Dissertation Class

Sharon Richardson:
Measuring Mobile Digital Footprints: A Modern Index of Urban Interaction

Exercise: What does a Masters Dissertation in CASA look like?

Sharon completed the MSc in Smart Cities and Urban Analytics in 2014/15, and her dissertation scored highly at the end of the year. What elements enabled her to successfully meet the course and module goals? Here are some questions focused on particular aspects of the dissertation that you may want to consider:

Structure
What elements does this dissertation include in its structure?
How are they ordered?
How are they linked?
How much space is devoted to each?
How much time do you think each represents? When could each be started and completed?

Abstract
What does the *abstract* communicate?
What can you say about his programme of research based on this abstract?

Research Goal and Overview (p11)
How has the author designed his research question?
How is this framed by what has come before?
How do they demonstrate that they are doing something (at least a little) *novel*?
How do they decide on a questions feasible in the time available?

A new global style for architecture and urban design (p13)
How has the author synthesized the literature here? What does *synthesis* mean in this context?
How is this relevant to their thesis? How do they link theory to their practice (research)?

Methodology, section 4.1 (p25)
How successful is the author in giving the reader the tools to query or reproduce their results?

Concluding remarks (p64--65)
What role do these concluding remarks serve in the thesis structure?

Broader questions (throughout the thesis)
How well does the author integrate graphs and images into the text?
How well does the author integrate equations and mathematics into the text?
Can you follow a logical thread or story through the dissertation?
How could the work in this dissertation be prepared for publication?