

## **Principles for Doctoral Degree Regulations**

### **at Kiel University**

Based on Section 21 (1) No. 15 of the Schleswig-Holstein Higher Education Act (HSG) of 28 February 2007 (GVOBl. Schl.-H. page 184), most recently amended by Article 1 of the Act of 4 February 2011 (GVOBl. Schl.-H. page 34, corrected page 67), after a resolution was passed by the University Senate of Kiel University on 15 May 2013, the following Principles were issued:

#### **1. Validity**

These Principles, to be met by the faculties in their Doctoral Degree Regulations, define quality principles and establish cross-faculty regulations for doctoral degree procedures at Kiel University.

#### **2. Doctoral studies**

(1) The doctoral degree is proof of the ability to conduct in-depth independent scientific work and is based on an independent scientific thesis (dissertation) and an oral exam. After issuance of the certificate, the doctoral degree entitles one to use the title of Doctor.

(2) The focus of the doctoral studies must be in a subject assigned to one of the faculties of Kiel University.

#### **3. Decisionmaking bodies in the doctoral degree procedure**

The Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations regulate which body or which person is responsible for making decisions as to the procedure and the examinations within the scope of the doctoral degree procedure.

#### **4. Regulations on supervision: Authorised supervisors and agreement on the supervision of a dissertation**

(1) A doctoral degree at Kiel University will be supervised by at least one authorised person in accordance with the HSG and the Constitution of Kiel University. The Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations determine, in accordance with the HSG and the Constitution of Kiel University, which group of persons, besides professors and non-faculty lecturers, in particular from other faculties and institutions of higher education, shall be authorised to supervise doctoral degrees.

(2) With the assignment of the preliminary topic the doctoral candidate and the authorised supervisors who will supervise the work conclude a written agreement on the supervision of a dissertation. This agreement will be signed by all authorised supervisors involved and by the doctoral candidate.

(3) The agreement on the supervision of a dissertation contains at least

a) the preliminary topic of the dissertation,

b) the intended doctoral degree,

- c) if necessary, a statement that explains whether the dissertation could possibly be assigned to several faculties (cross-faculty doctoral degree), as well as an indication of the faculty at Kiel University to which the doctoral degree is to be assigned,
- d) the declaration of the supervisor(s) to supervise actively the work and of the doctoral candidate to inform regularly all supervisors about the status and progress of the planned dissertation,
- e) the doctoral candidate's consent to the fact that his or her data on the dissertation project and its progress will be stored in the Graduate Centre in accordance with the Federal Data Protection Act, as this is the central registration office for dissertation data, used for evaluations of doctoral studies at Kiel University by Kiel University, as well as passed on to the Federal State Government of Schleswig-Holstein, its Statistical Office and the Federal Statistical Office,
- f) the doctoral candidate's declaration that he or she is aware of and undertakes to work in accordance with the "Rules of Good Scientific Practice – principles of scientific work pursuant to the recommendations of the German Research Foundation (DFG)" (University Senate resolution of 28 May 2002) in the version applicable at the time, and
- g) as a measure of protection against abuse a declaration of the doctoral candidate as to whether he or she made use of an agency for doctoral degrees (Vermittlungsagentur für Promotionen).

(4) The details of active supervision are governed by the Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations.

(5) In justified cases, both supervisors and doctoral candidates are entitled to terminate the supervision relationship, be it by mutual consent or independently of each other. The decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty responsible must be informed about the termination and the reasons must be specified.

(6) If supervision is terminated for reasons for which the doctoral candidate is not responsible, the decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty ensures, upon application of the doctoral candidate, further supervision within the faculty's possibilities.

## **5. Acceptance as a doctoral candidate by a faculty**

(1) The requirements for acceptance are governed by the Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations. The doctoral candidate is obliged to submit the agreement on supervision of a dissertation, concluded in accordance with Principle 4, together with the application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate to one of the faculties potentially responsible for the planned doctoral degree. At the same time, he or she shall submit a statement that he or she has not yet unsuccessfully submitted a dissertation on the same or a related subject; if a dissertation on another subject has previously been unsuccessfully submitted, the faculty where acceptance as a doctoral candidate is being applied for must be informed of the subject, institution of higher education and faculty at which the dissertation was unsuccessfully submitted. Based on the agreement and the application, the decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty makes a decision on the acceptance and after the acceptance of the doctoral candidate by the faculty, confirms its acceptance of the agreement in writing.

(2) If necessary, the faculty that first accepts the dissertation determines whether it is a cross-faculty dissertation and in the confirmation of acceptance declares its consent to admit the dissertation project or to assess its responsibility for the dissertation in good time before the admission to the doctoral examination procedure and to make a final decision on the admission.

(3) With acceptance the decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty checks whether the candidate fulfils the requirements for admission to the doctoral examination procedure, in particular the necessary academic degree. Requirements that are fulfilled are confirmed with the acceptance. If certificates are missing, the responsible body will give a reasonable period of time for their submission. If the deadline is not met the agreement shall be deemed invalid pursuant to Principle 4 and the faculty is entitled to withdraw its acceptance.

(4) Acceptance as a doctoral candidate shall be denied if there are reasons leading to a later refusal of admission to the doctoral examination procedure. Acceptance must be withdrawn if such reasons occur afterwards.

## **6. Admission to the doctoral examination procedure**

(1) The Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations determine the requirements for admission to the doctoral degree.

(2) The admission of graduates from universities of applied sciences as doctoral candidates is possible pursuant to Section 54 (2) HSG. Individual details, in particular the assessment of aptitude procedure of graduates from universities of applied sciences, are regulated by the Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations.

(3) Applicants who have obtained degrees abroad may be admitted to the doctoral examination procedure if they possess an equivalent degree or fulfill the additional requirements regulated in the Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations. The principles set out in the Anerkennungssatzung of Kiel University apply accordingly for determining the equivalence.

(4) Admission must be denied if

a) the documents are incomplete,

b) there are reasons that would justify the withdrawal of an academic degree or an academic degree has been withdrawn,

c) if the applicant already has finally failed in a doctoral degree procedure in the same or a related subject or

d) is currently involved in an admission to the doctoral degree.

## **7. Grading the dissertation**

If a dissertation is to be rated with the grade "Outstanding (opus eximium or summa cum laude)", another, external examiner must be appointed for this decision.

## **8. Cross-faculty doctoral degrees**

(1) To clarify cases of doubt concerning cross-faculty doctoral degrees Kiel University appoints a cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee concerning the responsibility of a faculty for admission to the examination procedure. This Committee shall consist of the chairpersons of the Doctoral Degree Committees and/or of the persons of the faculties responsible for doctoral degrees, or his or her authorised representative. The cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee elects a chairperson and his

or her deputy from among its members. The Committee constitutes a quorum if at least four of its members are present.

(2) Doctoral candidates, supervisors and the faculty that accepted the dissertation project shall be jointly responsible for clarifying the faculty's responsibility for a cross-faculty dissertation. If the topic of a dissertation is cross-faculty and the doctoral candidate, the supervisors or the faculty are in doubt as to the clear assignment to a certain faculty or to the doctoral degree the candidate desires to obtain with his or her application for admission, the doctoral candidate, the supervisors or the Doctoral Degree Committee or the person at the faculty responsible for doctoral degrees to which the application for admission is to be or has been submitted may contact the cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee for clarification. The cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee must be convened immediately by its chairperson. If the faculty to which the application for admission to the doctoral examination procedure shall be or has been submitted is a different one to that which accepted the dissertation project pursuant to Principle 5, the latter must be informed immediately by the doctoral candidate about the appeal to the cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee.

(3) The cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee decides on which faculty is responsible for the dissertation and which doctoral degree is likely to be achieved.

The decision is determined by the following factors:

a) whether the subject that will probably comprise the major part of the dissertation in terms of topic and content is, pursuant to the Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations, one of the subjects for which the respective faculty awards a doctoral degree,

b) whether the supervisors are members of this faculty in terms of their subject, and

c) whether it will be possible to find another examiner for the dissertation project in the faculty at Kiel University or in a similar or related faculty at another institution of higher education.

Those members shall be entitled to vote whose faculties are involved in the cross-faculty dissertation project as well as the chairperson of the cross-faculty Doctoral Degree Committee. In the event of a tie the chairperson has a second vote. If the chairperson's faculty is involved in the decision on the admission procedure, his/her deputy has the second vote. All other members shall have an advisory voice.

(4) A faculty declares its final consent to conduct the doctoral examination procedure in writing addressed to the signatories of the agreement on supervision of a dissertation.

## **9. Fast-track doctoral degrees**

(1) A fast-track doctoral degree can shorten the period between a Bachelor's degree and the completion of the doctoral degree. In this case the Master's degree programme and the first stage of the doctoral degree coincide. The fast-track doctoral degree represents a particular challenge and is therefore open to especially gifted graduates with a Bachelor's degree and qualified graduates of universities of applied sciences. The Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations must make provisions for the implementation of the fast-track doctoral degree, in particular with regard to requirements and the admission procedure.

(2) A Master's degree is awarded on the successful completion of the fast-track doctoral degree at the latest.

(3) The Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations regulate the details.

## **10. Declaration on independent composition of the work and on specified resources**

- (1) The doctoral candidate must submit a declaration that he or she
  - a) has produced the work him- or herself and on his or her own,
  - b) did not use any other than the specified resources,
  - c) the work has been produced according to the Rules of Good Scientific Practice of the German Research Foundation,
  - d) has not simultaneously applied for admission to a doctoral degree with the same topic at another domestic or foreign faculty or intends to do so,
  - e) has not yet irrevocably failed a dissertation project at another Institution of Higher Education or at another faculty of this Institution of Higher Education,
  - f) and he or she has not had an academic degree withdrawn.

(2) The dissertation must contain a summary of the resources used. The faculty's decision-making body for doctoral degrees decides about the form in which the resources used must be stated.

## **11. Withdrawal and revocation of the admission to a doctoral degree**

(1) The decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty must declare the results of the doctoral studies invalid if, before handing out the certificate, the faculty erroneously assumed that essential requirements for admission to the doctoral degree were met, and this due to reasons for which the doctoral candidate is responsible.

(2) The faculty must revoke the doctoral degree if, after handing out the certificate, it turns out that the doctoral candidate used wilful deceit to ensure the faculty erroneously assumed that essential requirements for admission to the doctoral degree were met.

(3) Before a decision in cases described in subsections 1 and 2 is taken the doctoral candidate must be heard.

(4) If the doctoral degree is revoked, all related certificates must be returned.

## **12. Violations against the "Rules of Good Scientific Practice – principles of scientific work pursuant to the recommendations of the German Research Foundation" (University Senate resolution of 28 May 2002) in their respectively applicable version**

(1) In severe cases the decision-making body for doctoral degrees at the faculty must declare the results of the doctoral studies invalid if, before handing out the certificate, it turns out that the doctoral candidate is guilty of gross violations against the rules of good scientific practice. In the case of minor violations this body makes an independent decision on measures for punishing such behaviour following a consultation.

(2) In severe cases the faculty must revoke the doctoral degree if, after handing out the certificate, it turns out that the degree has been obtained by means of gross violations against the rules of good scientific practice.

(3) In severe cases the faculty can revoke the doctoral degree if the doctoral candidate commits gross violations against the rules of good scientific practice in his or her scientific work after the doctoral degree has been awarded.

(4) Before a decision in cases described in subsections 1 to 3 is reached, the doctoral candidate must be heard. As a rule, external opinions are requested for the preparation of the decision in cases described in subsections 2 and 3.

(5) If the award of the doctoral degree is revoked, all related certificates must be returned .

### **13. Transitional rules for amending Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations**

Previously issued Faculty Doctoral Degree Regulations shall continue to be valid for the time being; they must be revised to reflect these Principles by 30 June 2014.