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Goethe-Universität | Frankfurt am Main

Satzungen und Ordnungen

General Conditions for the Doctoral Regulations of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main

Approved by resolution of the Presidium of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main on 27 November 2012

English translation for information purposes only. In the event of any conflict between the English and the German version of the General Conditions for the Doctoral Regulations of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, the German version shall prevail.

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Section 1 Doctorate and purpose of doctoral study

- (1) The following academic degrees are awarded at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main by the responsible faculties:

Doctor iuris (Dr. iur.),
Doctor rerum naturalium (Dr. rer. nat.),
Doctor rerum politicarum (Dr. rer. pol.),
Doctor philosophiae (Dr. phil.) or Philosophiae Doctor (PhD),
Doctor philosophiae naturalis (Dr. phil. nat.),
Doctor theologiae (Dr. theol.),
Doctor medicinae (Dr. med.),
Doctor rerum medicinalium (Dr. rer. med.),
Doctor medicinae dentariae (Dr. med. dent.).

The doctoral regulations of the faculties regulate further details.

- (2) A specific academic qualification is documented by the doctorate. The evidence of the specific academic qualification is provided by a dissertation and a verbal examination in the form of a defence. The principles of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and of the university must be observed in the doctoral process in order to guarantee academic practice.

Section 2 The doctoral committee

- (1) Each faculty shall form a doctoral committee for its area of responsibility, which shall be responsible for managing and implementing the doctorate. Several faculties can form a Joint Office. Details are governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations. Paragraph 5 shall remain unaffected hereby.
- (2) The doctoral committee is responsible, in particular, for the following decisions regarding
- a) Admission as doctoral candidate (Sections 5, 6),
 - b) Opening the examination procedure (Section 8),
 - c) Appointment of evaluators (Section 9 para. 4),
 - d) Forming the examination committee (Section 11).
- (3) The doctoral committee can delegate its tasks in part or in full to the chair, unless specified otherwise in these regulations. Details shall be governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations. The doctoral committee can be convened against decisions by the chair.
- (4) The doctoral committee shall at least comprise:
- a) Three members from the group of professors,
 - b) One member from the group of academic employees,
 - c) One member from the group of students, who must at least be in the main study phase, on a Master's course or doctoral course.

The group of professors must form the majority group. The members are selected by the Faculty Board upon recommendation from the groups, insofar as they are not members on the basis of their office (members of the Deanery). The members from the group of professors and the group of academic employees are selected for at least two years, the student for at least one year. A deputy must be selected for each member. The chair of the committee should typically be a member of the Deanery, who must be a professor as defined in Section 62 HHG.

- (5) Several faculties can form a joint doctoral committee. The provisions of para. 4 shall apply correspondingly to the joint doctoral committee with the following condition:
- a) The chair of the doctoral committee shall alternative between the members of the Deanery of the participating faculties or their deputies according to the cycle of their tenure. The faculties can include other provisions in their doctoral regulations.
 - b) The responsible members of the doctoral committee are appointed by the Faculty Boards of the participating faculties. The number of members and the process of their appointment shall be governed in the doctoral regulations.

- (6) The doctoral committee passes its resolutions by a majority of the people present. Decisions by the doctoral committee relating to the appointment of evaluators and to the examination committee, as well as relating to the supervision of doctoral candidates, require the majority of professors on the committee in addition to a majority of those present. Moreover, Section 11 para. 4 sent. 4 shall apply correspondingly.
- (7) Each negative decision must be justified and promulgated with information regarding the right of appeal.

Section 3 Requirements for doctoral study

- (1) Admission to the doctoral programme typically requires the following:
 - a) A completed university degree with a standard study period of at least eight semesters (diploma, Magister, state exam) in a relevant subject, or
 - b) A Master's degree in a relevant subject.
- (2) In conjunction with a separate suitability assessment, applicants can also be admitted to the doctoral programme, who
 - a) Completed a university degree in a subject other than those named in the conditions of the faculty awarding the doctorate, or
 - b) Completed a university degree in less than eight semesters, or
 - c) Completed a technical university degree (Master's, Diploma).

The suitability assessment process shall be governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations. It serves to determine whether an applicant is able to carry out independent academic work within the framework of a doctorate. The suitability assessment process can require examinations to be passed and attendance at specific lectures in the corresponding Master's course or courses or equivalent courses. The duration of the suitability assessment process typically should not exceed two semesters and 60 CP. To this end, applicants can enrol in the corresponding Master's course or courses or in equivalent courses, insofar as the requirements for admission to the Master's course or courses or equivalent courses are met.

- (3) The doctoral regulations of the individual faculties can also include other admission requirements. These include, in particular:
 - a) Evidence of a qualifying degree,
 - b) Evidence of successful participation in lectures or individual supplemental examinations.
- (4) Applicants cannot be admitted to the doctoral programme if they
 - a) Already have a doctorate corresponding to that desired,
 - b) Are guilty of deception or attempted deception in conjunction with the admission requirements;
- (5) The doctoral committee shall decide on the recognition of foreign degrees; additionally, equivalence agreements approved by the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs Conference and the University Rectors' Conference have to be observed.

Section 4 Doctoral study course

The doctoral regulations of the faculties can include regulations on a doctoral study course.

Section 5 Admission as doctoral candidate

- (1) Evidence of the requirements stated in Section 3 is typically required for admission as a doctoral candidate.
- (2) Before applying for admission as a doctoral candidate, the applicant shall seek a subject for the dissertation.
- (3) If possible the doctoral candidate shall be supervised during completion of the dissertation. In the case of supervision, a supervision contract can be concluded between doctoral candidate and supervisor. The working title is specified by mutual consent with the planned supervisor. The following can be supervisors:

- a) Professors,
- b) Emeritus or retired professors,
- c) Honorary professors,
- d) Non-scheduled professors,
- e) Private lecturers,
- f) Junior professors,
- g) Qualified university teachers employed in teaching and research in the faculty,
- h) Academics with a doctorate, who have proved themselves through particular academic performance (e.g. Emmy Noether Fellows and other junior research group leaders, whose performance has been evaluated in a peer review process),
- i) Academics holding a doctorate for at least three years and who have acquired the doctoral position in a peer review and competitive process.

For the supervision of doctoral candidates by academics according to letters h) and i) a second supervisor must be appointed within the framework of the supervision, who meets the professorial requirements according to Section 62 HHG.

- 4) The first supervisor shall give the doctoral candidate the possibility to meet with academics, shall support attendance at conferences, facilitate the development of (inter)national networks and support them in publishing their research results. The doctoral committee can restrict the number of supervised students (number of candidates per supervisor).

Section 6 Admission process

- (1) The application for admission as a doctoral candidate must be sent to the chair of the doctoral committee.
- (2) The application must at least include:
 - a) The documents required to prove fulfilment of the doctoral requirements according to Section 3;
 - b) Description of the provisional working title and a briefly summarised work programme, if required in the doctoral committee's regulatory conditions,
 - c) A written declaration regarding previous doctoral processes,
 - d) A written declaration stating if and, where applicable, by whom the work on the dissertation is being or to be supervised,
 - e) A written declaration of compliance with the principles of scientific practice,
 - f) An opinion by the supervisor concerning the working title.
- (3) The doctoral committee shall decide on the admission of the applicant as a doctoral candidate. The decision should be made within three months of the application and shall be immediately notified to the applicant in writing.
- (4) The application to become a doctoral candidate shall be rejected if the doctoral committee finds that
 - a) The requirements of Section 3 are not met. (The provisions of Section 5 para. 1 are unaffected), or
 - b) No professor of the respective faculty or faculties is responsible for the subject; in case of doubt, the doctoral committee shall decide after interviewing the potential professors and the Faculty Board;
 - c) The applicant has attempted a doctorate in the respective subject more than once, without success.

Section 7 Effect of admission

- (1) Upon admission, the applicant shall be awarded the status of doctoral candidate; each doctoral candidate shall be enrolled if possible in the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main. The status of doctoral candidate obliges the doctoral committee to guarantee the implementation of the doctoral process and the Faculty to make its research resources available to the doctoral candidate if possible.

- (2) The doctoral committee holds a list of subjects approved by it, including a register containing in particular the name of the doctoral candidate, date of admission, name of the supervisor and the duration of the doctoral process. Upon request from the doctoral candidate, the supervisor or the chair of the doctoral committee, the doctoral committee can evaluate the continuation of the work by interviewing the relevant person. If there is no prospect of a successful completion of the dissertation after the doctoral committee has set a reasonable deadline for the work, the doctoral committee shall end the doctoral candidate relationship. This shall be notified to the doctoral candidate in writing. The subject being worked on by the doctoral candidate shall be deleted from the list of dissertation subjects.
- (3) Upon request from the doctoral candidate, the supervisor or the chair of the doctoral committee, the doctoral committee can approve a change in the supervision relationship work by interviewing all participants.

Section 8 **Application for introduction of the examination process**

- (1) Candidates, who fulfil the doctoral requirements according to Section 3 can apply for the examination process to be started with submission of a dissertation to the chair of the doctoral committee.
- (2) The application must include:
 - a) The subject of the dissertation and the name of the supervising subject representative,
 - b) The name of the subject representative recommended by the applicant as evaluator of the dissertation.
- (3) The application must at least include:
 - a) A CV with a representation of the studies and educational career;
 - b) The documents necessary to prove the doctoral requirements according to Section 3, insofar as they have not already been submitted upon admission as a doctoral candidate;
 - c) The dissertation; the number of copies to be submitted shall be specified by the individual doctoral regulations,
 - d) A written declaration that the applicant wrote the dissertation themselves and has cited all resources used in the dissertation,
 - e) A written declaration from the candidate that they have not used the services of a commercial doctoral agency,
 - f) A written declaration regarding previous doctoral processes,
 - g) If applicable, a written declaration that primary data is recorded in an anonymised condition and is available for 10 years,
 - h) If applicable, a list of academic works already published,
 - i) Evidence that the doctoral fees have been paid,
 - j) If applicable, evidence of the work required within the framework of the doctoral study.
- (4) The start of the examination process can only be rejected if
 - a) No professor is responsible for the subject; in case of doubt, the doctoral committee shall decide after interviewing the potential professors and the Faculty Board;
 - b) The candidate has not submitted all the documents required, or
 - c) The requirements of Section 3 or Section 8 para. 2 and 3 are not met.
 - d) The candidate is guilty of deception, in particular in conjunction with the licensing requirements or even the dissertation.
 - e) The candidate has attempted the doctorate in the respective subject more than once without success; or
 - f) The candidate has already successfully submitted the same dissertation in another doctoral subject or at another university.

The date by when the application can be withdrawn, shall be governed in the individual doctoral regulations. It is no longer possible to withdraw the application once an evaluation has been received by the doctoral committee.

Section 9 Dissertation

- (1) The candidate must submit a dissertation, which satisfies academic requirements and contributes to the development of academic knowledge. It must be independent work by the candidate. If the dissertation is developed from joint research work, the individual work of the applicant must be clearly differentiable and evaluable. The individual contribution as such must satisfy the requirements for a dissertation.
- (2) The dissertation can be published in part or in full in advance.
- (3) The dissertation typically has to be written in German or English. Apart from the paper form, the dissertation must be submitted for evaluation purposes in a suitable, readable electronic form. The doctoral committee can permit the candidate to submit a dissertation written in another language if this is materially justified and organisationally possible and the evaluators consent to this. In this case, a summary in German is required.
- (4) The doctoral committee shall appoint two evaluators, one of whom should typically be the supervisor. The approved supervisors listed in Section 5 para. 3 a) to i) are possible evaluators. One of the evaluators must be a member of the faculty awarding the doctorate. The other evaluator can come from another faculty, another even foreign university or technical university or non-university research institution. The evaluations should be prepared independently from each other. The doctoral committee can appoint up to two additional evaluators in justified cases. The process shall be governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations.
- (5) The evaluators shall evaluate a dissertation according to the grades specified in Section 14 para. 2. The evaluations should be submitted within the deadline set by the individual doctoral regulations – typically not more than three months. The right of inspection for all supervising persons as defined in Section 5 para. 3 a – f, who are members of the Faculty and those, to whom the relevant doctoral regulations apply, and well as to the evaluators, should be guaranteed through a temporary display of the dissertation and evaluations and the advance notification of same. The process shall be governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations.
- (6) By mutual consent with the evaluators or the candidate, the doctoral committee can return the dissertation for revision before the final evaluation.
- (7) If all evaluators recommend rejection ("non rite"), the examination committee shall declare the examination to have been failed. If two evaluators recommend rejection, a third evaluation shall be appointed by the doctoral committee. The examination committee evaluates the dissertation on the basis of the evaluations and after examining any objections and opinions submitted; if applicable the examination committee can ask the doctoral committee to order additional evaluations.

Section 10 Cumulative dissertation

In their doctoral regulations or also their regulatory conditions the faculties can specify that the dissertation can be submitted in the form of a series of specialist publications (cumulative dissertation). The individual work by the candidate must be clearly identifiable and evaluable and must be marked by the candidate. Section 9 shall apply correspondingly.

Section 11 Examination committee

- (1) The examination committee shall decide on the doctoral candidate's performance. It is appointed by the doctoral committee. The chair shall be appointed at the same time.
- (2) The examination committee typically comprises the evaluators (Section 9 para. 4) and another professor from the faculty awarding the doctorate. The faculties can envisage other authorised examiners in the doctoral regulations, provided they are members of the faculty. The members of the examination committee, who belong to the faculty awarding the doctorate, should have the majority in the committee. The special regulations in Section 20 apply in the case of a cooperative doctorate or binational doctorate.
- (3) The dissertation and the evaluators' opinions, and any responses and objections, must be made available to the members of the examination committee.
- (4) The examination committee shall consult and decide in closed session. Decisions shall be passed by a majority of the votes of the members present. A secret vote and abstentions in examination matters are excluded. If a member of the examination committee cannot participate in the examination for good reason, the doctoral committee shall appoint another examiner.

Section 12 Admission to defence

The candidate can only be admitted to defend their dissertation if their dissertation has been accepted.

Section 13 Defence

- (1) The candidate shall defend their own dissertation before the examination committee in a public defence. With unanimous written consent from the examination committee, the defence can also be in English or other language. The defence can also cover selected problems of the subject of adjacent areas. The evaluations can be included in the defence.
- (2) The doctoral regulations of the individual faculties shall govern the duration of the defence.
- (3) The chair of the examination committee shall chair the defence. They can allow questions from the general public.
- (4) A report shall be prepared regarding the defence, which must include the names of the members of the examination committee, the duration of the examination, an overview of the objects of the defence and the grades.
- (5) The examination committee shall evaluate a dissertation according to the grades specified in Section 14 para. 2.

Section 14 Decision regarding the performance

- (1) The examination committee evaluates the dissertation and the defence. The grade for the dissertation is determined on the basis of the evaluations. The weighting of the two grades shall be governed in the faculties' doctoral regulations.

- (2) The grades are:

summa cum laude	with distinction (0)
magna cum laude	very good (1)
cum laude	good (2)
rite	satisfactory (3)
non rite	insufficient (4)

The numbers merely serve as the basis for the calculation and are not included in the doctorate certificate. If the calculation of the average grade results in fractions, values up to and including 0.50 shall score the better grade, irrespective of the conditions for "summa cum laude".

- (3) The grade "summa cum laude" should typically only be awarded if the dissertation and defence have been unanimously awarded the grade "summa cum laude" by the evaluators or examiners. The doctoral regulations of the faculties can specify other quality criteria and an additional evaluation for this grade.
- (4) The candidate can only be graduated if the dissertation and the defence have both been graded at least as "sufficient" (3.0). If the requirements are not met, the examination committee shall declare the defence failed. A single repeat of the defence is possible upon request.

Section 15 Publication, mandatory copies

- (1) The dissertation has to be published in a version approved by the faculty as a book, magazine submission, article in a collection, a reproduced manuscript or in electronic form. If applicable, the publication can be with other academics involved in the research work.
- (2) In addition to the copies required for the faculty's examination files, the author shall provide the university library with free mandatory copies. The following formats are permitted:
 - a) Publication as online document on a server of the university library, or
 - b) 4 bound printed copies on acid-free, non-ageing paper (according to DIN ISO 9706) in A4 format or A5 format with simple adhesive binding (no spring binders, no spiral binding).
 - c) 3 copies, if published in a journal, or

- d) 3 copies, if a commercial or academic publisher carries out the distribution via book shops and a minimum print run of 150 copies is documented, or
- e) 5 bound printed copies on acid-free, non-ageing paper (according to DIN ISO 9706) in A4 format or A5 format with simple adhesive binding (no spring binders, no spiral binding) for distribution in exchange of dissertations between libraries, or
- f) 5 CD-ROM or 4 bound printed copies on acid-free, non-ageing paper (according to DIN ISO 9706) in A4 format or A5 format with simple adhesive binding (no spring binders, no spiral binding).

For a), the doctoral candidate shall transfer to the university the non-exclusive right to produce additional copies of the respective electronic versions of the dissertation and to distribute a summary approved by the first evaluator (abstract) of the dissertation of not more than one page for purposes of publication.

It is incumbent upon the faculty to distribute the mandatory copies.

- (3) The faculties can specify separate regulations regarding publication of the dissertation.

Section 16 Awarding the degree of doctor

After the dissertation has been published as described in Section 15 or equivalent evidence has been provided, the doctoral candidate shall be presented with the doctorate certificate by the Dean. The doctorate certificate shall state the date of the defence, which is deemed to be the date of the doctorate. It shall include the seal and the signatures of the Dean. The doctoral regulations can specify that the doctorate certificate is also issued in a certified English translation.

Section 17 Withdrawal of title

- (1) The doctoral committee must withdraw the title if
 - a) The title has been obtained by the doctoral candidate through deception, or
 - b) Old or new facts become known after the award, which would have precluded its award.
- (2) The withdrawal shall be based on Sections 48 et.seq. HVwVfG. Before the decision by the doctoral committee regarding the refusal or withdrawal of the doctorate, the affected person shall have the opportunity to respond to the accusations.

Section 18 Doctoral fees

The faculties can charge doctoral fees. The doctoral regulations of the faculties regulate further details.

Section 19 Honorary doctorate

- (1) The faculties can award honorary doctorates for extraordinary academic work in their faculty. The degree of honorary doctor is given the suffix "h. c." after the respective degree according to Section 1 para. 1.
- (2) The honorary doctorate must be applied for to the Faculty Board by at least two professors and justified in writing. The start of the process requires the consent of the Faculty Board. If the Faculty Board consents to the application with a 2/3 majority of the authorised voters present, it shall then appoint two external evaluators.
- (3) The honorary doctorate is awarded by the Dean of the faculty presenting the doctorate certificate.

Section 20 Cooperative and binational doctorates

- (1) The faculties' doctoral regulations can govern the implementation of a joint doctoral process with another research institute (cooperative doctorate) on the basis of an individual cooperation agreement. This can also refer to binational doctorates. Possible research institutes of a cooperative doctorate are:

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- a) Technical universities, or
 - b) Foreign universities, or
 - c) Non-university research institutions.
- (2) The persons named in Section 5 para. 3 a – i are possible supervisors for a cooperative doctorate, as well as persons with equivalent academic qualifications. One of the supervisors must be a member of the faculty awarding the doctorate. The other can come from a technical university, a foreign university or a non-university research institution.
- (3) The candidate for a cooperative doctorate must fulfil the admission requirements both of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main and the admission requirements of the participating research institution.
- (4) A doctorate certificate is issued after successful completion of a cooperative doctoral process. In the case of a cooperative doctorate as defined in para. 1 b, it shall receive the signatures and seals of both universities; additionally, the certificate shall state that the degree awarded is a joint doctorate. In the case of a cooperative doctorate as defined in para. 1 a and c, the certificate can include the following additional information for the participating cooperation partner:
- "The dissertation was supervised jointly with (name of the cooperation partner). For support for the dissertation (signature of the authorised signatory of the cooperation partner and logo of the cooperation partner)."
- (5) The faculties' doctoral regulations shall govern additional details regarding the implementation of a cooperative and binational doctorate.
- (6) The possible supervisors in national or international doctorate support programmes are the persons named in Section 5 para. 3 a – i are possible supervisors, as well as persons with equivalent academic qualifications. One of the evaluators must be a member of the faculty awarding the doctorate.

Section 21 Inspection

The candidate has the right to inspect the doctoral documentation after completion of the doctoral process and, in justified cases, during the current doctoral process.

Section 22 Appeal against decisions in the doctoral process

The candidate can appeal against negative decisions by the doctoral committee and the examination committee in writing within one month of announcement. The President shall decide on the appeal lodged against the doctoral committee.

Section 23 Entry into force, transitional conditions

- (1) These General Conditions for the Doctoral Regulations of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main shall enter into force on the date of publication. Simultaneously, the general conditions for the doctoral regulations of the faculties of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main of 18 January 1994 (ABL. 7/94, p. 530 et.seq.), last amended on 13 October 2009 (UniReport of 05 November 2009) are cancelled.
- (2) Doctoral candidates, who started their dissertation before entry into force of the General Conditions for the Doctoral Regulations of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, can complete their doctorate according to the previous process.

Frankfurt am Main, 11 December 2012

Prof. Dr. Enrico Schleiff
Vice-President of the
Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main

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