



Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee Bylaws Supplementing the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences Doctoral Degree Regulations dated 1 December 2010

On 09 February 2017 the Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee adopted the following by-laws in conformity with the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences Doctoral Degree Regulations:

Section 3 Admission requirements

Subsection 1

An application for admission must be submitted before work is started on the proposed dissertation.

Subsection 3 (“fast track”)

In order to be admitted to a doctoral degree program under a so-called fast track program, candidates must have been awarded a bachelor's degree and earned an overall grade of 1.30 or better, whereby no module must have been completed with a grade of less than 1.70. A topic-related assessment test given to a candidate shall last 30 minutes. A study plan shall be created by the candidate and the supervisor in cooperation with the Biology Academic Office, which must be approved by the departmental doctoral committee.

Section 4 Admission procedure

The application for admission to the doctoral degree program must be submitted using the corresponding application forms found on the Department's website. Additionally, the curriculum vitae form from the website must be used. The supervision agreement executed by the doctoral candidate and supervisor of the doctoral project must be submitted with the application.

The application for admission together with the commensurate supporting documents must be submitted (in person or by mail) to the Academic Office in the Department of Biology (henceforth Biology Academic Office).

In cases where time is of the essence (with respect to visas, scholarships and grants, and enrollment without interruption in the transition from a master's degree program to a doctoral degree program), the chair of the departmental doctoral committee may decide to admit a candidate to a doctoral degree program. Any such decision shall be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee after the fact.

Subsection 5

After the expiry of the 4-year admission period, an annual letter has to be sent to the Specialist Doctoral Committee to briefly explain why an extension is requested for a further year to conclude the doctorate.

Section 6 Supervision

a) Generally (Section 6 subsection 3)

Doctoral projects in the Department of Biology are generally supervised by professors and members of the departmental faculty that have completed a *Habilitation* (postdoctoral qualification). If a doctoral project is being co-supervised, then any co-supervisor must be indicated when the application for admission to the doctoral degree program is submitted.

b) Authorization of other supervisors (Section 6 subsection 4)

Upon request, faculty members from other departments or faculties as well as non-university research institutions may be authorized to supervise doctoral candidates on a recurring or non-recurring basis.

c) Postdoctoral researchers

In justified individual cases, researchers holding a doctoral degree may be authorized to act as examiners for the written evaluation of a dissertation. They must qualify as follows:

- They must have completed their own doctoral studies at least five years earlier (proven with a doctoral degree).
- They must have published at least eight peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals related to the topic of the dissertation to be supervised (four of which as the first/lead author).
- They must have supervised at least three graduate theses (*Diplomarbeiten*, master's theses, doctoral dissertations). A principal supervisor must confirm in writing co-supervision of a thesis.
- They must provide two references (including email and phone number).

Doctoral candidates must submit all required documents together with their applications for admission to a doctoral degree as well as providing electronic copies thereof to the Biology Academic Office. The latter is intended to accelerate admission procedures.

d) Supervisors under fixed-term employment agreements

For doctoral proceedings where the supervisor is employed under a fixed-term employment agreement (e.g., junior professors), a permanently employed person is required as a second supervisor. This is designed to ensure the smooth continuation of doctoral proceedings if the first supervisor should not be able to supervise the doctorate to its conclusion prior to the end of any fixed term of employment. This second supervisor must be indicated on the top of page 3 of the application for admission to the doctoral degree program.

e) External doctoral projects

A faculty member of the Department of Biology must co-supervise doctoral degree proceedings where the primary supervisor is not a faculty member of the Department of Biology or has been authorized to supervise in accordance with b). The supervisor who is a faculty member in the Department of Biology must be specified in the application for admission.

f) Supervision agreement (Section 6 subsection 6)

Provisions for supervision agreements as well as drafting suggestions provided in the corresponding sample from the departmental doctoral committee can be found at <http://www.uni-hamburg.de/biologie/promotion.html>.

In cases where time is of the essence (with respect to visas, scholarships and grants, and enrollment without interruption in the transition from a master's degree program to a doctoral degree program), the chair of the departmental doctoral committee may appoint the supervisor or the panel of supervisors. Any such decision shall be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee after the fact.

Section 7 subsection 2 Dissertation

1) Form

“a) A dissertation comprised of a single coherent description of research work and results. If unpublished papers form part of the dissertation, the student must indicate his or her specific contribution. Please see the criteria in b) for properly indicating original work.

or

b) a cumulative dissertation comprised of individual papers, which collectively are equivalent to a dissertation pursuant to letter a).” (Section 7 Doctoral Degree Regulations) In accordance with the Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee Bylaws, a cumulative dissertation must contain at least two peer-reviewed publications accepted by scientific journals in which the doctoral student is the first/lead author for at least one of the two publications. For each publication, the doctoral student must separately indicate in detail his or her contribution to the publication, which must be affirmed by the supervisor with his or her signature. In particular, it is important here to address project planning, the execution of experiments (which experiments were conducted by the student), the evaluation of the data, and the composition of the first draft of the manuscript. Non-published data or data not intended for publication may be appended as an additional chapter of the cumulative dissertation in a form suitable for scientific publication. The doctoral student must provide an introduction of the scientific interrelationship (at least 10 pages) and discuss all chapters in a conclusion (at least 15 pages).

There are no specifications prescribed for font sizes, font types, margins, structure, etc.

2) Language

The dissertation may be written in either English or German. An informal request must be submitted to the departmental doctoral committee if another language other than the two specified

above will be used. A native speaker (of the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, or Ireland) must confirm the linguistic accuracy of a dissertation if it appears as a monograph in English.

3) Submission of the dissertation

Three bound copies (no spiral binding) and a CD-ROM (dissertation in PDF format) must be submitted.

Section 8 subsections 1 and 2 Examination commission

The majority of the members of the examination commission should be faculty members from the Department of Biology. The departmental doctoral committee is responsible for ensuring that the examination commission has a well-balanced composition. Wherever possible, commission members should come from different working groups or fields and, where required, an additional member should be appointed or a proposed member substituted. The majority of the members of the examination commission should not be comprised of examiners (*Gutachter*) of the dissertation.

Section 11 subsection 2 Oral defense

Oral defenses only take place in the centers of the Department Biology (Biocenter Klein Flottbek, Biocenter Grindel, Center Wood Science, IHF). In urgent cases the chairperson of the departmental doctoral committee may substitute examination commission members if compelling reasons prevent a member from attending the oral defense (and through such absence the oral defense would have to be postponed). Any such decision shall be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee after the fact.

The doctoral student's presentation and subsequent questioning and oral defense shall last approximately 60 minutes.

All votes and resolutions may be adopted upon written consent, provided, however, that no member objects. If one member objects, the procedure shall be considered invalid. The adoption of resolutions by written consent shall occur either upon the proposed resolution being supplied in writing to all members one after another (circulation procedure) or simultaneously with the request to consent. Non-responses shall not be taken into account. The same rules shall apply as during meetings. Email responses shall be documented in the minutes.

If cases of changing the chairperson of the departmental doctoral committee the previous chairperson should become the substitute of the current chairperson.