

**GUIDELINES / FAQs – MASTER’S THESIS (TRABAJO DE FIN DE MASTER), MASTER IN  
NORTH-AMERICAN STUDIES (MANAS)  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021**

What is it?

- It is the student’s final project for the master’s program, so it should deal with a specific topic of their interest within the field of American studies.
- It should be an original piece of research.
- It should be written (and, later, defended) in English.

Who can be my advisor?

- Any doctor teaching in the program, or
- Any doctor from one of the departments connected with the program, either at Universidad de Alcalá or at Universidad Complutense.

When can I defend my master’s thesis?

There are three different dates:

- July (regular date);
- September (regular date);
- February (this is an extraordinary date and requires registering and paying fees again).

When do I have to inform the coordinators of my choice of topic/advisor?

*[Please **check the specific dates** at the website]*

- If you are defending in July/September: February
- If you are defending in February: late November

You will have to turn in the following:

- Document 1 (“Propuesta de título y coordinador”, available online) stating the title of your master’s thesis, an abstract, and five keywords
- Document 2 (“Aceptación de tutorización del Trabajo de Fin de Master”, available online), signed by you and your advisor (available online)

Please give these documents to the coordinator of the university where you are registered (if you are registered with Alcalá, Esperanza Cerdá, if you are registered with Complutense, Carmen Méndez).

The coordinators will have to approve both your choice of topic and your choice of advisor.

What should the length of my master’s thesis be?

- 60 pages (minimum) - 80 pages (maximum),
- Times New Roman size 12 for the main text, Times New Roman size 10 for the footnotes/endnotes,

- Line spacing: 1,5,
- Margins: 2,5 (top and bottom), 2,5 (left and right),
- Appendixes (if necessary) do not count towards the minimum or maximum number of pages.

Do I have to use an academic style sheet?

Yes, you have to use one of the following style sheets:

- MLA (*MLA Handbook*, 8th ed., 2016)
- Chicago (*Chicago Manual of Style*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2010)

What should be the structure for my master's thesis?

- Cover page (Document 3, "Portada", available online),
- Academic integrity statement (Document 4, "Declaración de no plagio", available online), signed by you,
- Table of contents,
- Abstract + 5 keywords,
- Introduction / objectives,
- Methodology / theoretical framework,
- Main text,
- Conclusion/s,
- List of references / works cited,
- Appendixes (only if necessary).

When do I have to turn in the final version? How? Where?

Please **check the specific dates** at the website

You have to give the coordinator of the university where you are registered (if you are registered with Alcalá, Esperanza Cerdá, if you are registered with Complutense, Carmen Méndez) **four** hard copies

You also have to provide her with a report written by your advisor, in a closed and signed envelope (Document 5, "Informe de valoración del tutor", the model is available online).

Also, please send a PDF version of your final project by email to **BOTH** coordinators, regardless of what university you are registered with.

What will the defense be like?

- You will have 15 minutes to present your project, explain your research as a process, and summarize your findings.
- You will then take questions from the professors on your committee.
- The final grade is a combination of both your written thesis and your performance during the defense.

Who will be on my committee?

- There will be three people on your committee, commenting on your work and asking you questions. All of them will be professors teaching in the master's program or from departments connected to the program.