Guide for preparing your Bachelor's Thesis/ Masters Dissertation[1]

I. Introduction

In accordance with the "Regulations for the organization and conduct of the bachelor and master level final exams" and the approved curricula, the bachelor/diploma exam at UBB, Department of Journalism and Digital Media consists of two tests, as follows:

a) test 1: assessment of your basic and specialised knowledge;

b) test 2: presentation and defense of the bachelor's thesis/diploma project.

The purpose of the examination foreseen in the first test is to evaluate the graduates' ability to integrate the knowledge obtained during the faculty and to adapt it to the cognitive process in the respective field. In the process of evaluation of fundamental and specialized knowledge, the year exams taken during the undergraduate studies will not be repeated.

The dissertation exam consists of the presentation and defense of the dissertation.

The aim of the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation thesis is to assess the graduates' ability to process knowledge in conditions of solving specific problems in the field of training or conducting case studies, field research, etc., according to the specific specialization.

The scientific coordinators of the bachelor/diploma/dissertation can only be permanent teaching staff, who hold a doctorate in the respective field. The bachelor/diploma/dissertation thesis may have two or more scientific coordinators, in which case at least one of them must be part of the permanent teaching staff, holding a doctoral degree. Adjunct teaching staff may coordinate bachelor's/diploma/dissertation theses as sole coordinator, only if they hold a doctorate and they have an employment contract with the university for a period of at least one academic year.

The preparation of graduates for the preparation of papers, the establishment of the didactic and scientific procedures of their assistance, their guidance, the establishment of requirements and evaluation criteria are carried out by specializations, fields, respectively lines of study. Class tutors, tutors are responsible for informing the graduates about them, work coordinators are responsible for the application of professional decisions specific to the formations to which the graduates belong.

A faculty member may supervise the work of graduates from other faculties, specialization, line, but in accordance with the professional criteria and requirements of the course to which the graduate belongs. Graduates are required to inform themselves about the requirements and criteria of their own course of study.

Candidates will choose the topics and tutors for their bachelor/diploma/dissertation no later than at the end of the first semester of the last year of studies. The supervisors are obliged to ensure

[1] This is a translation of the original Romanian language document. For all legal matters, the document that will be referred to is the Romanian language original.

continuous cooperation with the candidates throughout the preparation of the bachelor/diploma/dissertation.

The formal and content requirements, as well as the research/individual study requirements for the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation, the milestones for the foundation, documentation, conception, design, elaboration, writing, defense of the dissertation, as well as the evaluation criteria are provided in this guide for the preparation of the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation and its annexes.

The bachelor's/diploma/dissertation dissertations are prepared, drafted, edited and defended in the language of the specialization/program of study or in a widely used language (English, French, Italian, etc.).

Fraud, through total or partial plagiarism in the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation work leads to elimination from the examination, based on a report prepared by the members of the examining board.

The defense of the thesis or dissertation is made in front of the Committee and is public. The scientific coordinator of the bachelor's/dissertation thesis proposes the mark for the scientific content and the mark for the preparation of the thesis and takes part in the defense of the thesis. If he/she is absent for a justified reason, i.e. due to the concomitance of several oral presentations at which he/she must be present, he/she will submit to the secretariat the written report containing the evaluation of the thesis. The Committee will award the final mark.

The average of each paper of the license/diploma examination, as well as the average of the dissertation examination, is calculated as the arithmetic average of the marks awarded exclusively by the members of the examination committee and is determined to two decimal places, without rounding. The marks awarded by the members of the examination board for the written paper are integers from 1 to 10. The average mark for the bachelor's/diploma examination shall be calculated to two decimal places, without rounding off, exclusively on the basis of the average of the papers.

The Committees' deliberations on the results of the license/diploma examination are not public.

The grade awarded for the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation paper will reflect both its content and the candidate's presentation. In the case of differences of more than two points between the marks awarded by the members of the Committee, the chairperson shall order a re-evaluation of the bachelor's/diploma/dissertation.

A test of the graduation/license/diploma exam is considered passed, if the final average of the test is at least 5,00.

The bachelor/diploma/dissertation exam is considered passed if the component exams are passed and the exam average is at least 6.00.

II. Principles for structuring and writing the diploma thesis

The diploma thesis for the Digital Media specialization will meet the following criteria of organization and writing:

II.1 Work size

The size of the paper must be at least **50,000** characters (with spaces) and at least **30 pages** (both criteria apply simultaneously) for the **bachelor's and dissertation.**

II.2 Paper format

The bachelor's thesis/dissertation must be finalized exclusively in PDF (Portable Document Format) electronic file format (*searchable/machine-readable*) in order to be submitted for the final exam.

II.3 Structure and content of the paper

II.3.1 Cover page

The cover will contain the following information - see (Rad, 2008, 184):

- full name of the university and city (UNIVERSITATEA "BABEȘ-BOLYAI", CLUJ-NAPOCA);
- full faculty name (Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences)
- name of the specialization (Journalism Specialization / Digital Media Specialization);
- The title of the degree / dissertation (the actual title will appear on the title page);
- Scientific title and name of the coordinator(s);
- name of the graduate;
- city;
- year.

II.3.2 Title page

The title page will contain the following elements - see (Rad, 2008, 185):

- full name of the university and city (UNIVERSITATEA "BABEȘ-BOLYAI", CLUJ-NAPOCA);
- full name of the faculty (Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences);
- name of the specialization (Journalism Specialization / Digital Media Specialization);
- the actual title of the Bachelor / Dissertation thesis;
- Scientific title and name of the coordinator(s);
- name of the graduate.

II.3.3 Summary / Abstract

The abstract (maximum 1 page) is a short text about the content of scientific work. It should be accurate, comprehensive, contain the key concepts used in the paper, accurately reflect the content of the paper and not include information that is not in the text - see (Chelcea, 2007, 79). The paper will also contain a translated version of the abstract in an international language (preferably English, in which case it will be entitled "Abstract"). If the paper is written in an international language, it may include, on the recommendation of the coordinator, an abstract in Romanian.

II.3.4 Contents

The table of contents, table of contents or table of contents will contain the titles of all chapters and sub-chapters including appendices and the page numbers at which they begin. The latest versions of MS Office Word include a number of tools for automatically creating and updating the table of contents of a paper.

The abstract and the sections intended to present the table of contents, or the list of figures will not be included in the numbering of the chapters of the paper. The page numbering of the paper starts from the Introduction section.

In terms of paper structure, **it is recommended that approximately two thirds of the paper** (from the section dedicated to the presentation of the research plan to the conclusions section) **should be dedicated to the presentation of the original research**, following the recommendations of the coordinator

II.3.5 Introduction

The introduction will introduce the research topic and briefly describe the work/investigation strategy. It situates the research problem within the field and should specify the aspects that differentiate the research from other existing research, the elements of originality and the research objectives.

A good introduction should answer the following questions - see (Chelcea, 2007, 80):

- What is the subject / problem being studied?
- What is the investigative/research approach related to the object of study/issue under study undertaken in the paper? (What will the paper show / demonstrate?)
- What is the theoretical context of the paper, and if the paper has theoretical implications, how will these implications influence knowledge in the field?
- On what basis were the conclusions drawn?

Like the abstract, the introduction should largely be written only after the research has been done.

II.3.6 Literature review

The critical presentation of the literature reviewed or **the presentation of theoretical concepts relevant to the topic under study** will demonstrate the researcher's documentation. Reference will be made both to established works in the field and to as many works from recent years as possible. The author will first of all clarify all the concepts included in the topic of study, referring as much as possible to bibliographical sources as established/validated as possible in the field in Romania and abroad, but also to new reconceptualizations if this serves as a basis for the use of those concepts in the research. Emphasis will be placed on the most relevant materials, but in a critical, evaluative way, supporting the critical arguments with examples and quotations from those bibliographical sources. It is recommended to systematize the literature review (either chronologically or conceptually) to enhance the readability of the text. It is recommended to avoid discussing outdated, out-of-date works and the use of unsupported value judgments ("brilliant work by author X", "fantastic author Y", "work Z shows the author's incompetence"). It will not merely describe the content, without evaluating or commenting on it. It will not accept or support any point of view found in specialized literature. Uncontrolled, inaccurate information will not be included. When referring to or citing authors or works, attention should be paid to the correct spelling of authors' names and bibliographical data (For more information on the rules of citation and referencing in scientific texts - see (Rad, 2008) and (Chelcea, 2007)). Also, in the case of the use of neologisms or terms borrowed from another language in the absence of a suitable equivalent, the rules imposed by grammar in such cases must be followed. To avoid the improper use of terms for concepts introduced in another language and conversely the use of terms from another language for which there is an exact equivalent in the scientific literature. (For more information on citation and referencing rules in scientific texts - see (Rad, 2008) and (Chelcea, 2007).

II.3.7 Research plan

The description of the research plan/design or details of the methodology consists of a description of the means used to achieve the proposed research aim. In general, in this part of the paper the author will describe the approach chosen for the investigative or research approach, a description of the materials worked with, the techniques or tools used to collect and analyze the data/materials, the criteria for classifying and analyzing them.

In the case of a **sociological study**, a general description of the research will be given in this section:

- State aims and objectives;
- Hypotheses or research questions;
- Description of materials;
- Nature of information collected;
- Data collection methods;
- Sampling method;
- Repeatability if necessary;
- Start date and duration of the research;
- Accuracy;
- Evaluation of research results;
- Data accountability;
- Critical remarks on research techniques and procedures (Advantages and limitations of research).

In the case of a **philological**, historical or certain qualitative studies, this section may clarify or detail issues related to:

- Research aims;
- Research questions;
- Types of materials studied;
- Selection criteria for materials;
- Method of obtaining / consulting materials;
- Number of materials studied;
- Specify criteria for classifying materials (chronological, thematic, etc.);
- Techniques used / how materials are processed;
- Relevance of the approach used in relation to the stated aim of the study;
- Clarification of some issues related to ownership and responsibility for the materials used;
- Critical remarks on research techniques and procedures (Advantages and limitations of research).

II.3.8 Data analysis and discussion

The analysis and discussion of the data/materials will usually be the most substantial part of the dissertation. The discussion of the data involves the theoretical interpretation of the data/materials by putting the data/materials in the context of the literature mentioned in the respective section, aiming to fulfill the purpose of the study.

In the case of a **quantitative analysis**, the data and the statistical methods used to process them, various descriptive graphs or correlations obtained will be presented. Any graphical representation of the data will be fully interpreted, explained and discussed in the text of the paper.

Qualitative, philological or historical **studies** will include, in suitable proportions, interviewees' answers, autobiographical fragments, witnesses' comments, various documents, press articles, etc. These will be analyzed using specific methods (linguistic analysis, semiotic analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, etc.), highlighting those observations that will later instrument the results and generate overall conclusions.

II.3.9 Results

Results. The results of the investigative approach will be presented and correlated with other studies in the field contextualizing and leading to conclusions. I summarize the most important findings of the analysis.

II.3.10 Conclusions

Conclusions are usually the most important part (and the most carefully evaluated in the case of undergraduate research papers) of scientific research papers. They need to be clear, enlightening, concise, coherent, in line with the theme and purpose of the research and contain as much novelty as possible.

A possible structure of the concluding chapter is given in (Chelcea, 2007, 125):

- Current state of knowledge on the topic, globally and nationally
- Personal views on the issue
- Theoretical-methodological novelties brought in the study
- Applicability of results
- Limits of the investigation
- Possible directions for future research

Several types of reasoning are required throughout the paper:

- Analytical reasoning (breaking down into sub-problems)
- Oppositional reasoning (negative aspects/positive aspects)
- Causal reasoning (identifying explanatory chains)
- Deductive/inductive reasoning (general to particular or particular to general)
- Reasoning by reductio ad absurdum (revealing the consequences of the non-existence of the element analyzed)
- Dialectical reasoning (thesis that deals with positive aspects, antithesis that deals with negative aspects and synthesis through which the researcher makes an original contribution, evaluating the phenomenon under study) cf. (Chelcea, 2007, 122).

Each part of the dissertation can be elaborated differently by appropriating the type of reasoning. For example, in the introduction to emphasize the phenomenon under study, reductio ad absurdum reasoning may be more appropriate, literature review usually calls for reasoning based on opposition, conclusions can be structured according to a dialectical structure (Chelcea, 2007, 123).

II.3.11 Case studies

Case study writing is particularized from the structures presented above. One can consider one of the existing formats described by Robert K. Yin cf. (Chelcea, 2007, 134):

- Classic case study (contains traditional text, graphs, tables, photos)
- The classic multiple case study (contains texts grouped into chapters or sub-chapters for each case, as well as a chapter for comparative analysis)

- A single case or multiple case question-answer study (this is an abbreviated form, consisting of a presentation of the questions the researcher asked and the answers he/she arrived at)
- Multiple case study of comparative analysis type (without compartmentalization into chapters for each case, the information about the cases studied being dispersed within the chapters)

There are a number of compositional structures that can be used in writing a case study:

- The linear-analytic structure does not differ much from the traditional writing of quantitative scientific research papers
- The comparative structure involves highlighting similarities and differences between cases
- The chronological structure has the advantage of following the case history chapter by chapter
- *Grounded theory* structure involves organizing the chapters or sequences in the study so that they add new elements to support the emerging thesis.
- The 'suspense' structure is the inverted linear-analytic structure, with the conclusion presented in the first chapter and subsequent chapters developing the argumentation, explanations
- The non-sequential structure does not impose a particular order of chapters and is used exclusively in descriptive studies cf. (Chelcea, 2007, 135-136).

II.3.12 Bibliographic list and citation

Bibliographic list. There is guidance on how to compile the bibliographic list and in-text references in (Rad, 2008), (Chelcea, 2007) and (Eco, 2006).

For citations and bibliographic list, use APA or Chicago (author - year) style. The software used for word processing includes in the latest versions (MS Office Word) tools for inserting references or citations in various systems as well as for automatically compiling the bibliographic list. In addition, tools and platforms offering bibliographic management services (Zotero, Mendeley, etc.) through online services, plug-ins or desktop applications can be used.

Explanatory footnotes may be made in the body of the paper if the author does not wish to interrupt the flow of the text with detailed explanations in parentheses.

Word-for-word excerpts should always be marked with quotation marks, indicating the source by the appropriate citation, including in the case of excerpts and translations from the language of the original text into the language of the paper. It is recommended that quotations exceeding 200 characters should be highlighted as a separate paragraph, no longer than 500 characters, delimited by the text of the work. Taken together, the word-for-word excerpts, appropriately marked, should not exceed 500 characters or 1/5 of each redacted page of the paper.

II.3.13 Appendices

Appendices are not usually included in chapter numbering. They will include additional material not included in the paper which provides additional information or presents in full certain data only partially included in the body of the paper. Data extracted from the questionnaires, completed analysis grids, fully transcribed interviews will usually be included in appendices and summarized, possibly in graphical form, in the Data Analysis and Discussion section.

II.3.14 Other recommendations

The use of Artificial Intelligence tools should take into account the recommendations of the supervising teacher and institutional guidelines (FSPAC, UBB), as well as best practices in the field

- Text generated by an artificial intelligence tool should be treated as text belonging to someone other than the author of the work. Assuming the text generated by an artificial intelligence agent/tool as one's own text without the appropriate acknowledgments (detailed below) is tantamount to fraud. Artificial intelligence tools may be used to correct and/or reformulate the author's text under the guidance of the coordinator.
- Text generated by an artificial intelligence tool is cited according to the citation rules for conversations or interviews that cannot be accessed by others. In the text of the paper, parentheses, footnotes or bibliographic list, the following identifiers must be included: the name of the artificial intelligence tool used, the version, the name of the company developing the tool, the date the text was generated, the request (prompt) used, in the format "Response to request/prompt "[text of the request/prompt in quotation marks]", the URL where it was accessed. In the citation system (author year), the in-text reference will include the name of the tool and the date of access, and if not included in the text, the request/prompt and other information will be included in the full reference in the bibliographic list.
- All information and sources generated by artificial intelligence tools must be verified by the author of the paper. Artificial intelligence tools may generate false information, reference non-existent sources, or make improper attributions.

The use of any data analysis tools or approaches (including the use of artificial intelligence tools) must take into account the principles of reproducibility, repeatability and replicability

The adoption of methodological approaches and data analysis tools shall be done in consultation with the coordinator and with a critical presentation of their limitations.

The results of scientific research must be documented in such a way that their inference is completely transparent.

The collected/analyzed data files are differentiated stored, labeled and documented, and made available to the coordinator of the work and possibly to the committee at the request of the committee chair.

Analyzing the data using the same procedures should be able to yield the same results.

Methods and tools for data analysis that cannot be described in detail and transparently are not recommended.

Bibliography:

1. The Chicago Manual of Style, 18th Edition, The University of Chicago Press, 2024.
2. Chelcea Septimiu, *Cum să redactăm o lucrare de licență*, o teză de doctorat, un articol științific în domeniul științelor socio-umane, București, Comunicare.ro, 2007;
3. Eco Umberto, *Cum se face o teză de licență*, Iași, Polirom, 2006;
4. Rad Ilie, *Cum se scrie un text științific. Disciplinele umaniste*, Iași, Polirom, 2008.