

Załącznik

do uchwały nr 8/2025 rady dydaktycznej dla kierunków studia amerykańistyczne (American Studies)/ American Studies, studia regionalne i lokalne/ projektowanie rozwoju regionalnego i lokalnego z dnia 7 maja 2025 r. w sprawie określenia zasad dyplomowania na studiach II stopnia na kierunku American Studies

## **RULES OF AWARDING DIPLOMAS FOR THE AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM, SECOND CYCLE STUDIES (MA)**

### **§ 1**

#### **RULES OF PREPARING AND GRADING A DIPLOMA THESIS**

##### **I. Rules and procedures for choosing a thesis supervisor**

1. Students shall independently choose their MA thesis' supervisor, in accordance with their research interests, by registering for a specific MA Seminar towards the end of Semester 2 of the program.
2. An academic teacher is allowed to supervise no more than 8 MA theses in a particular academic year. In special cases, the Teaching Council may permit an academic teacher to supervise a Master's thesis outside of an MA Seminar.
3. Should the Teaching Council give permission to supervise a MA thesis outside of the Seminar, the Teaching Council shall recommend that the Director includes it in the supervisor's teaching hours, after the diploma exam, at the rate of 7 regular hours (as established in the Rules of Employment at UW) for every thesis, based on the rules established by a resolution of the IAiE Faculty Council. Supervising a MA thesis outside of the seminar requires the supervisor to be available to the student via email or in person during office hours and to read, comment on, and discuss the received thesis or thesis fragments within three weeks.

##### **II. Rules and procedures for choosing a thesis topic**

1. The topic and content of the MA thesis shall be within the scope of the American Studies program.
2. The topic of the thesis shall be chosen by the student in agreement with his/her supervisor.

### **III. Rules and procedures for accepting the topics of theses**

1. The topic of the MA thesis shall be approved by the supervisor and by an ASC verification committee. The committee is established each year by the Head of Educational Unit and consists of academic teachers from the ASC permanent faculty representing various areas of American Studies, a representative of the ASC Educational Quality Assurance Team, and the Head of Educational Unit as the committee chair.
2. Topics of MA theses shall be approved by the ASC verification committee by 30 January of the academic year during which the MA Seminar has started.
3. The list of approved topics shall be relayed by the Head of the Educational Unit for approval by the IAiE Teaching Council.
4. In case when an MA thesis' topic needs to be changed, a new one should get approved as quickly as possible by a verification committee member who represents a given discipline and should get approved by the IAiE Teaching Council at its nearest meeting. The deadline for submitting a new topic is 31 March of the academic year in which the MA Seminar had started. In special cases, individual topic approval by the IAiE Teaching Council may take place.

### **IV. Substantive requirements for a MA thesis**

1. The author of an MA thesis should demonstrate in-depth knowledge of advanced research methods and the ability to use them to solve an academic problem, as well as show independence in finding relevant sources and skill in analysis and assessment of the gathered materials.
2. The MA thesis shall prove the author's abilities to conduct academic research.
3. To fulfill the substantive requirements an MA thesis must include the following elements: a research problem, a thesis/hypothesis, reasons for choosing the topic, the aim and scope of the thesis, research methods, a table of contents showing a logical argument and appropriate distribution of material into individual parts of the thesis, and a bibliography.
4. An MA thesis should verify educational outcomes assigned to the MA Seminar.
5. An MA thesis shall not breach the principles of academic honesty. Every thesis at the University of Warsaw is verified using the Uniform Anti-Plagiarism System. Additionally, the American Studies Center uses a specialized antiplagiarism software adapted to verifying materials written in English based on English-language texts. Committing plagiarism as well as

undocumented or unaccepted by the supervisor use of AI generative tools disqualifies the thesis from further proceedings.

#### **V. Formal requirements for an MA thesis**

1. The first pages of the MA thesis shall be compliant with the sample pages presented in Attachment 1 of Ordinance no 16 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw from the 18th of May 2006.
2. The thesis shall be written in English or Spanish, compliant with academic standards.
3. The suggested volume of the thesis should be approximately 60 pages of text, yet no fewer than 15 000 words.
4. The thesis shall include at least 20 academic sources and the references to them shall be compliant with the Chicago Manual of Style, latest edition.
5. The thesis shall be submitted in electronic form through the University of Warsaw Archive of Diploma Theses (APD) in accordance with the schedule announced by the Head of Studies.
6. After accepting the final, complete version of the thesis, the supervisor sends an electronic form to the ASC Students' Office and the Head of Studies with a request to appoint an exam committee for a particular student. The Students' Office informs the student about opening the APD system and the student is responsible for uploading the final version of the thesis accepted by the supervisor to APD. After the thesis is tested by the anti-plagiarism software, the Supervisor accepts it in the APD.

#### **VI. Responsibilities of an MA thesis' supervisor**

1. The topic of the thesis shall be a result of cooperation between the supervisor and student and take into account the research interests and competences of both parties.
2. The person teaching an MA Seminar shall acquaint the students with formal and substantive requirements for an MA theses at the ASC, monitor the process of writing a thesis, be available to students via email or during office hours, and return theses or their fragments (depending on what was agreed upon) with commentary and discuss them within three weeks. The supervisor shall not correct grammatical or stylistic errors, but rather identify problems and point to the types of mistakes made.

#### **VII. Grading criteria for a diploma thesis**

1. In accordance with the Rules of Study at the University of Warsaw, a diploma thesis shall be graded by the thesis supervisor and at least one more reviewer.
2. Reviewers shall be chosen taking into account compatibility of their research interests with the thesis topic.
3. Reviewers shall receive the thesis for review 10 days before the planned date of the exam at the latest.
4. Grading criteria for diploma theses are included in the diploma thesis review form to be found in the APD.
5. Reviews shall be submitted to APD no later than 3 days before the planned date for the MA exam.

**VIII. Grading criteria for a diploma thesis prepared by more than one student**

The Teaching Council adopts the principle of evaluating each case like this individually.

**§ 2**

**RULES FOR CONDUCTING A DIPLOMA EXAM**

**I. Rules of forming an examination committee appropriate for the educational cycle and studies' profile**

1. The examination committee shall include at least 3 members: the committee chair, the thesis supervisor and the reviewer.
2. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the Head of Studies.

**II. Substantive requirements for a diploma exam**

The aim of the MA exam is to verify knowledge gained by the student over the course of their studies, as well as their proficiency in topics relevant to the thesis. Questions posed in the course of the exam shall be consistent with the program's educational outcomes and within the scope of the program. The committee shall grade the student's answers based on their substantive content and the proficiency in knowledge, skills, and social competences acquired over the course of studying.

**III. Procedures for conducting a diploma exam**

1. To proceed to the MA exam a student shall first:

- a) fulfill all requirements, that is gain the required number of ECTS points, obtain credit for compulsory subjects, pass compulsory exams, and fulfill other requirements detailed in the studies program;
  - b) submit the MA thesis, approved by the supervisor, which passed anti-plagiarism tests and received positive reviews from the supervisor and reviewer;
2. The MA exam shall be conducted in the language of the MA thesis (English or Spanish).
3. The exam shall consist of three questions.
4. In justified cases, an MA exam may be conducted remotely using widely available internet tools. Both the student and the examiners may participate remotely. All participants have to agree to this form of exam and to record the proceedings.
5. To graduate with honors a student has to fulfill the requirements established in the Rules of Study at the University of Warsaw (§ 52, s. 4).

#### **IV. Scope and form of a diploma exam**

1. The committee chair shall conduct the exam and ensure that exam procedures are followed. The chair may also pose one question to the student.
2. During the exam the student should demonstrate knowledge of the assigned readings for the course Key Readings in American Studies, the bibliography prepared with the supervisor, and the thesis' reviews.
3. An MA exam shall consist of three questions:
  - a) a question concerning issues covered by the assigned readings for the course Key Readings in American Studies – this question shall be posed by the committee chair, who may forgo posing the question and relay it to the thesis supervisor
  - b) a question concerning the submitted MA thesis – this question shall be posed by the reviewer
  - c) a question concerning 10 academic texts (books, articles, essays) selected by the student (and approved by the supervisor) from the thesis bibliography – this question is posed by the thesis supervisor.

#### **V. Grading criteria**

1. Grades for the student's answers shall be assigned unanimously, or if it is impossible, by majority vote.

2. A failing grade for one out of three questions shall not automatically result in failing the diploma exam, as long as the answer for at least one of the remaining questions was graded as “good” (4); in this case the final grade shall be decided by the examination committee. The exam automatically results in a failing grade if:
  - a) a student receives a failing grade for one of the questions and a grade lower than “good” (4) for both remaining questions;
  - b) a student receives a failing grade for more than one question.

### **§ 3**

#### **RULES OF MONITORING THE PROCESS OF AWARDING DIPLOMAS**

##### **I. Analysis of the process of awarding diplomas**

1. Once a year the IAIÉ Teaching Council shall conduct an analysis of the process of awarding diplomas in that particular academic year.
2. The following shall be subject to analysis:
  - a) reviews of diploma theses and the awarded grades, especially: compliance with the schedule of making thesis reviews available to students; objectivity, completeness, and accuracy of the justification for the grades awarded by the supervisor and reviewer for the thesis; legitimacy of discrepancies in grades awarded by the supervisor and the reviewer;
  - b) exam questions and grades awarded for the diploma exam;
  - c) remaining within the scope of the assigned material and following procedures for conducting a diploma exam;
  - d) results of surveys about cooperation with the supervisor and the process of writing the diploma thesis filled out by graduates when they collect their diplomas.
3. Based on the results of conducted analyses, the Teaching Council shall prepare a report and send it to the University’s Educational Council before the end of the semester following the academic year which was subject to analysis.

##### **II. Procedure for implementing corrective actions to improve the process of awarding diplomas**

1. The ASC Director and Head of Educational Unit, in cooperation with ASC Educational Quality Assurance Team, shall be responsible for implementing corrective actions.
2. In case new regulations need to be included in the rules, they shall apply from the next cycle onwards.

