

# **Newsletter – Special Edition of the Paris-Lodron-University Salzburg**

## **125. Curriculum for the doctoral programme of the Natural Sciences at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg** (version 2009)

### **Programme goal and prerequisites**

**§ 1.** (1) The goal of the doctoral programme is to support and train young researchers and to further develop their capacity to undertake independent scientific research (§ 51 section 2 no 12 UG).

(2) Admission to the programme is dependent on the prior completion of a Diploma, Magister or M.A. degree in Natural Sciences. Admission to the programme can also be granted to those who have completed a degree at a recognised domestic or international educational institution. Such a degree must: a) be equivalent to the above-mentioned degree programmes or b) provide all the necessary knowledge required to continue with a doctoral programme.

In accordance with § 5 section 3 FHStG, the completion of a university of applied science (FH) training programme relevant to the subject of the dissertation may also meet this requirement.

### **Workload and programme requirements**

**§ 2.** The doctoral programme requires the completion of 180 ECTS points. These include the writing of the dissertation (150 ECTS), the participation in dissertation seminars (10 ECTS), attending courses (10 ECTS) and carrying out special credit projects (10 ECTS). The PhD programme is deemed completed following a public dissertation defence (Viva) (§ 6).

### **The doctoral committee**

**§ 3.** (1) The doctoral committee (§ 22 section 2 statute) is subject to the rules of procedure of the University of Salzburg senate and advises the Dean in matters concerning doctoral programmes at the Faculty of Natural Sciences. The doctoral committee consists of the following persons:

- 1) the Dean;
- 2) the Chair of the Doctoral Programme Curriculum Committee;
- 3) an academic member of staff from each department of the Natural Sciences Faculty with a teaching qualification (*venia docendi*) in accordance with § 94 section 1 no 6 and section 2 UG;
- 4) two doctoral students of the Natural Sciences Faculty. The students are assigned by the institution responsible for the legal representation of students.

(2) The doctoral committee advises the Dean in matters relating to admission to the doctoral programme, the approval of a dissertation proposal, the selection of supervisors, the

selection of dissertation evaluators, and the selection of examiners at the dissertation defence (Viva).

(3) Where authorisation has been granted pertaining to § 5 section 3 FHStG, the doctoral committee must approve the courses as prescribed by the specifications of the extended doctoral programme.

### **The dissertation**

**§ 4.** (1) The dissertation is a research project that demonstrates the candidate's ability to address research issues independently (§ 51 section 2 no 13 UG). The dissertation is to be written in German or English language. A dissertation in the form of a collection of scientific articles is acceptable providing it contains a comprehensive introduction and a list signed by each co-author confirming which parts of the dissertation the doctoral student has written.

(2) The student is entitled to propose a dissertation topic which is subject to approval by the Dean, who, as a general rule, may consult with the doctoral committee. At the same time, the student should propose a primary and a secondary dissertation supervisor. The proposal of a dissertation topic must contain a project outline and timetable and be accompanied by short evaluations obtained by the Dean from the primary and secondary supervisors. If the proposed topic is approved, the Dean, after having consulted with the doctoral committee, must establish a group of supervisors that consists of a primary and at least one secondary supervisor. The primary supervisor will direct the group of supervisors. Should the dissertation proposal be rejected by the Dean, the candidate can appeal to the Vice Rectorate for Teaching.

(3) Dissertation supervisors should be selected from the University of Salzburg faculty members with a teaching qualification (*venia docendi*) in accordance with § 94 section 1 no 6 and section 2 UG. If necessary, other persons may be selected in accordance with § 94 section 1 no 7 and no 8 UG from another Austrian university, accredited private university, or recognised international university or institution of higher education with an equivalent teaching qualification, or with a doctorate in accordance with § 94 section 1 no 4 UG. However, such persons are not allowed to be primary supervisors. Up until the dissertation is submitted, the candidate is permitted to change his/her supervisor(s).

(4) The dissertation proposal is considered accepted if it is not rejected by the Dean within 4 weeks of submission.

(5) The completed dissertation is to be submitted to the Dean. The primary supervisor and at least one other evaluator is to be selected by the Dean to provide written evaluation reports within no more than two months, a deadline that may be extended by the Dean if necessary. Dissertation evaluators must be habilitated personnel (in accordance with § 94 section 1 no 6, no 7, no 8 and section 2 UG) at an Austrian university, accredited private university, or recognised international university or institution of higher education with an equivalent teaching qualification. Normally an external evaluator is to be appointed for the evaluation of the dissertation.

(6) In the case of the appointment of only two evaluators, and where one evaluator deems the dissertation to be unsatisfactory, the Dean is obliged to bring in another evaluator from a closely-related field of study. The new evaluator will have two months to submit a report, a deadline that may be extended by the Dean if necessary.

(7) Should the evaluators fail to reach any consensus on a grade, the proposed grades are to be added together, divided by the number of evaluators and rounded to a whole number. Any result greater than .5 will be rounded up. If an additional evaluation as per section 6 above

leads to an additional negative evaluation, the dissertation will be rejected. Where more than two evaluators have been selected from the beginning of the process, and if at least half of the evaluations are negative, the dissertation is to be rejected in any case.

### **Dissertation seminar Courses and special credit projects**

**§ 5.** (1) The student must earn a total of 10 ECTS points through active participation in doctoral seminars which are selected in consultation with the primary supervisor. In the event that the student has successfully attended dissertation seminars during the entire course of the doctoral programme up to the submission date of the dissertation, and has not yet, however, managed to earn 10 ECTS points, the missing ECTS points can be earned in accordance with section 2 and 3.

(2) The student must earn 10 ECTS points by attending and passing examinations in courses approved for the doctoral programme in question at the Faculty of Natural Sciences.

(3) Students are encouraged to undertake special credit projects of 10 ECTS points to develop skills that are important for their further academic career. These may include:

- 1) Active participation in international workshops or conferences
- 2) Teaching courses
- 3) Peer-reviewed publications which are unrelated to the dissertation
- 4) Courses that are not covered by section 2.

(4) Individual special credit projects are normally to be presented to the Dean for approval and evaluation of ECTS points in a timely manner prior to their submission.

If the student attains less than the prescribed ECTS points for special credit projects, or if no special credit projects are submitted, the missing ECTS points may be compensated for by substituting the completion of additional courses from section 2 above.

### **Defending the dissertation**

**§ 6.** (1) Permission to proceed with the dissertation defence is dependent upon completion of the 30 ECTS points as described above in § 5 and the positive evaluation of the dissertation in accordance with § 4 section 6 and 7.

(2) The public dissertation defence is administered by a defence committee in accordance with § 18 of the statute of the University of Salzburg. The primary supervisor is the chair of the defence committee. The Dean appoints the two defence examiners (§ 3 section 2).

(3) The dissertation defence begins with a presentation of the contents and results of the dissertation by the candidate.

(4) Then, the examiners take the evaluation reports into consideration as they question the candidate on the contents of the dissertation, with the aim of evaluating the candidate's mastery of the academic discipline.

(5) As the moderator, the chair of the defence committee can then open the discussion to any members of the audience who have questions for the candidate.

(6) The assessment of the defence is subject to § 18 section 4 and 5 of the statute of the University of Salzburg, but the overall performance of the candidate at the defence is to be evaluated rather than individual subjects.

### **Academic degree**

**§ 7.** (1) Graduates of the doctoral programme of the Natural Sciences will be awarded the academic degree of "Doctor of Natural Sciences", "Doctor rerum naturalium" in Latin, abbreviated "Dr. rer. nat."

### **Transitional provisions**

**§ 8.** Students who were admitted to the doctoral programme at the Faculty of Natural Sciences prior to the winter semester of 2006/07, are entitled to complete their doctoral studies until September 30, 2017 – in accordance with the relevant former curriculum for the doctorate of Natural Sciences (see newsletter no. 158 and 159 on May 15, 2003). Students may change to the curriculum of the 2009 doctoral programme of the Natural sciences by a voluntary transfer when registering at the beginning of a semester.

### **Execution**

**§ 9.** This regulation comes into effect September 1, 2009.

In all cases the German version of this document and not the English version will be binding.

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