GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Master's Dissertation (B001076)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 15.0 **Study time 450 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

B (Year)	English	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Willaert, Klaas	RE22	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	**crdts**	**offering**
Master of Science in Maritime Science	15	B

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Analysis maritime topic, research, critical evaluation

Position of the course

The master dissertation consists of a written and oral part and focuses on a maritime topic from a legal, technical, economical, logistical, policy or other relevant perspective, or a combination of those approaches. The purpose of the master dissertation is to obtain knowledge and understanding, leading to a thorough insight into the topic concerned. The scientific character of the dissertation implies the use of all relevant sources concerning the chosen topic and the capacity to critically analyze and evaluate the problem at hand. The master dissertation aims to realize tangible progress with regard to the student's research skills, written abilities and oral presentation skills.

Contents

The topic of the master dissertation is chosen in consultation between the student and the supervisor. The topic should be linked to the content of one of the courses of the MSc in Maritime Science (general course or optional course), taught by the supervisor. Students can suggest a topic to a supervisor of their choice or can contact one of the professors for possible topic suggestions.

The master dissertation is typewritten in English and contains maximum 20.000 words (including footnotes; excluding title page, table of contents, bibliography and possible annexes), unless the supervisor authorized a higher limit. It needs to be well-structured and consists of a title page (a template is provided), a table of contents (with page numbers), an introduction, a conclusion, a main part in between (with as many chapters as considered necessary), a bibliography and possible annexes.

The citing of sources is very important and a master dissertation should include all necessary references. Using (structures of) texts or ideas of another author without quotation is deemed plagiarism, which is prohibited by and will be sanctioned. Students must be selective and have to make sure that they use adequate, reliable sources. If generative AI is used in the research or writing process, this must happen in a responsible manner, in accordance with relevant regulations and guidelines.
All references must be consistent and have to correspond to prevalent citation methods within the specific discipline. Every source that is used throughout the

work needs to be mentioned in the bibliography at the end of the master dissertation, divided by type of source source and alphabetically/chronologically. Students may not refer to sources they didn't consult.

The written part of the master dissertation is followed by a public oral defense in presence of a jury, consisting of the supervisor and an assessor.

Initial competences

Having basic academic research, writing and presentation skills

Final competences

1 Being able to obtain in-depth knowledge and understanding of a maritime topic
2 Being able to develop an independent and critical opinion on a maritime topic
3 Being able to identify and establish scientifically sound links between different disciplines
4 Being able to conduct a scientifically sound dialogue with regard to a maritime topic
5 Being able to identify trends and to distinguish between the essential and the ancillary in the context of a maritime topic
6 Being able to produce a coherent, logically argued document about a research project
7 Being able to accept and analyze diverging perspectives and opinions
8 Being able to orally present the findings of a research project
9 Being able to defend research findings on the basis of sound arguments

Conditions for credit contract

This course unit cannot be taken via a credit contract

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Master's dissertation

Extra information on the teaching methods

See Master Dissertation Regulation Maritime Science.

Study material

None

References

Master Dissertation Regulation Maritime Science

Course content-related study coaching

A member of the teaching staff of the MSc in Maritime Science serves as supervisor, counselling and guiding the student during the research and writing process.

Assessment moments

continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Professional practice, Oral assessment, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

The written part of the master dissertation is followed by a public oral defense. The student presents the research in 10 minutes, followed by 15-20 minutes of further discussion on the basis of questions from the jury members.
At least three guidance moments (comprising individual consultations, group sessions, written feedback, ...) should be held throughout the master dissertation process in order for the student to be allowed to submit and defend the master dissertation. If students would be at risk of violating this rule, thereby jeopardizing

successful submission of the dissertation, they will be informed by the supervisor.

Calculation of the examination mark

Following the oral defense, the jury members deliberate and evaluate the process, written dissertation and oral defense of the master dissertation in a holistic manner, in the absence of the student and on the basis of a standardized grading sheet.

The final examination mark is determined following the completion of the three mandatory components of the evaluation (process, written dissertation, oral defense). The final mark is not the mathematical sum of hypothetical grades for each of the components, but is based on the extent to which the student has achieved the final competences. The oral defense is essential in this regard to assess whether the student masters the content of the dissertation and has developed the work in a satisfactory manner, taking into account requirements of scientific integrity. Students who fail to complete one of the evaluation components, cannot pass.

Facilities for Working Students

In accordance with Education and Examination Code