

Guidelines for Preparing Theses

**in the Department of Computational Biology and Applied
Algorithmics**

at the Max-Planck-Institute for Informatics

Here you find a summary of the criteria, by which theses (FoPra, Bachelor, Diplom, Master) prepared at the department of Computational Biology and Applied Algorithmics of the MPI for Informatics are being judged. These guidelines are adapted from a similar set of guidelines at the Lehrstuhl for Informatics 2 of the University of Erlangen.

The requirements for Diplom- and Master theses are higher than for FoPra and Bachelor theses, what the amount of work and of creative own contributions is concerned. The expected length of a FoPra/Bachelor theses is 20-25 pages. The expected length of a Diplom/Master thesis is 40-60 pages. Theses can be prepared in German or in English.

Theses are judged considering five aspects separately. The aspects have different weights in the judgment that are represented by different numbers of points that can be earned.

1. Difficulty of the problem

A problem of medium difficulty is one that can be handled by a student with a medium qualification with respect to the base group of students. Differences in difficulty are measured with respect to this normal case. The judgment of the difficulty of the problem can be performed only after the thesis is finished (0 – 6 points).

2. Independence of the work on the thesis

The independence of the student in performing his thesis work is measured in terms of the intensity of supervision and guidance that the student needs in solving his/her problem. It is assumed that the student shows his/her own initiative in identifying problems and discussing them with the supervisor. For

Diplom and Master Theses the student is expected to make his/her own original contributions (0 – 8 points).

3. Scientific work technique

The independence of the student in performing his thesis work is measured in terms of the intensity of supervision and guidance that the student needs in solving his/her problem. It is assumed that the student shows his/her own initiative in identifying problems and discussing them with the supervisor. For Diplom and Master Theses the student is expected to make his/her own original contributions (0 – 10 points).

4. Style

Linguistic quality of the thesis is the major aspect to be judged here. Aspects of this are preciseness and conciseness of expression as well as readability – even difficult problems have to be presented in an intelligibly, trivial facts should not be concealed behind a complex formalism. The argumentation must be transparent (0 – 4 points).

5. Form and Layout

Aspects to be judged here are the diligence and proficiency of producing the thesis. This comprises structuring of the thesis, figures and tables including their captions, and the appropriate collection of the reference list and citation of references (0 – 3 points).