Mauch, J.E., Birch, J.W.: **Guide to the Successful Thesis and Dissertation**. 4th Ed. – Marcel Dekker, New York – Basel 1998. ISBN 0-8247-0169-0. 21 + 335 pp., USD 59.75.

The reviewed book is the 58th volume of the series of monographs and textbooks "Books in Library and Information Science". This volume should help both the university students and faculty teachers. It has become popular as seen from existing four editions (this one was revised and expanded). For us who live in Europe where the tradition of universities started mostly in the 13th or 14th century, already the introductory historical chapter brings interesting information: In the U.S. the Doctor of Philosophy degree was first offered as late as in 1861 at Yale University, and even the courses of study leading to the master's degree started only in 1858 at the University of Michigan. Also some of the present professional U.S. degrees are certainly very rare in Europe, such as Master of Nursing or Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

The main text is divided into ten chapters, that deal with individual steps of preparing proposal of either thesis (T) for obtaining master's degree or dissertation (D) for reaching the doctor's degree, conducting the study, writing the manuscript, and defending it. Each chapter is opened by a box showing on which pages answers to three to five specific questions can be found. The content of this manual deals more with T/D in philosophy, history, and other social sciences than with T/D in natural sciences. In natural sciences, in Europe and certainly also in the U.S., possible T/D topics are mostly limited by the research scope of the respective institute or research team and by the available apparatuses and instruments. Hence the selection of T/D topic starts usually with recommendations of the advisor, not with ideas of the student. The possibility of honours programs for outstanding undergraduate students is more or less a speciality of the U.S.; in Europe such bachelor's thesis is mostly a necessity for all students who wish to reach this degree and continue in undergraduate studies.

First two chapters deal with getting started and selecting a proper research advisor. Distinctions between research in academic and professional disciplines are summarised in Table 1-1, distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research are on pp. 18-19. Developing the proposal by an interaction of student and advisor and preparing it by the student is the topic of next two chapters. The reader can find here, *e.g.* things dissertation advisors hate to hear (pp. 38-39), problems of sexual harassment (p. 42), ethical responsibilities (pp. 48-50) and responsibilities of higher-education institutions (pp. 54-57), criteria of selection of the research advisor (pp. 58-60), recommendations for disabled and handicapped (pp. 65-67) or foreign (pp. 76-77) students, checklists of T/D topic sources (p. 68) or topic feasibility and appropriateness (pp. 74-75), recommendations for database searches (pp. 81-84), how to prepare table of contents for the proposal (p. 97). Further recommendations are how to prepare literature review, make research design and select methodology, collect data and treat them. On pp. 116-122 nineteen examples of research types are given.

Chapter 5 deals with the T/D committee that controls the progress of preparing the T/D and continuously gives advice and consults the candidate. The form for evaluation of T/D (pp. 133-135) and the progress report memorandum (p. 137) are certainly interesting tools to maintain communication of student, advisor, and committee. The criteria for selecting committee members and their roles (*e.g.* to encourage clear writing) are also given here. Chapter 6 is on the approval of the overview and chapter 7 on conducting the study. One can find here how can word processing programs help in work, how to use private information, what are the obligations to human (and animal) subjects, *etc.*

Very important is the topic of chapter 8 entitled "Writing the manuscript", but the space reserved to this question is very limited (only 25 pp.). Interesting is the recommended table of contents for T/D (pp. 219-220): implications for practice and scholarly understanding, and recommendations for further research or modifications in accepted theories are often omitted by students. Constructing a "dummy" of the finished document (pp. 220-221) is a sound idea. Also the notice on copyrighted material is very important (pp. 221-222) as well as the checklist for T/D (pp. 228-229). Chapter 9 deals with T/D defence, including oral examination, and chapter 10 is on publication of the finished dissertation, responsibilities to professional improvement, *etc.* A list of 18 points as guidelines for articles or papers (pp. 268-270) is certainly useful.

There are three appendices: a very good list of research related telecommunication and computer terminology, suggested proposal and project guidelines, and course outline. The bibliography contains 279 items. An author index and a subject index are included.

According to my opinion it was not a very good idea to prepare book that should simultaneously serve students, advisors, and committee members. I think that half of the book size would be enough for students, certainly with more emphasis to the writing of T/D manuscript and to the problems of students of natural sciences. Nevertheless, everybody can find some interesting information in this book.

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