

Regulations for doctoral promotion at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Bern (PromR)

From 9 May 2011 (as of 1 August 2019)

The Faculty of Humanities of the University of Bern,

having regard to article 44 (1) (c) of the Law of 5 September 1996 on the University (University Law, UniG)¹, article 33 of the University Decree of 12 September 2012 (UniV)² and article 43 of the Statute of 7 June 2011 of the University of Bern (UniSt)³,

decrees:

I. General provisions

SCOPE AND TITLE

Art. 1 ¹ These rules govern the PhD study program at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Bern.

² The title „Doctor of Philosophy” (PhD) can be attained in one of the study programs offered by the Faculty.

PURPOSE OF DOCTORAL PROMOTION

Art. 2 The goals of a successful doctoral promotion at the Faculty of Humanities are:

- a* to extend the boundaries of established knowledge through innovative, high-quality work,
- b* to develop the skill to design and conduct research in a scientific, substantial and integer manner,
- c* to systematically understand a field of study and master its methods,
- d* to be able to critically analyze and synthesize new and complex ideas, [*Version from 26.06.2019*]
- e* to be capable of contributing to methodological, social or cultural developments within an academic context,
- f* to be able to meet the standards of nationally and internationally reviewed publications.

¹ BSG 436.11

² BSG 436.111.1

³ BSG 436.111.2

FORMS OF DOCTORAL
PROMOTION

Art. 3 ¹ The doctoral promotion takes place as an independent doctorate or as part of a structured doctoral program.

² Structured doctoral programs are

- a Graduate Schools, in which the Faculty is involved,
- b *[Repealed on 04.05.2015]*
- c Doctoral programs recognized by the Faculty.

DOCTORAL PROMOTION

Art. 4 ¹ Doctoral promotion requires, at the least, a dissertation and an oral exam, as well as potential additional work, which is specified in the doctoral agreement.

² For doctoral promotions as part of a structured doctoral program, additional work is specified in the study plan.

³ Additional work is detailed in the diploma supplement.

FEES

Art. 5 ¹ The fee for conferring a doctorate is set out in the GebDV Phab (English: Board of Directors regulations on fees for habilitation and conferring a doctorate at the University of Bern) from 31. January 2011⁴.

² If the candidate deregisters from the exam at least one day before the scheduled exam, in accordance with Article 22 (1), or if the candidate is excused, in accordance with Article 22 (2), the examination fee remains valid for the rescheduled exam. The Dean decides on the possibility of a refund, if a refund claim is made by the candidate.

II. Admission conditions for doctoral promotion, admission to structured doctoral programs and exclusion from both

ADMISSION CONDITIONS
FOR DOCTORAL PROMOTION

Art. 6 ¹ Admitted are applicants *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

- a with a Master's degree from a university or an equivalent university degree in the intended field of study,
- b whose degree was at least assessed as "good",
- c and whose dissertation proposal is approved by an authorized person referred to in Article 8 (1) who agrees to act as principle supervisor.

² The Collegium Decanale assesses the content upon request by the designated principle supervisor. Rejections are issued in the form of an appealable decision. *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

³ If the Master's degree or the equivalent university degree was not obtained in the field of study intended for doctoral promotion, the Collegium Decanale can apply for admission at the university management upon request by the principle supervisor. *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

⁴ BSG 436.111.3

⁴ Students with a Master's degree from a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College can be admitted in accordance with the Regulations of the University Management. *[Inserted on 26.06.2019]*

⁵ In case of a grade which is based on a grading system that cannot indisputably be translated into the grading system of the Faculty, the Collegium Decanale can confirm the equivalency of the grade of the degree.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Art. 6a *[Inserted on 26.06.2019]* ¹ Knowledge and skills which were not acquired during the Master's program can be required in the form of additional qualifications which have to be completed within a binding period of time. The Collegium Decanale decides on additional qualifications on an individual bases in the form of requirements.

² For students with a Master's degree from a university, requirements can amount to a total of 30 ECTS.

³ For students with a Master's degree from a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College, requirements can amount to a total of 60 ECTS.

⁴ If students are admitted with requirements, they will be excluded if they fail to meet the requirements. Failed requirements cannot be compensated.

⁵ Requirements are detailed separately in the diploma supplement.

STRUCTURED DOCTORAL PROGRAMS: ADMISSION AND EXCLUSION

Art. 7 ¹ Doctoral candidates who have been admitted to doctoral promotion can apply for admission to a structured doctoral program. The application procedure is specified in the respective study plans.

² A doctoral candidate can be excluded from structured doctoral programs. The following circumstances can lead to exclusion:

a repeated unexcused absence from mandatory courses offered by the respective structured doctoral program, *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

b repeated unexcused failure to meet obligations specified in the study plans or in the doctoral agreement.

³ The request for exclusion is made by the director of studies to the Collegium Decanale. The student affected will be heard by the Collegium Decanale. The Collegium Decanale issues an appealable decision. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

⁴ If a doctoral candidate is excluded from a structured doctoral program, doctoral promotion is still possible in form of an independent doctorate or as part of a different structured doctoral program, as long as supervision is ensured.

III. Organization of doctoral promotion

Art. 8 ¹ Habilitated members of the Faculty of Humanities have the right and obligation to supervise doctoral candidates. Upon request, assistant professors without habilitation (incl. funded professors) can be given permission by the Faculty to supervise dissertations. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

² Eligible supervisors have the right and obligation to deny supervision in case of justified doubt regarding the candidate's qualifications for the intended research project or regarding the feasibility of the project, or if qualified supervision cannot be provided.

³ Responsible for supervision is a primary supervisor (principle supervisor), as well as a co-supervisor.

⁴ Principle supervisors have the right to continue supervision of dissertations that were initiated prior to their resignation from the Faculty of Humanities (after becoming an emeritus professor or appointment at a different institution) for five years after their resignation. If approved by the Faculty, they can supervise dissertations that were initiated prior to their resignation as co-supervisor after five years have passed since their resignation.

⁵ *[Repealed on 26.06.2019]*

⁶ In consultation with the doctoral candidate, supervision can take the form of a Thesis Committee, made up of up to five people in accordance with Article 8 (1). The principle supervisor chairs the Thesis Committee and proposes to the Deans Office a committee member who should write the second thesis report. *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

⁷ Candidates who were admitted to the doctorate based on a Master's degree from a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College and who are pursuing their doctorate in doctoral programs and Graduate Schools with formalized involvement of a University of Applied Sciences will be supervised by a Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee is generally made up of three people, including the principle supervisor in accordance with Article 8 (1) and two additional lecturers at universities, Teacher's Colleges or Universities of Applied Sciences. Co-supervision and -assessment can be undertaken by lecturers at a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College, provided they have at least one doctorate and habilitation-like qualifications. The principle supervisor proposes to the Deans Office a committee member, who should write the second assessment. *[Inserted on 26.06.2019]*

⁸ Candidates who were admitted to the doctorate based on a Master's degree from a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College and who are pursuing an independent doctorate will be supervised by a principle supervisor in accordance with Article 8 (1). Co-supervision and -assessment can be undertaken by lecturers at a University of Applied Sciences or a Teacher's College, provided they have at least one doctorate and habilitation-like qualifications. *[Inserted on 26.06.2019]*

⁹ Further regulations may be stipulated in the study plans of the structured doctoral programs.

DOCTORAL AGREEMENT

1. CONTENT

Art. 9 ¹ A doctoral agreement is signed between the doctoral candidate and the supervisors, and specifies the duration, process, goals, general conditions and language of the doctoral promotion. It also stipulates the form of assessment of the research project.

² *[Repealed on 04.05.2015]*

³ The doctoral agreement is filed at the Deans Office three months after admission at the latest. In justified cases, later filing of the doctoral agreement can be granted by the Collegium Decanale.

⁴ For cross-faculty dissertations, the regulations for doctoral promotion of the principle supervisor apply. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

2. ALTERATIONS AND TERMINATION OF THE AGREEMENT

Art. 10 ¹ Admission to, exclusion or resignation from a structured doctoral program lead to alterations of the doctoral agreement.

² The doctoral agreement can be altered by mutual agreement. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

³ Termination of a doctoral agreement can be decided unilaterally by each party involved. The other party must be informed of this termination and the underlying reasons immediately. Valid reasons for the termination of the doctoral agreement are the failure to comply with the doctoral agreement on the part of one of the parties, plagiarism and compelling reasons which hinder doctoral promotion.

⁴ The principle supervisor immediately informs the Deans office of an alteration of the doctoral agreement or its termination in written form. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

3. IN CASE OF CONFLICT

Art. 11 In case of conflict regarding the doctoral agreement, the Dean decides. *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

IV. Assessment of work

ASSESSMENT

Art. 12 ¹ Work that is assessed as sufficient is graded on the following grading scale:

6	=	excellent
5,5	=	very good
5	=	good
4,5	=	satisfactory
4	=	sufficient

² Work that is assessed as insufficient is graded on the following grading scale: 3,5; 3, 2,5; 2; 1,5; 1.

³ Grades are rounded:

Grades ranging from		Rounded grade
5,75	to 6,00	6,0
5,25	to < 5,75	5,5
4,75	to < 5,25	5,0
4,25	to < 4,75	4,5
4	to < 4,25	4,0
3,25	to < 4,00	3,5
2,75	to < 3,25	3,0
2,25	to < 2,75	2,5
1,75	to < 2,25	2,0
1,25	to < 1,75	1,5
1,00	to < 1,25	1,0

⁴ Ungraded work is assessed as “pass” if it is sufficient or as “fail” if it is not sufficient.

⁵ Insufficient work can be retaken once in accordance with Article 23 of the regulations regarding studies and performance assessments of the Faculty of Humanities (RSL 05).

⁶ Handling of absences from exams and exams that are not completed is set out in Article 22a RSL 05.

V. *Dissertation*

MONOGRAPH AND
CUMULATIVE DISSERTATION

Art. 13 ¹ The dissertation generally takes the form of a monograph. Work that has already been published needs to be approved for assessment by the Collegium Decanale.

² The cumulative dissertation is an exception. It requires the submission of at least four papers which have been published or have been accepted for publication by a journal or equivalent publisher. Additionally, a cumulative dissertation contains a thematic overview (synopsis), in which insights from each of the individual publications are integrated into a broader framework.

³ The council of Faculty Staff (Fakultätskollegium) decides, upon request by the affected institute or research centers, in which programs cumulative dissertations are permitted. [*Version from 04.05.2015*]

⁴ Collaborative dissertations are not permitted.

LANGUAGE

Art. 14 The dissertation can be written in German, English, French, Italian, Latin or Spanish. Other languages can be permitted by the Collegium Decanale upon request by the principle supervisor.

EXTRA-FACULTY
DISSERTATIONS

Art. 15 The Fakultätskollegium can accept a dissertation that was not written at the Faculty of Humanities upon request by the principle supervisor.

JOINT-SUPERVISION
DOCTORATE

Art. 16 ¹ The prerequisites for the arrangement of a joint-supervision doctorate are admission to both partner universities, confirmation from a supervisor from each of the two universities and enrollment at the university that is responsible for administration. In addition, an individual cooperation agreement must be signed between the partner universities and the doctoral candidate. This agreement has to be submitted to the responsible departments through official channels.

² As part of the joint-supervision agreement the doctoral candidate completes research stays at both partner universities. Details regarding duration, process and supervision are set out in the cooperation agreement, which is signed by both rectors, and the doctoral agreement, which is signed between the doctoral candidate and the supervisors of both partner universities.

³ Doctoral promotion concludes with an oral exam held by both universities. If the university at which the doctoral candidate is enrolled does not hold an exam, the doctoral candidate will not be examined.

⁴ Following successful doctoral promotion, the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Bern and its partner university award the doctoral degree. The certificate specifies that the degree was attained through a joint-supervision doctorate.

ASSESSMENT OF THE
DISSERTATION

Art. 17 ¹ The principle supervisor compiles the primary thesis report.

² The Collegium Decanale appoints a co-supervisor from the circle of people defined in Article 8 (1), (7) and (8) or from the Thesis Committee, following the proposal of the principle supervisor in agreement with the doctoral candidate. *[Version from 26.06.2019]*

³ The Collegium Decanale can assign the secondary report to lecturers with a doctorate at a different faculty, a different unit, or a different university, or to the Bern University of the Arts (HKB). *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

⁴ In the reports, the Faculty is requested to accept or reject the dissertation. The reports contain one suggested grade each.

⁵ The reports have to be submitted in written form to the Dean's Office by a set deadline.

⁶ In case of a cumulative dissertation, the research that has been agreed upon in the doctoral agreement is assessed in its entirety. The assessment process at the Faculty takes place irrespective of assessment processes at journals or equivalent publishers. Supervisors are not involved in assessment processes at the respective journals or equivalent publishers. The supervisors confirm their impartiality in a declaration.

GRADING OF THE
DISSERTATION

Art. 18 ¹ The dissertation is graded on a grading scale from 1 to 6.

² Dissertations are only accepted if they are graded with at least a 4 in both reports.

³ The final grade results from the average of the two individual grades. The final grade is rounded in accordance with Article 12 (3).

⁴ If the grades in the two reports deviate by more than a full grade, a third report is required. The person in charge of the third report is appointed by the Collegium Decanale. In this case, the final grade results from the average of the three individual grades and is rounded in accordance with Article 12 (3).

⁵ Awarding of the grade 6 requires corresponding suggestions from both supervisors. Rounding, as set out in Article 12 (3), does not apply.

INSPECTION

Art. 19 ¹ For members of the Fakultätskollegium a copy of the dissertation is available for inspection for two weeks, following the registration for PhD/Doctoral examination. The Fakultätskollegium approves the reports in a faculty meeting for which the reports have been put on the agenda. If there are no objections, the suggested grades are accepted and the doctoral candidates are admitted to the oral exam. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

² In case of an objection, the Fakultätskollegium decides.

³ *[Repealed on 04.05.2015]*

VI. Completion of the doctorate

1. General remarks

REGISTRATION FOR PHD/DOCTORAL EXAMINATION

Art. 20 ¹ Along with the registration form, the doctoral candidate submits the following forms to the Dean's Office:

- a confirmation of enrollment as a doctoral candidate at the University of Bern,
- b a signed confirmation from the first examiner regarding their willingness to hold an oral exam and to provide evidence that the candidate has met all requirements set out in the doctoral agreement, including an accepted dissertation,
- c the doctoral candidate's own dissertation in printed and in electronic form, *[Version from 04.05.2015]*
- d a résumé (CV),
- e if part of a structured doctoral program, a confirmation of completion of all requirements as set out in the doctoral agreement,
- f if applicable, a confirmation of completion of all additional qualifications,
- g a dissertation declaration, confirming that the dissertation was written without unlawful help, and that it has not been submitted to another university in order to obtain an academic degree,

h a receipt confirming payment of the exam fee.

² Registration deadlines are announced by the Dean's office in appropriate form.

³ The Fakultätskollegium makes a decision regarding admission based on the proposal of the PhD evaluation board. Rejections are issued in the form of an appealable decision. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

⁴ If the dissertation is not accepted by the Fakultätskollegium it can be revised once. The revised dissertation must be submitted within one year. If the revised dissertation is assessed as insufficient as well, doctoral promotion has to be terminated. *[Inserted on 04.05.2015]*

2. Oral exam

ORAL EXAM

Art. 21 ¹ The oral exam entails either a thesis defense or a rigorosum. If the doctoral candidate and their examiners cannot agree on an examination format, the Collegium Decanale decides.

² The oral exam is one hour in length.

³ The oral exam takes place during the examination period scheduled by the Faculty.

⁴ Upon agreement between examiners and the doctoral candidate and the approval of the Collegium Decanale, the oral exam can take place outside of the examination period if there are solid reasons. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

REGISTRATION, WITHDRAWAL, ABSENCE

Art. 22 ¹ Withdrawals must be requested in writing at least one day before the scheduled exam.

² Handling of absence from the oral exam and oral exams that are not completed is set out in Article 22a RSL.

CHAIR, LANGUAGE OF EXAMINATION, PUBLIC ACCESS

Art. 23 ¹ As examiners act the principle supervisor, the co-supervisor and a chairperson, selected by the supervisors from the circle of people defined in Article 8.

² The oral exam takes place in the language of instruction or in a language agreed upon by the examiners and the doctoral candidate.

³ The oral exam is public. Upon request by the doctoral candidate the public will be excluded.

EXECUTION OF THE EXAM

Art. 24 ¹ The oral exam is generally given by the principle supervisor, the co-supervisor and the chairperson.

² The execution of the exam is primarily the principle superior's responsibility. If the principle supervisor is not available, the Collegium Decanale appoints a substitute after conferring with the doctoral candidate.

³ If the doctoral candidate was supervised by a Thesis Committee, its members can be involved in the exam upon request by the principle supervisor in agreement with the candidate.

⁴ The chairperson takes minutes of the procedure of the oral exam and is responsible for the proper execution of the exam. They have the right to approve or to mandate breaks during the exam.

RESULT OF THE
ORAL EXAM

Art. 25 ¹ The examiners determine the grade of the oral exam immediately after the exam. If they cannot come to an agreement, the chairperson makes the final decision. The grading scale is set out in Article 12 (1) and (2).

² The oral exam is passed if it is graded with at least a 4.

³ To receive a grade 6 in the oral exam, a unanimous vote of all examiners is required.

⁴ A failed oral exam can be retaken once. The retake must take place the following semester. The Collegium Decanale can approve postponement by an additional semester upon request if there are solid reasons. [Version from 04.05.2015]

⁵ Accepted solid reasons are illness, pregnancy, childcare, study-related extra-curricular internships, non-residential study visits, language courses for foreign language speakers, military service, civil service, employment.

3. Graduation

GRADE

Art. 26 ¹ The overall grade of the doctorate results from the weighted means of assessment of the dissertation and the assessment of the oral exam in a 2:1 ratio.

² Based on the grade average of the dissertation and the oral exam, the examiners and chairperson award an overall grade in accordance with the following phrases:

summa cum laude	=	6
insigni cum laude	=	5.5
magna cum laude	=	5
cum laude	=	4.5
rite	=	4

³ Awarding of the overall grade summa cum laude for the doctoral promotion requires a dissertation and an oral exam that each were assessed with the grade 6.

⁴ Following the oral exam, the examiners inform the candidate of the result in oral form. They immediately forward it to the Dean's Office.

DISCLOSURE,
RECORDS OF THE
DOCTORAL PROMOTION

Art. 27 ¹ The principle supervisor hands over the thesis reports to the candidate following the completed oral exam.

² On behalf of the Fakultätskollegiums, the Dean's Office discloses the results of the dissertation and oral exam in written form alongside legal information. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

³ Inspection of the minutes of the oral exam is, in principle, allowed at all times for up to three months after the disclosure of the results, taking into consideration administrative procedures.

AWARD OF TITLE

Art. 28 ¹ Following successful completion of the doctoral promotion, the Fakultätskollegiums of the Faculty of Humanities awards the doctoral title. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

² The certificate is not issued until the dissertation has been published and the mandatory copies have been submitted, subject to Article 29 (4). For the intervening period, the doctoral candidate receives a confirmation of successful completion of doctoral promotion. This allows for the assumption of the title of Doctor designatus (Dr. des.), but not the assumption of the title Dr. phil. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

³ The certificate allows the doctoral candidate to assume the academic title of „Doctor philosophiae” (Dr. phil.) of the University of Bern.

⁴ The certificate contains the overall grade of the doctoral promotion and the title of the dissertation. It is signed by the rector and the Dean.

PUBLICATION
[Version from 04.05.2015]

Art. 29 ¹ The examiners can impose the condition to edit the dissertation prior to publication, and can check whether the condition has been met. In case of disagreement, the Collegium Decanale decides. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

² *[Repealed on 04.05.2015]*

³ The dissertation must be published within two years. If this deadline cannot be met, an extension has to be requested from the Collegium Decanale before the deadline has passed. If necessary, further extensions can be requested. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

⁴ Once a contract of publication is in hand, the issuance of the certificate can be requested from the Dean's Office. *[Version from 04.05.2015]*

⁵ In case the dissertation is published on an electronic platform provided for this purpose by Bern's university library, submission of mandatory copies does not apply. *[Inserted on 04.05.2015]*

VII. Administration of justice

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Art. 30 ¹ Decisions made by institutions of the Faculty of Humanities can be appealed within 30 days through the appeal commission.

² The University Law of 5 September 1996 (UniG) and the law of 23 May 1989 on the practice of administrative law (VRPG) apply to the procedure.

VIII. Final provisions

APPROVAL OF STUDY PLANS

Art. 31 On and from the commencement of these regulations, the study plans for doctoral programs are to be adapted and presented to the university management for approval.

INTERIM REGULATIONS

Art. 32 ¹ Doctoral candidates who take up doctoral promotion after the commencement of these regulations are subject to the present regulations.

² Doctoral candidates who took up doctoral promotion before the commencement of these regulations can submit a written request to be transferred to these regulations to the Collegium Decanale. Otherwise they complete their doctoral promotion by 31 January 2014 under the regulations from 1 September governing the studies and assessments at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Bern (RSP Phil-hist. Fak.).

COMMENCEMENT

Art. 33 These regulations commence on 1 August 2011.

Bern,

On behalf of the Faculty of Humanities
The Dean:

Approved by the Director of Education:

Bern,

The Director of Education:

Alterations

Commencement

Alterations from 4 May 2015, commenced on 1 December 2016

Alterations from 26 June 2019, commenced on 1 August 2019