Guidelines for the preparation of cumulative publication-based dissertations
Faculty of Human Sciences of the University of Potsdam

A cumulative publication-based dissertation exists if the results of the doctoral thesis are not presented in the form of a continuous publication, but in the form of a collection of several manuscripts of scientific publications.

A cumulative publication-based dissertation must be identified as such on the title page.

As a rule, a cumulative publication-based dissertation consists of *at least three* independently published original articles. The majority of the articles must be written by the doctoral candidate alone or, in the case of co-authored articles, under the leadership of the doctoral candidate. The content of the articles must constitute a consistent research topic. **At least two of the articles should have already been published or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals.** In individual cases, it is possible to deviate from the requirements regarding the number of articles or the publication status. Any such deviation must be justified to the Doctoral Committee.[1]

If there are several authors, the doctoral candidate's contribution must be clearly stated. This must be explained on an extra page and countersigned by the co-authors.

In the case of empirical studies, the explanatory documents or descriptions of the methods/procedures must be attached in addition to the published articles, unless these are already comprehensively included in the publications.

The doctoral regulations also apply in full to cumulative dissertations.

A cumulative dissertation must be submitted in bound form in DIN A4 page format. It consists of the following parts:

- Cover sheet
- table of contents
- List of abbreviations, if applicable
- Introduction (this should refer to the entirety of the manuscripts and explain the overarching question of the doctoral thesis); overview of the manuscripts with a description of your own contribution to the individual publications
- Manuscripts
- Discussion (this concluding discussion refers to the totality of all manuscripts and should bring the individual results presented in the individual manuscripts into the overall context of the overarching question and it should be explained how the results as a whole contribute to answering the question and how they fit into the current state of knowledge on the topic); length: 5-10 pages
- Summary (refers to the overarching research question, the totality of the results and their contribution/significance for answering the research question)
- Bibliography for the citations in the introduction and discussion
- as an appendix, possibly further original data or methods not documented in the manuscripts

The comprehensive introduction and the coherent overall discussion are of particular importance for the assessment of a cumulative dissertation. They must conclusively demonstrate the contribution made by the manuscripts in their entirety to the expansion of scientific knowledge in the subject area of the doctorate.

Latest update: 12/2024

[1] It should be noted that, in addition to a cumulative publication-based dissertation, it is also possible to submit a dissertation (monograph) that has already been published in parts (e.g. in the form of original articles).