

1. INTRODUCTION

With these *Guidelines* we want to help students to prepare easily, quickly, accurately and successfully professional and scientific papers, which are integral part of the work and activities of students at the undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Economics in Banja Luka¹, or during the first, second and third cycle of the studies, determined by the new Law on Higher Education². *Guidelines* present a general methodological framework for professional and scientific works, from seminar paper, diploma and master thesis to doctoral dissertations. We have assumed that the methodological approach is unique for all works, and that they vary in depth and width of analysis which is applied during development. When it comes to seminar paper undergraduate studies require basic knowledge of methods, techniques and instruments of research and analysis of a problem; for master thesis and doctoral dissertations students need very good knowledge of all methodological principles and procedures. At the first year of studies, within Sociology, undergraduate students are introduced to the elements and methods of writing seminar paper, as well as to the general framework of scientific method. In addition, each subject professor, as a mentor of seminar paper and diploma thesis, provides student with specific instructions on how to write the paper. Postgraduate students have special subject, Methodology of scientific work, which gives them an insight into the methodological and scientific procedure of writing master thesis, doctoral dissertations and scientific research.

Guidelines are divided into several chapters which describe all procedures, issues and dilemmas of the professional and scientific works at the faculty. The second chapter provides basic definitions of certain works, their purpose, similarities and differences, as well as the place in the overall studies. The third chapter presents the procedure for the preparation of each of these works, while the fourth chapter gives an overview of the elements which must be included in a paper, and the methodological instructions for writing each part of the work. Fifth chapter helps students to apply easily the principles of writing and word processing, while the sixth

chapter deals with the application procedure, handing in and presentation of each of these works. At the end of the *Guidelines* there is an example list of literature.

2. SCIENTIFIC WORKS AT THE UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

(Studies of the first, second and third cycle)

2.1. Seminar paper

Seminar paper is the initial step in which students acquire knowledge and experience in writing papers. Seminar paper includes an independent processing of the topic from the subject. Theme of the seminar paper can be chosen by the student or suggested by the subject professor or assistant. With seminar paper student shows the ability to apply methodological procedures and principles, observe and analyze problems, select opinions of the author, connect theoretical and practical solutions, and properly use the literature. In seminar paper students must learn how to analyze problems, learn that they can not take the parts from the literature without proper quoting and analytical point of the stated. Also, in seminar paper student must learn the importance and meaning of the original work and differ it from plagiarism and "Copy" - "Paste" approach. Optimal scope of the seminar is 4-5 thousand words, or 30-32 thousand characters with whitespace (space) ³.

2.2. Diploma thesis

Diploma thesis is the final paper of undergraduate students, after whose presentation a student is entitled to diploma on successfully completed studies at the Faculty. The subject of the thesis must be covered independently, with high quality, professionally and stylistically. Diploma thesis must show visible progress in the methodological and analytical approach to the work in relation to the seminar paper. Also, diploma thesis requires more frequent and longer mentoring supervision of professor. In general, diploma thesis can be theoretical treatment of the problem, then theoretical analysis of a problem with a practical example where indicated theoretical

preferences can be proved. Also, diploma thesis can include a brief theoretical introduction, and the main focus of work can be on the process of a problem in practice with the proposed solutions. The main part of diploma thesis should be a combination of theoretical knowledge with practical application and comprehension of concrete solutions in practice, which shows the ability of students to give concrete and original solutions of a certain problem and to resolve independently the assigned task. Diploma thesis should contain up to 10 thousand words.

2.3. Seminar paper at the postgraduate studies (the second cycle of studies)

This work should be methodologically, analytically, stylistically better from diploma thesis. Postgraduate student should demonstrate full independence in the choice of topics and research problems, apply all important methodological procedures, use representative sources, valuable, appropriate and current literature, state clear views and practical examples. Seminar paper at the postgraduate studies needs to show that student handles well concepts and categories from the scientific field and subjects. If the example is from practice, the work should be applicable to the extent that certain practical solutions can be indicated in its theoretical and practical findings and proposals. It should offer concrete solutions to the business problem or a segment of improvement and innovation in the business. This paper should contain between 8500 and 10,000 words, or between 60 and 65 thousand characters, including gaps.

2.4. Master thesis

Master thesis presents a scientific analysis of certain problem chosen by the author and processed with the help of mentor. Master thesis should show that the postgraduate student is fully familiar with the methodology of scientific research, conceptual categories from scientific field, and has good literacy, language and stylistic clarity and accuracy. Also, master thesis shows that the candidate possesses the ability to apply scientific results in a particular area for the acquisition of new knowledge and new research results. Master thesis must have originality,

completeness, reliability, accuracy, critical analysis and scientific analysis of points and results. Mentor gives the candidate agreement that the work reached the required scientific level and can be handed in. Master thesis should contain about 45 thousand words.

2.5. Doctoral dissertation⁴

Doctoral dissertation is an independent, original scientific work which the candidate works on with the help of mentor. Unlike previous works, doctoral dissertation gives concrete contribution to science, takes place in the mosaic of the scientific field (in our case the economics), and enters the research system (has its place in the systematization of scientific contributions), therefore, contributes to the development of science. Contribution to science shows that doctoral dissertation reveals new scientific facts, explains a new social phenomenon, or a new dimension of the old phenomenon, reveals the legality of some social phenomena (in this case economic), reveals cause-consequence relations within the phenomenon and between two or more phenomena, processes and relations, and provides a new theoretical assumption, or a new theory. Doctoral dissertation is a proof that the author has reached the required level of knowledge in the scientific area, for example, in social sciences, in the scientific field (economics), and specific scientific courses, for example, international economics⁵. Doctoral dissertation shows that the author is fully qualified to apply the methodology and theory in scientific research, as well as the candidate's ability to apply theoretical knowledge and attitudes in practical purposes. In some cases, doctoral dissertation should demonstrate the ability of candidates to approach the case of research from interdisciplinary point of view.

With PhD thesis presentation, the candidate acquires the highest academic degree awarded by the faculty, or the university which is responsible for the scientific field (scientific area). Scientists, especially methodologist, believe that the PhD is a

"ticket" for the world of science, where the scientists need to defend their premises and opinions continuously and persistently.¹

¹ According the new Law on Higher Education, doctoral dissertation is done at the end of the third cycle of the studies (doctoral studies) which lasts three years and brings 180 ECTS credits.

⁵ Zelenika, Ratko. *Metodologija i tehnologija izrade znanstvenog i stručnog djela*, 3. changed and added edition. Faculty of Economics University of Rijeka, 1998, page 629.