraph and/or a table that lists all of the tools used. For each of those tools, include a specific explanation of how and for what it was used. Also, add the following final sentence to this statement:

“I confirm that I have checked the accuracy of the AI-generated content to the best of my knowledge and beliefs, and I declare that I personally take the full responsibility for this human-machine collaboration outcome.”

SiF., HS 2026