



**The Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee Bylaws Dated 14 February 2020 with amendments dated 25 November 2020, effective as of 16 March 2020 and amendments dated 29 October 2021, effective as of 20 October 2021 Supplementing the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences Doctoral Degree Regulations Dated 02 May 2018**

**This English version of The Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee Bylaws Dated 14 February 2020 with amendments dated 25 November 2020, effective as of 16 March 2020 and amendments dated 29 October 2021, effective as of 20 October 2021, Supplementing the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences Doctoral Degree Regulations Dated 2 May 2018 is for information only and is not legally binding.**

The Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee adopted the following bylaws Dated 14 February 2020 with amendments dated on 25 November 2020 and 29 October 2021 to supplement the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences Doctoral Degree Regulations Dated 2 May 2018.

## **Section 2 Doctoral committees**

### **Subsection 4**

Responsibilities that can be performed by the chair in the interest of the expeditious completion of doctoral studies and that were not dealt with accordingly in the Doctoral Degree Regulations shall be regulated in the following sections of the bylaws.

Section 5 subsection 3

Section 7 subsection 2

Section 9 subsection 3

Section 10 subsections 4 and 6

Section 12 subsection 2

## **Section 3 Supervisors, assessors, and examination commission members**

Researchers from the groups of persons set forth in Section 3e) may, where applicable, be granted special status by the office of the dean upon the submission of an application and nomination by the departmental doctoral committee and may be appointed as supervisors pursuant

to Section 3e) in justified exceptional cases. This special status shall only be granted by the office of the dean provided that the following conditions are satisfied:

The applicants from the group of persons set forth in Section 3e) nominated by the Department of Biology's doctoral committee must demonstrably have at least the following:

- 1) Adequately fulfilled all of their teaching obligations
- 2) Indicated Universität Hamburg as one of their affiliations in their publications

These conditions must be (able to be) substantiated immediately as well as in the future.

Upon application, researchers from the groups of persons set forth in Sections 3h), i), k), and l) may be appointed as co-supervisors, assessors, and as members of examination commissions.

For the groups of persons specified in i), k), and l), the following conditions shall apply with respect to an appointment:

- They must have completed their own doctoral studies at least five years prior (doctoral diploma must be submitted as proof).
- 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, or doctoral dissertations). A principal supervisor must confirm in writing a co-supervision of a thesis.
- Two references (including email and phone number) must be provided.

Applications and supporting documents are to be electronically submitted to the Academic Office—(curriculum vitae, most recent diploma, list of publications, list of graduate theses supervised—the following does not apply to the group of persons set forth in Section 3h), university teachers, and members of other faculties of Universität Hamburg who have completed a *Habilitation* (postdoctoral qualification)—and two references with telephone numbers and email addresses).

## **Section 4 Admission requirements**

### **Subsection 1**

An admission application must be submitted before work is started on the proposed doctoral dissertation. Late applications will be rejected. A subsequent case-by-case review by the departmental doctoral committee is possible.

### **Subsection 3 (fast track)**

In order to be admitted to a doctoral degree program under a 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 may have been completed with a grade of less than 1.70. The topic-related assessment of the candidate shall last thirty minutes. The departmental doctoral committee shall appoint the examiners for the assessment. A study plan shall be created by the candidate and the supervisor in cooperation with the Department of Biology's academic office and must be approved by the departmental doctoral committee.

## **Section 5 Admission procedure**

### **Subsections 1 and 2**

The admission application to the doctoral degree program must be submitted using the corresponding application forms found on the department's website. The supervision agreement between the doctoral researcher and supervisor of the doctoral project must be submitted with the application.

The admission application and commensurate supporting documents must be submitted (in person or by mail) to the Department of Biology's academic office.

Provisions for supervision agreements as well as drafting suggestions provided in the corresponding sample forms from the departmental doctoral committee can be found on the Department of Biology's website for doctoral degree programs.

### **Subsection 3**

In urgent cases (with respect to visas, scholarships, and enrollment without interruption in the transition from a master's degree 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**

If the candidate needs to request an extension of the four-year admission period, they must inform the departmental doctoral committee briefly in an informal letter at least three months before the deadline as to why they are requesting an extension for the completion of the doctorate. The same applies to any possible subsequent applications. A maximum extension of one year is permissible per application.

## **Section 7 Supervision**

### **Subsection 2**

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

### **Subsection 3—Standard case**

Doctoral projects in the Department of Biology are generally supervised by full-time university teachers and members of the departmental faculty who have completed a *Habilitation* (postdoctoral qualification). If a doctoral project is being co-supervised, then any co-supervisor must be indicated when the admission application to the doctoral degree program is submitted. Doctoral procedures in which the supervisor is not a faculty member in the Department of Biology must be supervised by a researcher who belongs to the group of persons set forth in Section 3a and is a faculty member in the Department of Biology. The supervisor who is a faculty member in the Department of Biology must be specified in the admission application.

If the requested supervisor belongs to the group of persons set forth in Section 3d or Section 3e and has not been appointed by the MIN Faculty in accordance with Section 17 subsection 1 of the Hamburg higher education act (Hamburgisches Hochschulgesetz, HmbHG), an informal application for an "Extraordinary case of supervision" setting forth the reasons therefor must be submitted to the departmental doctoral committee. The application must be accompanied by a current curriculum vitae and a current list of publications.

In this exceptional case, co-supervision must be undertaken by a person from the Department of Biology set forth in Section 3a.

### **Subsection 5**

Statutory maternity leave and parental leave must be reported in writing (email or letter) to the departmental doctoral committee through the Department of Biology's academic office. In due course following the birth, the child's birth certificate may be submitted as adequate proof for leave.

### **Subsection 7—Untenured supervisors**

In doctoral procedures in which the supervisor has an untenured position (e.g., junior professors), a full-time co-supervisor is required in accordance with Section 3a). This person should assume

supervision in the event of the principal supervisor's departure, thereby ensuring the continuation of the procedure. They must be named in the admission application to the doctoral procedure under the supervisory commitment.

## **Section 8 Dissertation**

### **Subsection 2**

#### 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 doctoral researcher must indicate their specific contribution. Please see the criteria in b) for properly indicating original work.

or

b) A dissertation by publication comprised of individual papers that collectively are equivalent to a dissertation pursuant to letter a).” (Section 8 Doctoral Degree Regulations) In accordance with the Department of Biology's Doctoral Committee Bylaws, a dissertation by publication must contain at least two peer-reviewed publications accepted by scientific journals in which the doctoral researcher is the first/lead author for at least one of the two publications. For each publication, the doctoral researcher must separately indicate in detail their contribution to the publication, which must be affirmed through the signature of the supervisor. In particular, it is important here to address project planning, the execution of experiments (which experiments were conducted by the candidate), 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 dissertation by publication in a form suitable for scientific publication. The doctoral researcher 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, or other matters of formatting.

#### 2) Language

The dissertation may be written in either English or German. If you wish to use another language other than the two specified, you must submit an informal request to the departmental doctoral committee.

3) On submission: Dissertations must be submitted as follows:

1 printed copy (without CD)

1 PDF in Docata (must be uploaded when submitting the proposal)

1 e-mail with the dissertation (PDF or link to an attachment tool with the PDF) to the Academic Office of the Department of Biology (for further processing).

The reviews are requested digitally after the reviewers have been appointed.

### **Subsection 7**

The application for measures associated with compensation for disadvantages must be accompanied by a letter that includes recommendations for compensation measures from the student disability coordinator / student disability representative pursuant to Section 88 HmbHG.

## **Section 9 Examination commission**

### **Subsections 1 and 2**

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 is well balanced. 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 dissertation assessors.

### **Subsection 3**

In urgent cases, the chair of the departmental doctoral committee may decide on changes in the composition of the examination commission. Any such decision shall be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee after the fact.

## **Section 10**

### **Subsections 4 and 6**

In urgent cases, the chair of the departmental doctoral committee may appoint an additional assessor. Any such decision shall be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee after the fact.

### **Subsection 8**

The patent law protection of the assessments from access must be communicated to the departmental doctoral committee in a letter signed by the supervisor and the doctoral researcher. The

letter must be submitted to the academic office. Pursuant to Section 10 subsection 8, the dissertation will be available to the University public one week before the date of the oral defense, unless, for example, this would be explicitly precluded by patent law.

## **Section 12 Oral defense**

### **Subsection 1 (last sentence) and subsection 2**

Oral defenses in the Department of Biology shall take place at one of its institutes: the Institute of Plant Sciences and Microbiology (IPM), Institute of Zoology (IZ), Institute of Wood Sciences (IHW), or Institute of Marine Ecosystem and Fisheries Science (IMF). In urgent cases, the chair 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 defense and round of questioning subsequent to the doctoral researcher's presentation shall have a duration of approximately 60 minutes.

### **Subsection 6**

The application for measures associated with compensation for disadvantages with respect to the oral defense must be accompanied by a letter that includes recommendations for oral defense compensation measures from the student disability coordinator / student disability representative pursuant to Section 88 HmbHG. The application must be submitted together with the application to commence the doctoral examination procedure.

## **Section 14**

### **Subsection 1**

The doctoral researcher is responsible for applying for any retention period. The doctoral researcher shall inform the departmental doctoral committee about the duration of any retention period through a letter signed by both the supervisor and the doctoral researcher. The letter must be submitted to the academic office. The same shall apply to any application for the extension of any retention period. An application for a retention period with respect to the state library and the departmental library must be submitted separately.

### **Subsection 3**

The request should be made verbally at the oral defense and included in the record of the oral defense specifying by name the person who must approve the changes.

