Course Descriptions None 2026-2027

Course Title	Thesis Research Proposal
Course Code	SSP3011
ECTS Credits	3,0
Assessment	Whole/Half Grades

Period

Period	Start	End	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
S1	31-8-2026	31-1-2027					

Level	Advanced
Coordinator	Filippo Oncini For more information:filippo.oncini@maastrichtuniversity.nl
Language of instruction	English
Goals	* Students understand how a research proposal is built as well as how it is assessed. * Students produce a thesis research proposal, translating a sustainability issue into scientific research questions supported by the academic literature, link it to a relevant research design and methods. * Students assess the proposal of other students, using scientific arguments. * Students defend your proposal, using scientific arguments.
Description	The thesis trajectory of the Master SSPS programme consists of two phases: first, the Thesis Research Proposal (SSP3011) and second, the Master Thesis: research, writing, and presenting (SSP3021). Delivering a Master's thesis is a demanding task. It may be your first experience in developing crucial generic research skills. These skills concern, in particular, identifying a relevant research topic, studying the literature to identify knowledge gaps, formulating research questions, selecting a suitable research strategy and methods, planning your research and organizing time, collecting and analysing data, reporting your research in a thesis, and presenting it to your supervisors. From a students' perspective, the thesis trajectory is above all an individual process where you have to prove that you can organize and implement a piece of scientific research completely on your own, but under guidance of your supervisors. In the Thesis Research Proposal (TRP) course you will work on your research proposal. The course aims to be a learning community of students under guidance of the course coordinator and tutors and supported by the supervisors. In the course specific attention is given to formulating scientific research questions and selecting suitable research methods. During tutorials students present their research questions, research methods, and TRP outline, and provide feedback to others. At the end of the course each student should have a final TRP, which is the entry point for the Thesis Research, Writing and Presenting period (SSP3021).
Literature	Martyn Denscombe's book Research Proposals – A Practical Guide (2012), 178 pages, Open University Press.
Prerequisites	
Keywords	
Transitional Regulations	<ul class="trcohorts"> - Master Sustainability Science, Policy and Society - Master Sustainability Science, Policy and Society - Business for Sustainability - Master Sustainability Science, Policy and Society Policy for Sustainability - In 2025-2026 education and exam/resit opportunities are offered. - In 2026-2027 exam/resit opportunities are offered. - From 2027-2028 onwards, the course is cancelled. Note that from 2025-2026 onwards, SSP3041 "Academic Skills and Research Design" is offered as a replacement course. <table><col style="width: 200px;"><col style="width: 120px;"><col style="width: 120px;"><col><thead><tr><th>Academic Year</th><th>Education</th><th>Exam/Resit</th><th>Replacement(s)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2025-2026</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td>SSP3041 "Academic Skills and Research Design"</td></tr><tr><td>2026-2027</td><td> </td><td>X</td><td>SSP3041 "Academic Skills and Research Design"</td></tr><tr><td>2027-2028 onwards</td><td> </td><td> </td><td>SSP3041 "Academic Skills and Research Design"</td></tr></tbody></table>
Teaching methods	PBL / Presentation / Research / Skills
Assessment methods	Attendance / Participation / Presentation
Evaluation in previous academic year	For the complete evaluation of this course please click http://iwio-sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/rapporten.asp?referrer=codeUM

This course belongs to the following programme / specialisation

Master Sustainability Science in Transforming Societies - Business for Sustainability	In transition - Compulsory Skills
Master Sustainability Science in Transforming Societies - Policy for Sustainability	In transition - Compulsory Skills
Master Sustainability Science, Policy and Society	In transition - Compulsory Skills