

1 Jan 2016

School of Information Sciences  
MDP in Computational Big Data Analytics

## Grading criteria for a Master's theses in CBDA

### ***Aspects to be considered for evaluation***

The evaluation of master's theses shall pay attention to the following aspects:

*Characteristics of the supervision process.* Have the student's methods of working on the thesis matured during the supervision process? Has the supervision been effortless or has there been a need to repeatedly point out the same problems? How independent has the student been both in terms of writing and questions to the supervisor?

*Presentation of the thesis.* Is the thesis pleasant to read and does it form a logical and consistent whole? Have the possible definitions, theorems, algorithms and proofs been written in an understandable fashion? Are the examples self-made and illustrative? Is the structure well considered and purposeful?

*Difficulty level of the topic.* How challenging and broad is the topic area of the thesis? How far does the thesis proceed beyond the course materials? Does the thesis involve work on several conceptual levels? Does the thesis involve computer science and statistics in sufficient amounts, and is the thesis otherwise interdisciplinary?

*Mastery of the topic.* Does the treatment of the topic demonstrate that the student has worked thoroughly on the topic and become familiar with the topic area? Have the research questions and methods been chosen appropriately? Has the student presented the background knowledge in an original and/or improved form compared to the sources?

*Language, references and writing issues.* Is the language of the thesis fluent and correct? Is the formatting appropriate? Are the figures, tables and their captions polished and easily readable? Is the text accompanied by references to source material according to the good scientific practice? Is the writing careful and polished?

*Use of source literature.* Does the thesis show that the student has familiarized him/herself broadly and comprehensively with the relevant source literature of the topic? Has the student taken an independent and critical view on the sources? Has the student formed a uniform presentation based on the different sources?

*Empirical part.* Does the empirical part form a unified whole with the theoretical part? Have the research problems, hypotheses and assumptions been presented clearly and consistently? How skillfully has the phenomenon under research been modeled? Have the suitability of models and reliability of results been verified with appropriate measures? Have the results and conclusions drawn from them been presented clearly and understandably? Have the results been put in the context of the source material and earlier research? Has the research produced novel observations and knowledge compared to the earlier research?

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### **Grading**

An acceptable master's thesis should not contain clear mathematical errors, methodological flaws, or questionable experimental results. Master's theses are assessed as follows: (5) excellent, (4) very good, (3) good, (2) satisfactory, and (1) sufficient.

In order to be given grade (5), the master's thesis has to include an independent, deep and critical grasp of the topic and results and has to be carefully written and reviewed. Typically, a grade (5) involves independent work on a demanding topic with a mature theoretical or experimental approach, and has an impeccable presentation. Grade (5) can also be given for a master's thesis in which the treatment of the topic is deep and insightful and in which the author's own contribution is extensive even if the topic is not very demanding. Frequently, an excellent master thesis arises along with a smoothly flowing supervision process. Sometimes even publishable, novel results are presented in the thesis, but this cannot be considered as necessary for the grade.

A master's thesis can be given grade (4) if it is better than average, but does not satisfy all requirements of grade (5). For example, its presentation may be excellent but the topic is not demanding, or the topic may be demanding and the presentation good, but the author's independent contribution is not considerable.

A master's thesis that is given grade (3) is typically based on an average topic, has a valid presentation, and arose out of a regular supervision process. Such a grade can also be given if the topic is fairly demanding, but the author's independent, creative input is slight or there are clear deficiencies in the presentation. Such a grade might also be given if the treatment and presentation are excellent but the the topic is very easy.

A master's thesis can be given grade (2) if it does not satisfy all requirements detailed for grade (3). Either the topic or its treatment is moderate, or the presentation is poor, or the work lacks independence.

A master's thesis can be given (1) if it is formally acceptable, but has several of the deficiencies described for grade (2).