

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH & SOCIAL MANAGEMENT - 2019

evaluation of the master thesis.

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EVALUATION OF THE MASTER THESIS

Master thesis title:	Health literacy in the hospital workforce		
Examinees:	Dr. Muschnig Tanja, Rico Sattler BBA	Student ID number:	1710360018, 1710360012
Supervisor:	Dr. Armin Fidler	Overall Grade:	70,5 Satisfactory

SCORES – OVERALL GRADING SCALE:

100 – 90	excellent (1)
89 – 80	good (2)
79 – 70	satisfactory (3)
69 – 60	sufficient (4)
59 – 0	insufficient (5)

City, Date: Innsbruck, 01.08.2019Signature:

Dr. Armin Fidler

EVALUATION CRITERIA	REMARKS	POINTS (0-100)	FACTOR OF WEIGHTING	POINTS X WEIGHTING
Quality regarding content				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific foundation Quality of used references; adequacy of literature review Practical relevance Summary and reflection Individual contribution and independence in development of thesis 		72	0,5	37,5
Structural quality				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and outline (clear, logical, comprehensible) Congruency of objective, layout and argumentation Approach to problem solving (process, applied method) Linkage of theory and practice 		65	0,3	19,5
Formal quality				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent is consistent with specifications Correct and complete mode of citation Style and language Overall impression 		75	0,2	15
FINAL GRADE			1,0	70,5

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a highly relevant and pertinent topic. The students also went at great length to elaborate the background, analyze the international literature on the topic and put it in the context of the Austrian health system. Great emphasis was placed in assessing the theoretical framework to also consider the non-health sector related social determinants of health and their relationship to health literacy.

The thesis, however, has several fundamental weaknesses. First, I in my experience as a supervisor I consider the experiment of a “joint” thesis as fundamentally flawed and not surprisingly, I regard the outcome of this work close to a failure. There were no advantages of a “joint” thesis submission but many substantive disadvantages, such as uneven workload, conflicts, and difficulties to assess individual contributions if this were necessary. Most troubling though, I am not sure that students really learned a lesson from this experience – I would have wished a much more honest assessment of their experience in the “Limitations” section of their thesis.

The result of the thesis as presented has little resemblance with the thesis proposal the was submitted. Originally, the students wanted to write a scientific paper, comparing health literacy of hospital workers in two countries (Austria and Australia). Contrary to the plan, the actual thesis submitted was a lengthy background paper on social determinants of health and health literacy, at best a case study of one hospital in Austria and a rather flawed attempt of a mixed method analysis of health literacy of a small number of hospital employees (not a sample, because no sampling has taken place).

Unfortunately, the students in the course of their work over the past months were rather resistant to any advice – time and again they pursued their own approach despite words of caution regarding their chartered course of action from their thesis supervisor.
