The master's thesis is an independent analysis of a research question within the subfield of [peace and conflict studies](https://peacescience.unt.edu/), i.e. on the causes of conflict between and within states and promotion of sustainable peace, within the broader field of political science.

This individual research paper must include a clearly specified research question, methods grounded in political science, and pursue valid inferences. The thesis should adopt a publishable standard in terms of its design, substantive contribution and rigor.

The thesis enables students to independently explore an empirical or theoretical question with suitable political science methods. Students are responsible for defining a research question, selecting relevant methods and obtaining data in a rigorous and ethically sound manner. They must ensure that the content and format of the thesis is consistent with the current standards within political science research. Supervisors should be selected from the Department of Political Science, but external advisors may also be recruited.

[Getting started with your thesis](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/master/pecos/)

Learning outcomes

**Knowledge**

Students will learn

* Key debates within the substantive field of peace and conflict studies
* How to select and apply research tools and techniques from the broader field of political science
* Research ethics considerations within the substantive field of peace and conflict studies
* Basic principles for analysis and scholarly debate within the field of political science

**Skills**

* Define and operationalize a research question
* Design and conduct an independent enquiry specializing in one or more political science methods
* Identify, collect and analyze relevant data from various sources
* Place your research question and findings within the broader field of peace and conflict studies and discuss their implications
* Identify and discuss sources of bias in data and analysis

**General competencies**

* Understand how design choices and data limitations affect analysis in political science research
* Grasp and discuss ethical challenges and considerations in political science research broadly and in the sub-field of peace and conflict studies specifically
* Practice evidence-based and transparent analysis based on key principles of social science enquiry

Admission

The course is restricted to students of the Peace and Conflict Studies programme.

Prerequisites

Formal prerequisite knowledge

Students must have completed all mandatory courses. A supervisor must be assigned by the Department of Political Science before the student can start writing the master's thesis.

Students should consult this resource for research ethics and the social sciences: <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/resources/the-research-ethics-library/introduction/social-sciences-humanities/>.

For formatting and style, please consult the Chicago Manual of Style: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

Teaching

Students receive a combination of collective and individual academic supervision.

**Fieldwork**

Will you conduct fieldwork or travel as part of your research project? Read about [financial support for fieldwork](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/master/pecos/financial-support-field-work.html).

Examination

The written thesis will be assessed by a committee comprised of one internal and one external examiner. This will be followed by an oral examination of the thesis.

**The master's thesis**

* [Information on formal requirements, submission and postponed deadline](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/master/pecos/)

**Oral examination**

The oral examinations will be arranged after the submission of the thesis, usually in June and August for the spring semester, and December and January for the fall semester. You will be notified via your student e-mail at least one week before the oral exam.

The questions that will be posed during the oral examination are likely to focus on the research question, research design, limitations and bias in the data, broader implications of findings, etc.

**Information on how the master's thesis is assessed**

* Prior to the oral examination, the evaluation committee will award a preliminary grade to your Master's thesis. You will be notified of the grade and given an explanation for it when you present yourself for the oral examination.
* The oral examination will only be used to adjust the grade of your master’s thesis. Once the committee has determined the grade following the oral examination, you will be notified of the final grade.
* [Recommended norms for setting grades in political science](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grades/grade-descriptions/sv-isv.html).

**Use of sources and citation**

You should familiarize yourself with the rules that apply to [the use of sources and citations](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/sources-citations/). If you violate the rules, you may be suspected of [cheating/attempted cheating](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/cheating/).

Language of examination

English

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about [the grading system](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/).

Explanations and appeals

* [Explanation of grades and appeals](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/explanation-appeal/)
* [Ask for explanation of your grade in this course](https://nettskjema.no/a/65515.html)

Withdrawal from an examination

A master’s thesis that is not passed may be resubmitted only once, and then within the agreed time and in revised form. A master’s thesis that is passed may not be resubmitted in revised form.

If you [withdraw from the exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/withdrawal/) after the deadline, this will be counted as an examination attempt.

Special examination arrangements

Application form, deadline and requirements for [special examination arrangements](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/special-arrangements/).