

## **A short guideline on how to organize your Study Project or Thesis in the Department of Geopedology and Landscape Development**

Dear Students,

In order to support your decision-making process, regarding topic selection for conducting a Study Project or Thesis at the Department of Geopedology and Landscape Development, we have prepared a few important notes for you to follow. The reason being that we want both, you and us, to have a good and most effective time working together.

Generally, we supervise studies that involve field or lab work in Environmental Science analyzing the Earth's Critical Zone (CZ) that is build up by soils and landforms through natural and human processes. We generally combine a student's thesis with an ongoing or planned externally funded project covering one of our focus areas (Quaternary Landscape Development, Geoarchaeology and Holocene Land Use History, Geoecological Processes at the Earth's Surface, Anthropogenic Impact on Ecosystems and Land Use). We do not offer a fixed list of topics. The availability of Study Projects or Theses is dependent on the progress of our research projects. However, we are open to supervise topics that are proposed to us by students. However, topics proposed by students should fit within the scope of our department.

In case you want to apply for the topic at our department, please send us an Email that includes the following information:

- Semester and study course
- Are you looking for a Study Project or Bachelor or Master Thesis topic?
- In case of Study Project: is it your first one? If not, what was your last topic? Are you planning to conduct it alone or in a group (how many)?
- When do you want to start and finish?
- How many days in a week are you available for the project?
- Do you already have a topic or area of interest? (in order to get familiar with topics offered at department please visit: <https://www.b-tu.de/en/fg-geopedologie>)
- Do you have experience in lab and field work concerning soil science?
- Please let us know about your computer skills (statistical analysis, Word, Excel, GIS, R etc.)
- What is the best way to reach you (Email, Phone)?

Once we have got your information, we will contact you via Telephone or Email in order to fix the topic and the time frame. From your supervisor you will also receive a description of your work process including project title, aim, short introduction, methods used and procedure. Your supervisor will support you during the data acquisition and analysis, give you some starting literature and will also be your reviewer. Before you begin to start working on your topic, you are required to present a written short summary of the state of research regarding your topic (2-3 pages) and do a short, informal Power Point presentation at our chair about your subject and the methodology you will use. The presentation has no time restriction, but it must include:

1. A thematic overview of the thesis including a hypothesis about what you expect to find
2. A short overview of the state of research citing some relevant literature
3. A description of the methodology you will use (statistics, laboratory work, field work).

Now the work can start! You will be supplied with the project information and some literature. However, most of the literature research will be a part of your assignment, because it's a fundamental task for any scientific work. You should get familiar with the proper referencing style, scientific writing, good figures and diagrams quality. Be advised that we will check every written submission for plagiarism.

Your project is completed when you submit a written thesis. Be advised that writing your thesis will be the most labor-intensive part of your work, you should plan your time schedule accordingly. You will be also asked to present your results during the Department's Seminars. The grading will be based on the following criteria: understanding of the topic, proper scientific approach, independent and teamwork, engagement, quality of the written thesis and presentation (content and editing).

Good luck!

Thomas Raab and the Geopedology and Landscape Development Team