

**Doctoral Degree Regulations
of the Faculty of Arts
at the University of Potsdam**

of 23 June 2005¹

**as amended by the Second Amendment
to Modify the Doctoral Degree Regula-
tions of the Faculty of Arts
at the University of Potsdam**

of 19 February 2014²

– non-official version –

The Faculty Council of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Potsdam has decreed the following Doctoral Degree Regulations in accordance with § 74, para. 1, no. 1 in conjunction with § 18, para. 3 of the Brandenburg Higher Education Act (BbgHG) as amended on 6 July 2004 (Law and Ordinance Gazette GVBl., p. 394):

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§ 1 Right to Confer a Doctorate

(1) The Faculty of Arts of the University of Potsdam confers the academic degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)* on the basis of a dissertation and a successfully passed oral examination. The doctorate evidences a special academic qualification through independent research that is beyond a regular university degree.

(2) The Faculty of Arts may confer the degree of an honorary *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil. h.c.)* in appreciation of outstanding achievements in the academic fields represented at the Faculty.

(3) The Faculty may conduct a doctoral procedure in conjunction with other universities. Detailed provisions are contained in the partnership agreements with the respective institutions.

(4) The subjects for doctoral studies are listed in the appendix below.

§ 2 Doctoral Committee

(1) A Doctoral Committee is in charge of conducting the doctoral procedure. It is appointed by the Faculty Council for the duration of its term of office.

(2) The Doctoral Committee consists of four university instructors and a member of the non-professorial academic staff who holds a doctoral degree.

(3) The Faculty Council appoints a chairperson from the group of university instructors who are committee members. The Committee shall have a quorum if a majority of members is present. It decides by a majority of the votes cast. Abstentions and delegations of votes are not permitted. In the

¹ Approved by the Rector of the University of Potsdam by letter of 31 August 2005.

² Approved by the President of the University of Potsdam on 20 March 2014.

event of a tie the chairperson's vote shall be decisive.

(4) The Doctoral Committee is responsible for:

1. Evaluating compliance with the admission requirements for the doctoral procedure,
2. Opening the doctoral examination procedure,
3. Appointing the Examination Board for each doctoral examination procedure (in consultation with the supervisor) and appointing a member of the commission as chairperson for the respective doctoral examination procedure,
4. Monitoring adherence to the deadlines defined in these Doctoral Degree Regulations,
5. Reviewing the course of the doctoral procedures in case of an objection by a party to the procedure,
6. Deciding about declarations of invalidity,
7. Deciding about withdrawal of the doctoral degree,
8. Accepting proposals for honorary doctoral degrees and assignment of a commission to review such proposals.

§ 3 Examination Board

(1) The Examination Board consists of at least five members who are university instructors or habilitated professors. It consists of:

1. The reviewer,
2. Usually two representatives of the academic discipline that is in charge of the doctoral procedure,
3. At least one other member of the Faculty who does not come from this discipline.

The examination committee of the respective discipline may suggest members for the Examination Board. At least one member of the Examination Board shall be nominated following the suggestion of the person who applied for the doctoral procedure, provided that such a suggestion was submitted.

(2) The Doctoral Committee may decide to appoint members of other faculties of the University of Potsdam, other universities, grant committees for graduate studies, and non-university scientific institutions to become members of the Examination Board.

(3) The Examination Board shall be responsible for:

1. Deciding about the acceptance of the written work as a dissertation,
2. Conducting the oral examination,

3. Evaluating the dissertation on the basis of the submitted reports and the oral examination as well as the overall rating.

(4) Meetings of the Examination Board shall not be public.

§ 4 Admission Requirements

(1) The admission requirements for a doctoral procedure are:

1. First professional degree or another examination completing a program of academic training (also an institution of applied sciences - *Fachhochschule*) with a standard course length of at least eight semesters in the subject of the dissertation or
2. For qualified master's students, proof that he/she achieved a minimum of 50% of the credit points in the first year of the master's degree program, as well as a statement by the supervisor supporting the project's appropriateness, or
3. First professional degree or another examination completing a program of academic training (also an institution of applied sciences - *Fachhochschule*) with a standard course length of six semesters and subsequent adequate studies to prepare for the doctorate in the subject of the dissertation, or
4. Additional studies in the subject of the dissertation in case of less relevant preconditions, or
5. Confirmation of the primary supervisor of the dissertation project,
6. Statement that the person applying for a doctorate has not opened a doctoral examination procedure at another faculty or university,
7. For foreigners, proof of command of written and spoken German (unless the provisions under § 9, para. 2 are fulfilled).

(2) If the relevant academic achievements are not sufficient, the Examination Board for the subject will be requested to determine the type and scope of additional achievements in the subject of the dissertation.

(3) The Doctoral Committee decides about the recognition of foreign education certificates as admission requirements for the doctoral procedure after consultation with the International Relations Office of the University of Potsdam. In cases of doubt, the Central Office for Foreign Education shall be consulted.

§ 5 Acceptance as Doctoral Candidate

(1) The application to be accepted as a doctoral candidature shall be submitted in writing to the chairperson of the Doctoral Committee.

(2) The application shall include:

1. Evidence of meeting the admission requirements pursuant to § 4,
2. Statement of the Examination Board responsible for the pursued discipline that the candidate meets the required relevant academic requirements,
3. Preliminary working title of the dissertation, including an abstract of the work's objective,
4. Name and written confirmation of a person who is entitled to supervise the dissertation.

(3) Doctoral supervisors can be professors, honorary professors, adjunct/associate professors, university teachers, assistant professors (Privadozenten), and emeritus or retired professors of the Faculty, provided they have earned academic achievements in the subject pursued for the doctorate.

(4) The dissertation can be supervised by research group leaders at the Faculty or a professor/university instructor who works at an institution for graduate funding or at an academic institution in which the Faculty participates. The supervision of a dissertation by a professor of an institution of applied sciences shall be governed on a case-by-case basis by the University of Potsdam and the respective institution of applied sciences. The only persons eligible to serve as reviewers shall hold either a doctoral degree or have a track record of academic achievements equivalent to a doctorate. Pursuant to § 10, a Faculty member authorized for reviewing dissertations must be called in for the review.

(5) Every doctoral candidate is continually supervised by at least two supervisors - a primary supervisor and a second supervisor. For this purpose, a supervision agreement will be concluded that defines responsibilities and a common schedule of the two supervisors and the candidate to successfully complete the doctoral procedure. The second supervisor will be assigned upon the candidate's proposal and in consultation with the primary supervisor. Upon the candidate's request, the Doctoral Committee may also assign a second supervisor who is not a member of the Faculty if it is deemed necessary due to the dissertation topic. The Faculty recommends at least two supervision meetings per academic year with the primary supervisor.

(5) A doctoral candidate is accepted by the Doctoral Committee in writing; the committee must give reasons for any refusal of an application. Acceptance cannot be refused if the Faculty is the competent institution for the subject, the doctoral candidate meets the requirements under para. 2 hereof, and an authorized supervisor has agreed to supervise the dissertation.

§ 6 Application for Opening the Doctoral Examination Procedure

(1) Applications to open the doctoral examination procedure to obtain the degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)* shall be submitted in writing to the Doctoral Committee.

(2) The application shall include:

1. Statement about the intended scientific discipline of the doctorate,
2. Certificate that he/she was accepted as a doctoral candidate,
3. Statement pursuant to §5, para. 2, no. 2;
4. Statement that no other doctoral procedure has been opened in the same scientific discipline,
5. Tabular CV in German,
6. Evidence that the candidate meets the admission criteria for the doctoral procedure under § 4,
7. Dissertation in electronic form and three bound or stapled copies including a statement that the dissertation has been prepared independently, the candidate only used the resources stated in the dissertation, and that any text or contents from other sources have been referenced appropriately,
8. Statement as to whether the dissertation was already submitted to a faculty of another university or comparable institution of higher education in its current or a different version,
9. Certificate about enrollment for the current semester or a certificate of conduct if more than three months have passed since the termination of enrollment; this is not necessary if the applicant verifiably works for the civil service or the church,
10. List of the candidate's scientific publications,
11. Statement that the candidate is aware of the Doctoral Degree Regulations.

(3) The application for opening the doctoral examination procedure may include a recommendation of a reviewer subject to the provisions in § 10, para. 1.

§ 7 Opening of the Doctoral Examination Procedure

(1) The Doctoral Committee shall decide about the opening of the doctoral examination procedure by a simple majority of its members within six weeks after submission of the application.

(2) If the Doctoral Committee rejects the opening of the doctoral examination procedure, the chairperson shall inform the candidate in writing, give reasons for the decision, and provide instructions on the right to appeal. The Doctoral Committee may only reject the application if

1. At least one of the requirements under § 4 has not been fulfilled,
2. The submitted version of the dissertation, or a version that is not essentially different, has been submitted for evaluation to another faculty, or has not been accepted.

§ 8 Withdrawal from the Doctoral Examination Procedure

As long as no expert review has been submitted, the candidate shall have the right to withdraw from the procedure. Any procedural steps up to that point shall not be deemed a doctoral examination procedure.

§ 9 Dissertation

(1) The dissertation shall be prepared in a scientific area or academic field represented at the Faculty (see Appendix). It shall constitute an independently prepared and adequately formulated contribution to research.

(2) As a rule, the dissertation shall be written in German. Submission of dissertations in another language shall be approved by the Doctoral Committee. A dissertation in another language can be approved if it is typical in the respective discipline, and if the Faculty can ensure its evaluation.

(3) The dissertation must not have been published as a whole.

(4) The title page of the dissertation shall state the topic, the author's name, that it was submitted to the Faculty of Arts, and the year of submission. Dissertations in a language other than German shall include an appendix with a summary of approx. 10 pages in German.

§ 10 Evaluation of the Dissertation

(1) At least two written evaluation reports shall be prepared for the submitted dissertation. One evaluation will be usually prepared by the authorized member of the Faculty who accepted the primary supervision of the dissertation. The second evaluation will usually be prepared by a supervisor who is not a member of the Faculty. All professors, honorary professors, adjunct/associate professors, university teachers, assistant professors (*Privatdozenten*), and emeritus or retired professors of the Faculty shall be entitled to review a dissertation, provided they have earned academic achievements in the subject pursued for the doctorate.

(1) The person proposed must be a professor or have completed a postdoctoral qualification in the respective academic field. The Examination Board appoints a second reviewer from the academic field of the submitted dissertation who must be a professor or have completed a postdoctoral qualification. Conflicts of interests shall be excluded in line with the rules of good scientific practice.

(2) The evaluation reports shall be prepared independently and at the same time. They shall be forwarded to the Examination Board in writing within three months after they were commissioned. The evaluation reports must recommend the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation. The reports may formulate conditions to be fulfilled prior to publication.

(3) If they recommend the acceptance of the dissertation, they simultaneously have to propose a grade. The following grade can be given:

summa cum laude = with distinction

magna cum laude = very good

cum laude = good

rite = sufficient

non sufficit = insufficient

(4) Upon a proposal by the Examination Board, the Doctoral Committee shall request an additional evaluation report in case the recommendations in the evaluation reports differ with regard to acceptance or rejection or the grade differs by more than one assessment level. The additional evaluation report shall consider and weigh the reasons stated in the other reports and recommend the acceptance or rejection of the written work as a dissertation. Such report shall be available within 6 weeks, if possible.

(5) If the deadline for the submission of an evaluation report has been exceeded by more than one month, the Doctoral Committee assigns another re-

viewer. In this case, the doctoral candidate shall retain the right to propose the reviewer.

(6) The dissertation and the evaluation reports shall be made available for inspection at the Dean's Office for two weeks during the lecture period and four weeks during the semester break. It shall be duly informed by notice that the dissertation and reviews have been laid out. Comments on the dissertation have to be announced during the display period and submitted not later than two weeks after the end of the display period to the chairperson of the Examination Board. They shall be attached to the documents of the doctoral procedure.

§ 11 Decision about the Dissertation

(1) A decision about the dissertation shall be taken within a period of four weeks during the term and within eight weeks during the semester break.

(2) The Examination Board decides about the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation and bases its decision on the evaluation reports of the reviews and the submitted statements. The board must accept the dissertation if the majority of the evaluation reports recommends its acceptance and the statements according to § 10, para. 6 do not specify any compelling reasons for deviating from the positive evaluation reports. The board must decide to reject the dissertation if the majority of evaluation reports recommends its rejection and the statements according to § 10, para. 6 do not specify any compelling reasons for deviating from the negative evaluation reports.

(3) If the dissertation is accepted, the Examination Board will determine the overall grade of the dissertation based on the grades recommended in the individual evaluation reports:

summa cum laude
magna cum laude
cum laude
rite

The overall evaluation of the dissertation with summa cum laude is only possible if all evaluation reports recommended such a grading, the Examination board has taken a unanimous decision and the Doctoral Committee dismissed any objections.

(4) The chairperson of the Examination Board shall inform the doctoral candidate in writing about the dissertation's acceptance and evaluation and about the date of the oral examination. He/she concurrently informs the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee shall ensure that the candidate has access to the evaluation reports.

(5) If a dissertation is rejected, the chairperson of the Doctoral Committee shall inform the candidate and give reasons for the rejection. In case of a negative decision the candidate can file an objection with the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee shall decide about the objection consulting the person who supervised the dissertation. If the dissertation was rejected, the doctoral procedure cannot be continued. The rejected dissertation including all evaluation reports and statements, if applicable, shall remain in the examination records pursuant to § 10, para. 6.

§ 12 Oral Examination

(1) The oral examination takes place as a disputation. The candidate defends his/her dissertation in the disputation. The oral examination shall additionally cover selected topics of the candidate's academic field and related disciplines as well as the respective state of research. The disputation takes place in German. Upon application by the candidate, the Doctoral Committee may approve exceptions subject to the provisions under § 9, para Abs. 2.

(2) The members of the Examination Board jointly conduct the oral examination, which takes place at earliest two weeks and the latest four weeks after the dissertation was accepted.

(3) The oral examination shall take between 60 and 90 minutes. At the beginning the candidate shall give a 15-minutes presentation explaining the theses he/she submitted. The theses shall be submitted to the chairperson of the Examination Board not later than 10 days before the disputation and will be made accessible to all members of the Examination Board. The members of the Examination Board shall initially have the right to ask questions and subsequently the members of the Faculty.

(4) The chairperson of the Examination Board shall chair the oral examination. Another board member will be appointed to take the minutes about the course and results of the oral examination. The final report must include any potential conditions for the publication or a statement that the dissertation may be published in its submitted form.

(5) The oral examination shall be public. That does not include any deliberation of the Examination Board about the examination results.

(6) Immediately after the oral examination, the Examination Board shall decide about the examination result by simple majority. The following grading is possible:

summa cum laude
magna cum laude
cum laude
rite
non sufficit

If the candidate passes the oral examination, the Examination Board shall decide about the overall grading by simple majority based on the dissertation achievements and the grading of the oral examination. For the overall grade, the dissertation is double-weighted and the oral examination single-weighted. Abstention from voting shall not be permitted. The grading “summa cum laude” will be awarded only if both the dissertation and the oral examination were rated with this grade.

(7) If a candidate fails the oral examination, he/she can only repeat it once, at the earliest after six months and not later than one year.

§ 13 Notification of Examination Results

(1) After the decision has been made, the chairperson of the Examination Board shall inform the candidate about the overall grade of the doctoral achievements. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts shall be informed about the results.

(2) The Dean of the Faculty of Arts issues a provisional certificate that includes the grade of the dissertation and the overall grade. Such certificate does not entitle the holder to use the title *Dr. phil.*

§ 14 Publication of Dissertation

(1) The dissertation shall be published within two years after the date of the oral examination; the number of copies specified under § 16 shall be delivered to the University library free of charge. Before printing the dissertation, the candidate must obtain the approval for the text version to be published. The approval will be granted by the Dean of the Faculty after consultation with the doctoral supervisor.

(2) Submission requirements shall be extended by one year if evidence has been submitted that a commercial publisher guarantees publication. Further extensions of the deadline shall be possible in exceptional and duly substantiated cases.

(3) The copies to be published shall meet the formal requirement in accordance with § 9, para. 4 5 and name the reviewers as well as the date of the oral examination on the reverse side of the title page.

§ 15 Types of Publication

Approved types of publication are:

1. Publication as monograph by a commercial publisher,
2. Publication in a journal,
3. Publication in bound format by doctoral candidate; attachments on other types of media (CD-ROM, microfiches) are permitted,
4. Publication on microfiches,
5. Publication in electronic format on the publication server of the Potsdam University library.

§ 16 Submission Requirements

(1) If the dissertation is published as a monograph by a commercial publisher or in a journal, six (6) copies have to be submitted. The title page and its reverse side shall be marked as a dissertation at the University of Potsdam and specify the year of the doctorate and the names of the reviewers.

(2) If the author publishes the dissertation himself/herself, 15 copies have to be submitted, including attachments in other media types if applicable.

(3) If the dissertation is published on microfiches, five (5) printed and bound copies as well as 15 copies of the microfiches have to be submitted.

(4) If the dissertation is published in an electronic version, five (5) printed and bound copies and the electronic version have to be submitted. Data format and transfer of the electronic shall be agreed with the University library. The publication shall contain an abstract in German and English. The candidate shall grant the right to publish the electronic version in data networks to the *Universität Potsdam*, the *Die Deutschen Bibliothek in Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig* and, if necessary, the Special Collections Library of the German Research Association (DFG) and shall affirm that the electronic version corresponds to the accepted dissertation. The University library will verify the readability and compliance of the submitted version with the required standards. If the submitted data do not meet the specified standards requirements, the dissertation shall not be considered published.

(5) The purpose of submitting the dissertation in the cases under para. 3 - 5 hereof is its non-commercial distribution by the Potsdam University Library. By submitting the dissertation the author conveys the right to the University library to distribute it as well as to make and distribute further copies of the dissertation.

(6) If a certificate notifying the acceptance of the dissertation for printing or a publishing contract can be submitted in case the dissertation will be published in a journal or as a monograph by a commercial publisher, an application can be issued for a provisional certificate about the successful completion of the doctoral procedure that entitles the holder to use the title “Dr. phil.”.

§ 17 Doctoral Certificate

(1) When the submission requirements have been fulfilled in accordance with § 16, the doctorate will be awarded by delivering the doctoral certificate

(2) The doctoral certificate shall contain:

1. Name of the university and faculty,
2. Awarded doctoral degree,
3. Academic field,
4. Title of the dissertation,
5. Overall grade pursuant to § 12, para. 6,
6. Candidate’s name, date and place of birth,
7. Name of the Dean of the Faculty.

The doctoral certificate will be evidenced by the seal of the University and the signature of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The effective date of the doctorate shall be the date of the oral examination.

(3) Upon the delivery of the doctoral certificate, the candidate is entitled to use the title of a *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil)*.

(4) After the doctoral procedure has been completed, the respective candidate shall have the right to get access to all files and records of the doctoral procedure.

§ 18 Invalidity of Doctoral Degree

If it becomes apparent before the delivery of the doctoral certificate that the candidate has engaged in deception regarding the doctoral achievements or if essential prerequisites turn out not to exist, the Doctoral Committee, after consultation with the Examination Board and after hearing the doctoral candidate, may declare the candidate’s performance as invalid.

§ 19 Withdrawal of Doctoral Degree

(1) The doctoral degree may be withdrawn if it turns out that the candidate has engaged in deception or if essential prerequisites for awarding the doctorate do not in fact exist.

(2) The doctoral degree may also be withdrawn if the person who obtained the doctoral degree

1. Has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of at least one year without probation for a willful criminal act or
2. Has been sentenced for a willful criminal act that was prepared or committed by misusing the doctoral degree.

§ 20 Special Provisions for Doctoral Procedures Jointly Supervised by a Foreign Faculty

(1) A doctoral procedure may be jointly conducted with a foreign university if there is an agreement with the respective institution that was approved by the Doctoral Committee. The Agreement shall contain detailed provisions about a jointly supervised doctoral procedure.

(2) The procedure shall be supervised by an authorized person of the participating foreign university and the Faculty of Arts.

(3) The general provisions of these Doctoral Degree Regulations also apply for a doctoral examination procedure together with a foreign university unless separate provisions are specified below.

(4) The doctoral candidate decides in agreement with his/her supervisors of the dissertation at which participating university to conduct the doctoral procedure. Each participating university has the right to nominate a reviewer.

(5) The doctoral certificate contains the names and signatures of the persons designated by the doctoral degree regulations of both universities and is confirmed with the seal of the foreign university and the seal of the University of Potsdam. It contains the academic degree “Dr. phil.” as well as the respective foreign academic title. The doctoral certificate indicates that it is a doctoral degree obtained under joint supervision. If two certificates are issued, sentences 1 -3 shall apply accordingly.

(6) Upon receiving the doctoral certificate the doctoral candidate is entitled to using the title of a doctor in the Federal Republic of Germany and the respective doctoral degree title in the state where the participating foreign university is located. The successful candidate is only entitled to using one doctoral degree. The doctoral certificate contains a note specifying that the awarded foreign doctoral degree does not represent an academic degree acquired abroad within the meaning of § 20a BbgHG.

(7) The agreement with the foreign university may point out the foreign university’s rights regarding

duplication of the dissertation and the number of obligatory copies. It must be ensured that the Faculty of Arts of University of Potsdam will receive the obligatory copies specified under § 16.

§ 21 Honorary Doctorate

An honorary *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil. h.c.)* can be conferred in appreciation of outstanding academic and scientific achievements or accomplishments in promoting science: At least three faculty members must apply for the conferral of an honorary doctorate. The proposal will be accepted by the Doctoral Committee and reviewed by a commission appointed by the Committee. The Extended Faculty council will take a decision based on the vote of the commission. The decision requires a majority vote by the university lecturers.

§ 22 Temporary Regulation, Effective Date, Expiration of Regulation

(1) Doctoral candidates who were already admitted or accepted at the time the Doctoral Degree Regulations come into effect will be able to complete the doctoral procedure according to the Doctoral Degree Regulations of 19 April 2001 (AmBek UP, p 98).

(2) The Doctoral Degree Regulations shall come into effect on the day after their publication in the Official Announcements of the University of Potsdam. The Doctoral Degree Regulations of 19 April 2001 shall become invalid at the same time.

Appendix

Academic disciplines for doctoral studies at the Faculty of Arts:

- General and Comparative Literary Studies
- American Studies
- Applied Linguistics
- English Studies
- German Studies
- History
- Jewish Studies
- Jewish Theology
- Classical Philology
- Cultural Studies
- Art History
- Media Studies
- Philosophy
- Religious Studies
- Romance Studies
- Slavic Studies
- Linguistics
- Comparative Linguistics