

**Regulations for a Doctoral Degree from
the Faculty of Economics and Social
Sciences at the University of Potsdam
for the Title of Doctor of Economics
and Social Sciences (Dr. rer. pol.)**

July 10, 2013

The Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Potsdam has approved on July 10, 2014, the following doctoral regulations on the basis of Section 31 of the Brandenburg Higher Education Act (Brandenburgisches Hochschulgesetz, BbgHG) of April 28, 2014 (Law and Ordinance Gazette (GVBl.) I/14, [no. 18]) in combination with Section 21 subsection 2 no. 1 of the Basic Constitution of the University of Potsdam (Grundordnung, GrundO) of December 17, 2009 (Bulletin UP no. 9/2010 p. 60) in the First Version of the Amendment to the GrundO of February 27, 2013 (Bulletin UP no. 4/2013 p. 116):¹

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§ 1 Doctoral Studies

(1) The Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Potsdam confers:

- a) The academic degree of Doctor of Economics and Social Sciences (Lat. *doctor rerum politicarum*; Dr. rer. pol.) on the basis of a doctoral examination procedure (§§ 1-13)
- b) The academic degree and esteem of an honorary Doctor of Economics and Social Sciences (Lat. *doctor*

rerum politicarum honoris causa; Dr. rer. pol. h. c.) on the basis of an honorary doctorate conferral procedure (§ 16).

(2) Doctoral studies are done on the basis of a scholarly project (dissertation)—or multiple academic papers that are jointly equivalent to a dissertation—and the successful completion of an oral examination (defense).

§ 2 Doctoral Committee

(1) Doctoral examination procedures are performed by a Doctoral Committee acting on behalf of the Faculty.

(2) The Doctoral Committee is elected by the faculty committee for a term of two years and consists of at least six members. In addition to the dean, it includes at least four members of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences who are either university lecturers or associate lecturers working primarily for the university. Another member has received his or her doctorate in accordance with Section 1 subsection 1 no. 4–7 of the Basic Constitution of the University of Potsdam. This member must hold a doctorate. The representatives of the academic employees of the faculty committee are entitled to nominate their member. For each member, a deputy is elected. A re-election of members and deputy members is possible. Additional members may be added in an advisory capacity.

(3) The Doctoral Committee has the following duties in particular:

- Determining whether an applicant has met the requirements for a doctorate and deciding whether to admit them as a doctoral candidate
- Commencing the doctoral examination procedure
- Appointing the reviewers and naming the members of the Examination Committee
- Deciding whether to approve the dissertation, return it with requirements for edits, or reject it
- Revoking a doctoral degree
- Compiling statistics on doctorates and reporting them periodically to the Faculty Committee

(4) The chair of the Doctoral Committee is the dean. The dean may be represented by a deputy. The chair shall conduct the ongoing business of the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee reaches decisions by a simple majority of votes. In the event of a tie,

¹ Approved by the President of the University of Potsdam on April 17, 2014.

the chair's vote holds sway. Abstentions are not permitted.

(5) The Doctoral Committee generally meets four times per semester in a closed meeting.

§ 3 Admission to Doctoral Studies

(1) Admission to doctoral studies requires the successful completion of a graduate degree (Master, *Diplom*, or *Magister*), of the First State Examination for Teaching at Grammar Schools with a primary subject in the field of economics or social sciences at a university or equivalent institution of higher education, or of a Master's program at a polytechnic university in Germany.

(2) The Doctoral Committee may also admit applicants who have successfully completed an equivalent academic degree at a university in Germany or abroad with a standard course length of at least eight semesters.

(3) A graduate of a Bachelor's degree course may be admitted to doctoral studies as an exception to §3 (1). The special qualification requirements shall be set by the Doctoral Committee.

(4) Degrees listed under (1) or (2) must minimally have the grade of "good" or the equivalent. Degrees obtained abroad must demonstrate an equivalent grade. The Doctoral Committee shall decide on any exceptions.

(5) For admission, applicants shall submit the following documents:

- Application for admission
- Certificate of the degree obtained pursuant to Sections 1 and 2
- Approval by a supervisor
- A curriculum vitae in German or English outlining the applicant's academic career in particular
- A statement by the applicant affirming that he or she is not currently undergoing a doctoral examination procedure and has not conclusively failed an examination procedure for a doctorate of the same kind

(6) Applicants who have failed an examination procedure for a doctorate of the same kind or are currently undergoing a doctoral examination procedure shall not be admitted to the doctoral program.

(7) Exceptions are possible in cases of jointly supervised binational doctorates (the *cotutelle de thèse* model). The details are governed by special agreements concluded between the participating universities.

(8) The Doctoral Committee shall decide on the basis for the application for admission to doctoral studies. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the decision. A rejection must be accompanied by an explanation and information about available legal remedies.

§ 4 Supervision

(1) The Doctoral Committee shall nominate at least two supervisors (the primary supervisor and the secondary supervisor).

(2) The primary supervisor can one of the following: a professor primarily employed by the Faculty; a guest professor, honorary professor, associate lecturer, or a head of a junior research group at the Faculty. Retired full, guest, or honorary professors in the Faculty can also serve as primary supervisors with the approval of the Doctoral Committee. The secondary supervisor can also be a lecturer at another faculty, at another degree-granting institution, or, in the case of a cooperative model, at a polytechnic university.

(3) It is the primary supervisor's duty to work together with the doctoral candidate to define a dissertation topic and to provide professional advice and support during the dissertation writing process. Further details shall be governed by the written supervision agreement. The secondary supervisor supports the doctoral candidate in carrying out the doctoral examination procedure.

(4) The doctoral candidate must present his or her planned doctoral project in at least two doctoral colloquia held by the respective department or at equivalent occasions. The Doctoral Committee shall decide on any exceptions.

§ 5 Dissertation

(1) The dissertation must:

- Advance scientific knowledge by means of independent research
- Describe the methods applied to complete the task in a demonstrable manner
- Clearly represent the results, interpret them in the context of relevant current knowledge, and discuss the results
- Contain complete documentation of the scholarly literature and aids applied in the project

(2) The dissertation shall have sole authorship and be written in German. With the primary supervisor's approval, it may also be composed in English. Another language may only be permitted upon application with advance approval from the Doctoral Committee.

(3) In place of a dissertation, multiple articles published or submitted in academically recognized fashion may be accepted as written doctoral work (cumulative dissertation) if they are jointly equivalent to the effort of a full dissertation. A cumulative dissertation must:

- a) Contain a summary paper that lays out a coherent personal research program in light of the publications submitted
- b) Contain a statement specifying the doctoral candidate's personal contributions to jointly authored publications submitted as part of the dissertation. This declaration must be corroborated by the other co-authors.

§ 6 Commencing the Doctoral Examination Procedure

(1) The doctoral examination procedure commences upon written application by the candidate to the Doctoral Committee.

(2) The application must include the following documents and evidence:

1. Four bound copies of the dissertation with page numbers as well as one copy in an electronic format
2. A short summary of the dissertation's contents emphasizing research goals and methods
3. A curriculum vitae in German or English outlining the applicant's academic career in particular
4. Evidence of participation in doctoral colloquia in keeping with §4 (4)
5. Affirmation of
 - a) whether, when, and how successfully the candidate previously participated in a doctoral examination procedure

b) Whether the work the candidate has submitted or significant part of it has already been used to acquire an academic degree

6. Affirmation that the candidate wrote the dissertation independently and without outside help, did not use any other aids aside from those indicated in the source citations, and identified the sources of quotations or paraphrased passages as such; the Doctoral Committee determines the wording of this declaration

7. A declaration of consent allowing the dissertation or body of writing submitted in lieu of a dissertation to be checked using plagiarism software

(3) The Doctoral Committee shall decide whether to commence the doctoral examination procedure, appoint the reviewers (see § 7), and notify the doctoral candidate that the procedure is to commence. A rejection must be accompanied by an explanation and information about available legal remedies.

(4) The application to commence the doctoral examination procedure can be withdrawn as long as no reviews have been received yet. If the candidate withdraws the application subsequent to this, the doctoral examination procedure is terminated unsuccessfully.

§ 7 Dissertation Reviewers

(1) The Doctoral Committee shall nominate two reviewers who are professors, guest professor, honorary professors, or associate lecturers. In justified cases, the Doctoral Committee may solicit a third report.

(2) Generally, the Doctoral Committee assigns the primary supervisor the duty of writing the first report. The secondary supervisor or another person listed under § 7 (1) is assigned to write the second report.

(3) The Doctoral Committee may also select external reviewers, i.e., professors or associate lecturers belonging to another Faculty or another academic institution or heads of junior research groups.

(4) It is the duty of the reviewers to assess and evaluate the dissertation. The reports must address the evaluation of the research performance and describe the academic advance achieved through the work.

§ 8 Dissertation Grades

(1) An eight-week time period is set for reviewing the dissertation.

(2) Each reviewer shall compose a written report and recommend either to approve the dissertation, return it with requirements for edits, or reject it. When reviewers call for approval, they shall concurrently recommend a grade. The grades are:

- *Summa cum laude* (with distinction)
- *Magna cum laude* (very good)
- *Cum laude* (good)
- *Rite* (satisfactory)

(3) If not all reviewers recommend that the dissertation be approved, the Doctoral Committee shall solicit an additional report and appoint another reviewer. The persons listed under § 7 subsection 1 and subsection 3 are eligible as additional reviewers.

(4) The doctoral candidate shall be made aware of the reports.

(5) The Faculty Commissioner for Doctoral Affairs has the possibility of viewing the dissertation and reports. The objection period shall last at least three weeks. The opportunity to make objections shall be publicized to the Faculty. All professors primarily employed by the faculty, university lecturers, guest professors, and associate lecturers who completed their *Habilitation* at the Faculty have viewing privileges. These groups have the right to submit written statements responding to the dissertation and the reports to Doctoral Committee.

(6) After the end of the objection period as outlined in (5), taking into account the reviews' recommendations and other statements, the Doctoral Committee shall decide whether to approve the dissertation, return it with requirements for edits, or reject it.

(7) If the dissertation is returned to the candidate with requirements for edits, the edits must be made within half a year. The changes made must be documented in an accountable fashion. Subsequently, the Doctoral Committee shall decide whether to approve or reject the dissertation.

(8) If the dissertation is rejected or the requirements for edits have not been satisfied, the doctoral examination procedure is terminated unsuccessfully.

(9) The dean shall inform the candidate in writing whether the dissertation has been approved, returned with requirements for edits, or rejected. A rejection must be accompanied by an explanation and information about available legal remedies.

(10) The submitted copies of the dissertation remain in the Faculty's files even in cases when it is rejected or returned with requirements for edits.

§ 9 Examination Committee

(1) If the dissertation has been approved, the Doctoral Committee shall establish an Examination Committee.

(2) The members of the Examination Committee are members of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Potsdam and either professors, guest professors, honorary professors, or associate lecturers. Upon application by the candidate, external professors may also be appointed as members. The Examination Committee shall be directed by a professor appointed by the Doctoral Committee. The director may not be one of the reviewers. Altogether, its members comprise:

- a) The reviewers
- b) Two other members, including at least one who is not part of the same field as the reviewers in order to guarantee scholarly breadth. For interdisciplinary doctoral studies, the Doctoral Committee must ensure that the members of the Examination Committee represent all involved disciplines.

(3) The task of the Examination Committee is to conduct a defense (*Disputation*) and to assess the overall quality of the dissertation.

§ 10 Defense

- (1) The defense is intended to aid in determining whether the doctoral candidate is capable of justifying or elaborating upon the findings laid out in the dissertation in the face of questions and objections and, on that basis, of discussing them in a scholarly fashion.
- (2) The chair of the Examination Committee shall set the date and time of the oral examination and notify the doctoral candidate and the members of the Examination Committee and the Doctoral Committee.
- (3) The date and time of the defense and the dissertation's topic shall be publicized to the Faculty.
- (4) The defense shall last at least 60 minutes and at most 90 minutes. A transcript of it shall be prepared. To begin with, the doctoral candidate shall be given at least 20 minutes and at most 30 minutes to present his or her findings.
- (5) The defense is open to the university public.

§ 11 Outcome of Examination

- (1) Following the defense, the Examination Committee shall decide by vote whether the candidate shall be granted the doctorate, the defense shall be repeated, or the doctorate shall be denied. The defense can only be repeated once.
- (2) If the candidate will be granted the doctorate, the Examination Committee determines the overall grade of the doctorate, taking into consideration the grades from the dissertation reports.
- (3) The overall grade of the doctorate is subject to § 8 subsection 1 sentence 3. The grade of *summa cum laude* may only be granted if all reports recommend the grade of *summa cum laude* and if the Examination Committee decides this unanimously.
- (4) In the event of a tie in the Examination Committee, the chairperson casts the deciding vote.
- (5) The chair of the Doctoral Committee shall notify the candidate in writing of the decisions of the Examination Committee. If the candidate will not be granted a doctorate according to the decision, if he or she must repeat the defense, or if the doctorate is denied, this decision must be accompanied by an explanation and information about available legal remedies.

§ 12 Publication of the Dissertation

- (1) The dissertation shall be published.
- (2) The following shall be submitted to the Doctoral Committee of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences:
 - a) 30 mandatory copies (book or photographic printing); or
 - b) 10 mandatory copies if a commercial publisher is arranging distribution via the book trade and a minimum print run of 150 copies has been demonstrated;
or
 - c) 4 bound copies on durable paper upon delivery of an electronic version whose file format and storage medium is to be agreed on with the university library. The publication must contain an abstract in German and English. The doctoral candidate shall affirm to the university library of the University of Potsdam that the electronic version is the same as the approved dissertation. The University library assesses the submitted version for readability and conformance with requirements. The submission of files that do not meet the requirements of file format or media, and for which the requisite rights of use for electronic publication have not been granted, does not qualify as publication; or
 - d) Six bound mandatory copies of the published articles if the dissertation has been published in one or more journals
- (3) Within the doctoral examination procedure, there is no obligation to re-publish the individual published papers of a cumulative dissertation. Only those articles that have not yet been published or accepted for publication at the time of the dissertation's approval shall be published.
- (4) The Doctoral Committee may also permit publication in another form.
- (5) If the mandatory copies are not submitted within two years after the oral examination, all rights acquired through the doctoral work expire. The Doctoral Committee can extend the time limit in justified cases upon written application by the candidate.
- (6) The completion of the doctorate is contingent on the delivery and publication of the mandatory copies. In the case of subsection 3 sentence 2, the Doctoral Committee may decide to waive this requirement provided that it is guaranteed that the work will be published and the mandatory copies submitted within an appropriate time period. Subsection 2 applies accordingly.

(7) Upon application and in the presence of a contract to publish the dissertation, the doctoral candidate may receive a preliminary doctor's degree certificate. This allows the bearer to use the title *doctor designatus* (Dr. des.).

§ 13 Conferring the Doctorate

(1) The dean executes the doctorate by delivering the doctor's degree certificate after completion of the doctorate requirement. The day of completing the doctorate is considered to be the day of the successfully performed defense.

(2) The doctor's degree certificate shall include the name, date of birth, title of the dissertation, the overall grade, and the date of completing the doctorate. The certificate shall bear the university seal and be signed by the dean and the president.

(3) Once the doctor's degree certificate has been delivered, the candidate has the right to use the title of doctor.

§ 14 Invalidity of Doctoral Work

(1) If, before the delivery of the doctor's degree certificate, it is determined that the candidate has committed deception in proving the admission requirements or in the doctoral work, or that significant requirements for admission to the doctoral process have been erroneously accepted to be in place, the doctoral work may be declared invalid by a resolution of the Doctoral Committee.

(2) Before a resolution is issued, the candidate shall be given an opportunity to make a statement.

§ 15 Invalidity and Revocation of Doctorate

(1) The doctor's degree can be revoked by a resolution of the Doctoral Committee after there has been an opportunity for statements by the professors, guest professors, honorary professors, and members pursuing their *Habilitation* at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences.

The doctor's degree may be revoked if:

- a) The doctor has been convicted of a crime that was committed by abusing the doctor's degree; or
- b) The doctor's degree was acquired through deception or significant requirements for its conferral were accepted erroneously.

(2) Before a resolution is made, the president shall be heard and the representative for safeguarding good scholarly practice at the University of Potsdam shall be notified. The doctor shall be given an opportunity to make a statement.

(3) The Doctoral Committee shall decide by a majority of votes from the members present. In the event of a tie, the chairperson of the Doctoral Committee casts the deciding vote.

§ 16 Honorary Doctorates

(1) The Faculty of Science can award the degree and dignity of the honorary degree of Doctor of Economics and Social Sciences (Dr. rer. pol. h.c.) in recognition of special achievements in economics and social sciences.

(2) Upon a request by a professor whose primary occupation is at the Faculty, the Faculty Council shall form a commission to evaluate the scientific achievements of the potential honoree. The commission shall consist of the dean, five other members who are university lecturers at the Faculty, one academic employee, and one student. The members of the Doctoral Committee must be notified of the formation of the commission. Upon their own application, every member of the Doctoral Committee may join this commission.

(3) A proposal to award the honorary doctorate requires a resolution by the commission members. Once a proposal by the commission is in place, the extended Faculty Council shall make a decision. The decision to award an honorary doctorate requires a two-thirds majority of voting members of the Faculty Council.

(4) The awarding of an honorary doctorate is completed with the handover of a certificate emphasizing the achievements of the honoree. The certificate shall bear the university seal and be signed by the president and the dean.

§ 17 Access to the Doctoral File

Within one year after the conclusion of the doctoral examination procedure, the candidate has the right to view all doctoral documents.

§ 18 Application; Transitional Provisions

These Regulations for Doctoral Degree Studies take effect on the day of their publication in the Official Public Notices of the University of Potsdam. The Regulations for Doctoral Degree Studies of 27 August 2002 (AmBek No. 2/2003), as modified by the amendments of 29 February 2012 and 20 June 2012, expire when these Regulations for Doctoral Degree Studies take effect.

They continue to apply for doctoral examination procedures that began before these Regulations took effect unless the doctoral candidate declares to the Doctoral Committee, within one year after they take effect, that his or her doctoral degree shall be subject.