

Exceptional regulations concerning PhD Defences within COVID-19-pandemic

Virtual PhD Defence according to §11 of the Doctoral Degree Regulations (17. Juni 2011)

For the implementation of the oral examination by video conference, the faculty offers an administrative moderator. The PhD student must contact her/him at least 3 weeks before the PhD defence. The administrative moderator operates as host of the zoom conference. She/he will fix the date of the video conference and communicates the meeting ID to the doctorate office at least 2 weeks in advance. The meeting ID will be published via invitation. The administrative moderator is responsible for the technical process.

The chair of the examination committee leads through the defence and fills in the necessary form. He/she is responsible for the signing of the protocol by all authorized examiners (e.g. by circulation procedure).

Part I: Public lecture with discussion (doctoral colloquium)

Virtuell attendees: all authorized examiners

Additionally allowed: interested audience, according to the capacity of the video conferencing software

Duration of the public lecture: should not exceed 30 minutes

The audience stays mute during the complete public part of the defence. Comprehension questions during the lecture must be renounced.

Immediately afterwards, all of the audience members can ask the doctoral candidate questions on the doctoral thesis for 15 minutes via the chair of the examination committee.

The audience members can raise the „blue hand“ virtually and will be activated by the administrative moderator for asking questions. Chair and PhD student stay unmute during the discussion. Finally, the administrative moderator closes the video conference.

Part II: Non public scientific debate (disputation)

After a short break (max. 10 minutes), the examination committee and the PhD student enter the virtual examination room. The administrative moderator is again host and ensures the technical procedure for the scientific debate. Meeting ID and password for the scientific debate will be sent to the members of the examination committee together with the examination documents.

In the disputation, the ability of the PhD student to present the subjects of his/her doctoral thesis and their categorisation within the doctoral discipline is verified (by peers) in a specialist discussion by the doctoral candidate with all members of the examination committee; subsequent to this, all people eligible to conduct examinations in accordance with § 3 (1) also ask the doctoral candidate questions via the chair of the examination committee. The disputation should last at least 30 minutes and at the most 90 minutes. (§ 11 (4))

After the disputation, the PhD student will be transferred into the waiting room. The examination committee will assess the oral examination. Then the PhD student will be retransferred from the waiting room and will be informed about the result.

Assessment of the oral examination (§ 12):

Immediately following the oral examination, the examination committee decides privately on the assessment of the oral performance. It can award the following individual grades:

0 = Outstanding	1 = Very good	4 = Not passed.
2 = Good	3 = Passed	

Overall assessment of the doctoral achievements (§ 13):

For the successful completion of the doctoral examination procedure, it is necessary that at least the grade “passed” (3) has been achieved for both the doctoral thesis and the oral examination.

The arithmetic average of the individual grades by the first reviewer, the second reviewer, and the oral examination is calculated to determine the overall grade. For any further expert reports, the arithmetic average is calculated in each case in advance with the second expert report; special expert reports in accordance with § 10 (3) & (9) will not be taken into account. **When determining the average, only the first decimal place is taken into account; all further places are omitted without rounding.**

The examination committee can increase or decrease the overall grade determined in accordance with § 13 (2) by the value of 0.3 due to its overall impression of the result of the doctoral examination procedure. However, the grade “outstanding (0)” cannot be increased; the grade “passed (3)” cannot be decreased. **If the increase/decrease of grades is being used, the word „no“ must necessarily be deleted clearly on the last page of the examination papers.**

The following overall grades and Latin honors can be awarded for the overall assessment of the doctoral achievements:

0.0	=	Outstanding (summa cum laude)
from 0.1 to 1.5	=	Very good (magna cum laude)
from 1.6 to 2.5	=	Good (cum laude)
from 2.6 to 3.0	=	Passed (rite)

The chair of the examination committee informs the doctoral candidate about the result of the doctoral examination procedure. A provisional certificate for the result is issued by the Faculty committee.