

Bachelor Thesis Guidelines

(as of 6th October 2025)

For students studying:

- Major Economics
- Double Major Program with Major Economics
- Minor Economics/Volkswirtschaftslehre
- Business Economics/Wirtschaftspädagogik
- Studium Individuale

Study program director and instructor of the bachelor thesis colloquium:

Professor Dr Boris Hirsch
Institute of Economics, Microeconometrics and Policy Evaluation
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Available supervisors of your bachelor thesis are the professors at the Institute of Economics:

- Professor Dr Boris Hirsch, Professor of Microeconometrics and Policy Evaluation
- Professor Dr Johannes Lohse, Junior Professor of Law and Economics
- Professor Dr Mario Mechtel, Professor of Empirical Microeconomics
- Professor Dr Christian Pfeifer, Professor of Applied Microeconomics
- Professor Dr Florian Unger, Professor of Macroeconomics
- Professor Dr Thomas Wein, Professor of Economic Policy
- NN, Professor of Applied Economic Policy
- NN, Junior Professor of Microeconomics

Bachelor theses of students studying the Major Economics and bachelor thesis colloquium

In each academic year, you can register your bachelor thesis at three different dates (details below) – mid of April (group 1), end of May (group 2), or end of November (group 3) – and attend the accompanying mandatory bachelor thesis colloquium where you receive feedback about your planned thesis and your progress while working on it. The bachelor thesis colloquium is offered separately for each of the three groups of students and has three sessions. To pass the colloquium, you have to attend these sessions and provide and present an outline of your thesis (in the second session) and present the preliminary state of your thesis while working on it (in the third session).

First session: Before attending the first session of the bachelor thesis colloquium you should already have a general idea about the topic of your thesis, prospective supervisors, and the type of thesis you want to write. But you do not have to have already contacted your prospective first supervisor (though this may help to sort thoughts). When forming first thoughts about the thesis's topic, keep in mind that you will need a first supervisor who is both familiar with and interested in the topic. So you should (re)turn to the contents of the courses you took in the Major Economics and the research interests of the professors available as supervisors, which are best seen from their publication lists available on their websites and CVs. A topic that has neither sufficient overlap to what is taught in the Major Economics nor a connection to the research interests of potential supervisors makes no sense.

Turning to the type of bachelor thesis, you can either write a survey on an existing theoretical or empirical economic literature or conduct an own empirical analysis, which we strongly encourage because this will allow you to make use of theory as well as the empirical methods at the heart of the Major Economics. Writing an empirical bachelor thesis comes along with a different timing than writing a survey because you will have to find suitable data first, prepare the data for your upcoming analysis, and run first regressions as plausibility checks before you can register your thesis. Otherwise, you may face time problems after registration. Therefore, you should also get into touch with a prospective first supervisor before attending the first session of the colloquium. When planning to write a survey, you should get into contact with prospective supervisors as soon as possible after the first session of the colloquium. So you can start to work on the thesis outline quickly, which you will have to present in the second session of the colloquium.

Second Session: In the second session of the bachelor thesis colloquium, you will present the thesis outline, as agreed upon by your first supervisor. The thesis outline includes details about the topic of the thesis, its economic relevance, the relevant economic literature, and a schedule of the planned writing process. If you plan to write an empirical bachelor thesis, your focus should lie on the data you will use, your hypotheses, and your empirical research design including your core variables and estimation equations.

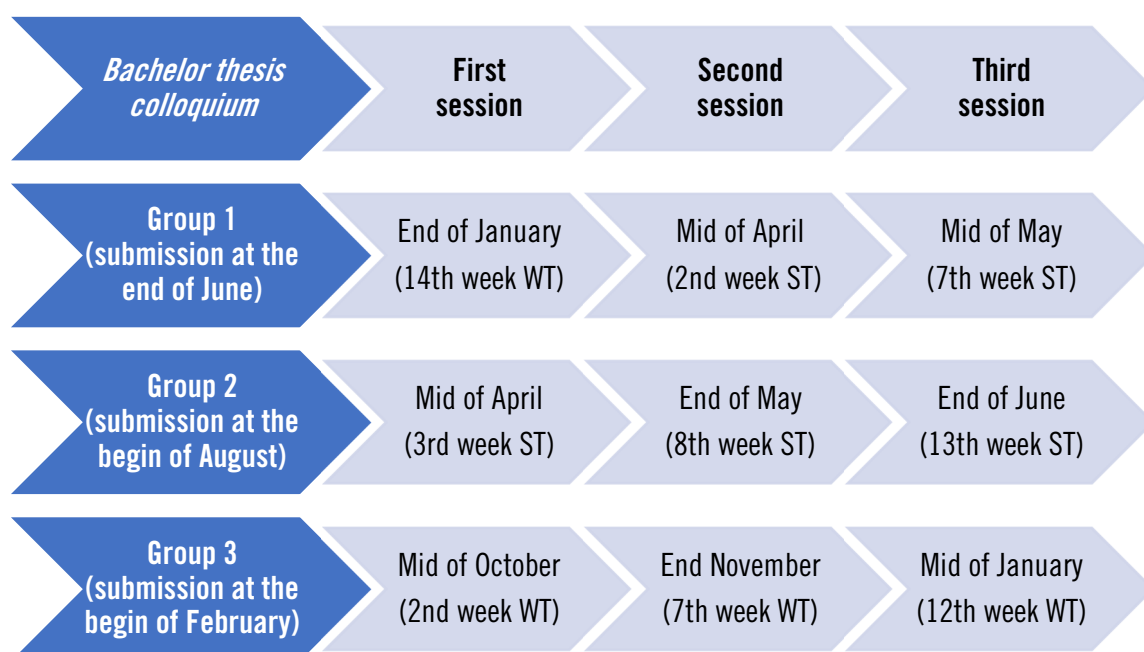
You have to submit the thesis outline in written form (about 5 pages) by Friday noon (i.e. 12.00pm) prior to the second session of the bachelor thesis colloquium as pdf by email. The written thesis outline is the first component of coursework that is required to pass the colloquium. Note that any outline that has not been agreed upon by the first supervisor will not be accepted as coursework. During the second session of the colloquium you will present the thesis outline (up to 10 minutes). The presentation and its slides, to be sent as pdf by email before the session, are the second component of coursework that is required to pass the colloquium.

After the second session you are expected to register your thesis as soon as possible. So you will have made progress in the writing process when presenting the preliminary state of your thesis in the third session of the colloquium.

Third session: In the bachelor thesis colloquium's third session (that is about three to five weeks after registering your thesis), you will present the progress you made while working on your thesis (up to 10 minutes). You are expected to present an update of the thesis outline you originally submitted stating where things worked out as expected and where you deviated from the original plan. The presentation and its slides, to be sent as pdf by email before the session, are the third component of coursework that is required to pass the colloquium.

After the third session you will finalise your bachelor thesis. The submission deadline of the thesis is nine weeks after its registration. After the submission of your thesis the first and second supervisors will write reports and mark it (80% of the final mark), which usually takes at least four weeks. After that there will be an oral defence (20% of the final mark). Keep this timing of events in mind when making plans. And also keep in mind that, as a general rule, the date of the oral defence is an examination date set by your supervisors and not by you. Due to the timing of the bachelor thesis colloquium and the thesis registration, students from groups 1 and 2 will have completed their thesis by the end of the summer term and students from group 3 at the end of the winter term.

Timing of the sessions of the bachelor thesis colloquium (about 90–180 minutes per session):



Notes: WT = winter term; ST = summer term; the exact dates of the sessions may be subject to slight changes and are published in myStudy.

Some general bachelor thesis guidelines:

- The length of the thesis is about 30–50 pages; for detailed formal requirements, ask your first supervisor.
- For details on literature search, scientific writing, citation and reference (in-text) style, etc. revisit the slides of the course “Orientation in Economics: Education, Labor Market, Research” as well as the information you got in other courses in the Major Economics where you have written term papers.
- The thesis must be written in correct standard English (orthography, punctuation, and grammar). Students who started their studies in German may submit their thesis in German, too.
- When submitting an empirical thesis, you must provide commented do files from which it is clear which lines of the code generate which results (tables, figures, etc.) as well as the data sets and the generated log files.
- The oral defence of the thesis takes 30 minutes. In the first 15 minutes, you will present the core findings of your thesis (using slides); the remaining 15 minutes will be an open discussion on your thesis with the two supervisors of your thesis.

Bachelor theses of other groups of students

Double Major Program with Major Economics:

- In the Double Major Program, you study two majors. This means that you either write separate bachelor theses in both majors or a single joint bachelor thesis.
- In case of separate bachelor theses, refer to the details about bachelor theses of students studying the Major Economics above for your bachelor thesis in economics.
- If you want to write a joint bachelor thesis, it has to be about a topic at the intersection of the two majors and the treatment of the topic must be sufficiently aspiring for the thesis to count for both majors. Further, one of your supervisors must be affiliated to the Institute of Economics while the other supervisor must come from the faculty of your other major. If the first supervisor is from economics, you will have to attend the bachelor thesis colloquium (see the details about bachelor theses of students studying the Major Economics above).

Minor Economics/Volkswirtschaftslehre:

- As a general rule, students are expected to write their thesis in their major subject and under supervision of someone from the faculty of their major subject. In case your topic has a very close overlap to the courses and/or research interests of someone affiliated to the Institute of Economics, s/he may be available as second supervisor of your thesis.
- If you are studying the Minor Economics and want to write a bachelor thesis in economics, this exception to the rule is only possible if your topic has a perfect fit to the courses and/or research interests of your potential first supervisor from the Institute of Economics. In this case, you also have to attend the bachelor thesis colloquium (see the details about bachelor theses of students studying the Major Economics above).

Business Education/Wirtschaftspädagogik:

- Students studying business education can write a bachelor thesis in economics provided the topic of their thesis has a close connection to the courses they took in economics. In this case, the two supervisors will come from the Institute of Economics.
- As a general rule, the thesis will provide a survey on an existing economic literature and is expected to combine theoretical economic insights with empirical evidence stemming from scientific economic sources. That said, the required detail and depth of analysis is less than for students majoring in economics.
- The submission deadline of the thesis is eight weeks after registration; there is no oral defence afterwards.

Studium Individuale:

- Students studying Studium Individuale can write a bachelor thesis in economics provided the topic of their thesis has a close connection to the courses they took in economics.
- If the first supervisor is from economics, it is strongly recommended that you also attend the bachelor thesis colloquium (see the details about bachelor theses of students studying the Major Economics above).