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Doctoral Regulations of Heidelberg University for the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies

of 7 May 2012

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Section 1 Doctorate

- (1) The Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies of Heidelberg University awards the academic degree of Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil. - Doctor of Philosophy) in the subjects of education, ethnology, gerontology, psychology, sports science, and diaconal studies and social ethics on the basis of work completed during the doctoral programmes, or the honorary degree of Doktorin/Doktor der Philosophie ehrenhalber (Dr. phil. h.c. - Honorary Doctor of Philosophy) on the basis of outstanding academic achievements in the field of behavioural and cultural studies, including related areas. In the subjects of diaconal studies and social ethics, the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies collaborates with the Faculty of Theology. If the statutory requirements are met, the English title of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) may also be conferred.
- (2) The Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies is committed to the recommended guiding principles on the promotion of junior researchers issued by the Senate of Heidelberg University and will implement those recommendations appropriately.

Section 2 Purpose and components of the doctorate, doctoral degree procedure

- (1) The conferral of a doctorate is proof of the candidate's aptitude for independent academic work.
- (2) This proof is based on the submission of an academic paper (dissertation) in the subject of the doctoral studies, and an oral examination (defence) in the same subject.
- (3) The bodies in the faculty responsible for doctoral degree procedures are the doctoral committee (Promotionsausschuss) and an examination committee appointed by the doctoral committee for each doctoral degree procedure.

Section 3 Doctoral committee

- (1) The doctoral committee ensures that the doctoral programme proceeds properly. In particular, it decides on the admission to doctoral programmes, on the admission of applicants as doctoral candidates, on the appointment of evaluators, and on the composition of the examination committee. It can assign responsibility for performing these duties to its chair.
- (2) The members of the doctoral committee and a deputy for each of these members are elected by the faculty council at the end of the spring semester for a two-year term of office. If a member or deputy leaves, his or her successor is immediately elected for the remaining term of office. Members may be re-elected.
- (3) The members of the doctoral committee are the dean or a vice dean as chair and four other professors or associate professors from the faculty whose primary occupation is at Heidelberg University. If the committee must debate or resolve doctoral matters in the subjects of diaconal studies or social ethics, a professor from the Faculty of Theology must be invited to join the committee; he or she will have a voting right on the matter concerned.
- (4) The doctoral committee takes decisions on the basis of a majority vote of its members. If there are an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote. In a duly scheduled meeting, the doctoral committee can, in individual cases and with a two-thirds majority of its members, approve exemptions from the provisions of these doctoral regulations unless otherwise stated in the Universities Act (Universitätsgesetz).
- (5) The doctoral committee does not convene publicly. This does not affect the right of the candidate concerned to be heard.
- (6) The Doctoral Committee informs the candidate or doctoral student of its decisions in writing.

Section 4 Admission to doctoral degree programmes

- (1) The requirement for admission to a doctoral programme is a master's degree or a comparable academic degree from a higher education institution, generally in the subject of the doctoral programme. Under special circumstances, applicants with a bachelor's

degree may be admitted to a doctoral programme if they performed exceptionally well in their undergraduate programme and meet the following additional requirements:

1. bachelor's degree with distinction
 2. proof of candidate's ability to undertake independent academic research. Proof can be furnished either: a) by way of a peer-reviewed publication as the lead author, which will normally be based on a degree thesis currently in print or already published, or (b) by way of a supporting statement from a professor testifying to the fact that the bachelor's thesis clearly shows the applicant's aptitude for academic work and meets the requirements for a master's thesis.
 3. pass a colloquium, which is conducted by two teachers of the subject holding a habilitation, and in which the candidate demonstrates his or her high and comprehensive level of familiarity with the intended doctoral subject (must be marked "very good").
- (2) If the overall mark is lower than "good", the applicant may be admitted to the doctoral programme if two professors or associate professors belonging to the faculty – with the involvement of the Faculty of Theology in the case of diaconal studies and social ethics – submit supporting statements that testify to the applicant's academic aptitude. This also applies if no overall exists.
 - (3) The doctoral committee decides on the equal standing or otherwise of exams, on the admission of applicants whose overall mark is lower than "good", and on how to proceed if is no overall mark exists.
 - (4) If the subject of the doctoral programme was not the main examination subject in the preceding final examination, the candidate must prove his or her technical knowledge to the doctoral committee in a colloquium. In addition, publications and other written pieces of work by the candidate can be taken into account.
 - (5) If the subject of the doctoral studies was not an examination subject in the preceding final examination, the candidate must demonstrate his or her technical knowledge to the doctoral committee by submitting publications or other similar written pieces of work and by taking a colloquium.
 - (6) The colloquium is an oral exam which lasts approximately an hour. It is conducted by two examiners who are professors or associate professors from the faculty concerned, and who have been appointed by the doctoral committee. Through the colloquium, the applicant must demonstrate that he or she has a level of knowledge in the doctoral subject as is required to pass a final examination in the main subject of a Diplom, Magister or comparable programme. This is the case if the overall mark awarded for the colloquium is "good" or higher. The overall mark is the arithmetical average of the individual mark awarded by the examiners; only the grade "excellent" (1), "good" (2), "satisfactory" (3), "adequate" (4) or "inadequate" (5) can be given.

Section 5 Acceptance of doctoral candidates

- (1) Any applicant who meets the requirements for acceptance set out in section 4 can apply to the faculty deanship for admission as a doctoral candidate, specifying the subject of his or

her dissertation. The doctoral committee decides whether a candidate is to be admitted. The following must be enclosed with the application:

- a) proof of compliance with admission requirements as defined in section 4;
 - b) specification of the intended topic for the dissertation together with a brief outline;
 - c) the applicant's curriculum vitae, setting out his or her personal and professional background; and
 - d) a declaration stating any previous or current attempts to obtain a doctorate.
- (2) The doctoral committee decides whether a candidate is to be admitted as a doctoral candidate. Admission must be denied if
- a) requirements for acceptance for doctoral studies are not met;
 - b) the documents are incomplete;
 - c) the topic chosen for the dissertation is obviously unsuitable or does not fall within the faculty's remit.
- (3) Admission can be denied if
- a) the applicant has already undertaken more than one unsuccessful attempt to obtain a doctorate;
 - b) there are grounds which would justify the revocation of an academic degree or an academic degree has already been revoked.
- (4) Applicants who are accepted as doctoral candidates will receive a doctoral student identity card issued by the dean's office.
- (5) A decision on the application should generally be taken within six weeks during term time. The candidate must be notified in writing if his or her application is turned down, along with the reasons for this decision. This also applies to the application for admission to the examination (section 8).
- (6) Upon admitting a doctoral candidate, the faculty undertakes to examine a final academic dissertation on the specified topic with the theme already provided, and to support the doctoral student in his or her dissertation work.
- (7) The doctoral studies should generally be completed within three years. Admission to the doctoral programme may be revoked if, after five years, the candidate provides no reason to believe that he or she will conclude the dissertation successfully. This does not apply if the doctoral candidate is not responsible for the delay. The candidate concerned must be heard before a decision is taken.

Section 6 Academic guidance for doctoral candidates

- (1) The faculties' professors are obligated to supervise doctoral candidates within the limits imposed by their tasks related to research, teaching, and academic self-government. With respect to leaders of independent research training groups acting as supervisors or evaluators, the guiding principles on the promotion of junior researchers issued by the Senate of Heidelberg University (clause 5) are to be observed.
- (2) Doctoral candidates may nominate a professor, associate professor or leader of an independent research group as their supervisor vis-à-vis the doctoral committee. The doctoral committee is to appoint the designated supervisor if he or she is prepared to take

on this role, and if the outline submitted by the doctoral student gives reason to expect that the dissertation will meet the purpose of the doctorate (see section 2 subsection1).

- (3) The candidate and his or her supervisor conclude an agreement stating the dissertation topic, the duration of the doctorate, and in particular a dissertation schedule generally spanning three years. The progress of the dissertation project shall be evaluated regularly. The candidate signs a statement declaring that he or she will adhere to the German Research Foundation's rules for safeguarding good scientific practice, and the rules for safeguarding good academic practice and handling academic misconduct of Heidelberg University.
- (4) The faculty board can set down guidelines for doctoral degree procedures, stipulating inter alia the involvement of candidates in interdisciplinary research training groups or obligating candidates to realise workshops where the candidates of a given subject or subject group present their doctoral projects.
- (5) At the request of the doctoral candidate, the doctoral committee will endeavour to find a professor or associate professor from the faculties involved to supervise the doctoral candidate.
- (6) Upon request by the candidate, a second supervisor must be appointed.

Section 7 Dissertation

- (1) The dissertation must be of an adequate scientific standard and demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake independent academic work in the doctoral subject.
- (2) Contributions to group papers, which can be unequivocally attributed to the candidate and evaluated separately, may be submitted as a dissertation if they meet the dissertation requirements.
- (3) The dissertation is generally to be written in German, English or French. Upon written request by the candidate, the doctoral committee may allow him or her to submit his or her dissertation in another language if language skills among the professors and associate professors or leaders of independent research groups of the faculty concerned allow for the dissertation to be evaluated in this language.

Section 8 Acceptance for examination

- (1) On completion of the dissertation, the doctoral student can submit a written application to the deanship for acceptance for the examination. The following must be enclosed with the application:
 - a) Three copies of the dissertation;
 - b) An affidavit stating that the candidate is the sole author of the submitted dissertation, that he or she has not made use of any sources or resources apart from those indicated, or, if the dissertation was created as part of a group paper, an affidavit stating that the applicant is the sole author of his or her contribution to the group paper.
 - c) An statement by the doctoral student indicating whether he or she has previously used the dissertation or an amended version thereof as part of an examination, or submitted it to

another faculty as a dissertation.

- (2) The dissertation may already have been published, either in full or in part.
- (3) Acceptance is to be denied if
 - a) the requirements for acceptance are not met;
 - b) the documents are incomplete; or
 - c) the candidate submits a dissertation that has already been rejected by another examining body or used as an examination paper in another examination procedure.
- (4) Acceptance can be denied if there are grounds that would justify the revocation of an academic degree or if an academic degree has already been revoked.

Section 9 Dissertation evaluation

- (1) Once the dissertation has been submitted, the doctoral committee appoints at least two evaluators. The supervisor is one of the evaluators. The evaluators should be appointed within four weeks during term time.
- (2) The evaluators must be professors or associate professors or leaders of independent research groups. They should generally belong to the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies. For the subjects of diaconal studies and social ethics, the evaluators proposed by the Faculty of Theology should be appointed. Professors who are fully or semi-retired (i.e. who have been released from their teaching duties) can be appointed as evaluators, subject to their consent. Professors, associate professors or leaders of independent research groups from other faculties of Heidelberg University can be appointed as evaluators, subject to their consent, if the dissertation covers areas that are related to their subjects. The doctoral committee will decide on the appointment of professors, associate professors or leaders of independent research groups from other universities or comparable academic institutions of higher education who hold an appropriate position equivalent to that of a professor. At least half of all evaluators must be professors, fully or semi-retired professors or associate professors from the faculty.
- (3) For dissertations by publication, no more than one of the evaluators can also be a co-author of the publications that make up the dissertation.
- (4) Professors, associate professors or leaders from independent research groups from the faculties involved who are technically capable and can reasonably be expected to take on the workload may not refuse an appointment as evaluator.
- (5) The evaluators give reasons for their assessment of the dissertation in writing and suggest whether the dissertation should be accepted or rejected and, if they are suggesting that it should be accepted, propose one of the following marks:
 - Outstanding (0)
 - Excellent (1)
 - Good (2)
 - Satisfactory (3)
 Marks may be differentiated by adding or subtracting 0.3. Marks below 0 or above 3 shall not be assigned.
- (6) The evaluators can issue conditions for publication of the dissertation in their written

evaluations.

- (7) The written evaluations should be submitted to the doctoral committee no later than three months after the appointment of the assessors.

Section 10 Inspection of the dissertation and written evaluations

- (1) The four-week inspection period in the dean's office begins when the doctoral committee receives the evaluations. If there any are written requests asking to reduce the inspection period, the doctoral committee decides whether the request will be acceded to.
- (2) All professors, associate professors and leaders of independent research groups in the faculty, plus professors from the Faculty of Theology if the dissertation relates to the subjects of diaconal studies and social ethics, and the evaluators have the right to inspect dissertations and written evaluations.
- (3) Once the doctoral committee has received the evaluations, it must inform the doctoral candidate in writing that the written evaluations are available for inspection at the dean's office during office hours. The dissertation and the written evaluations will then be made available for inspection at the dean's office.
- (4) The commencement date of the inspection period, the name of the candidate, the title of the dissertation, and the names of the evaluators are to be communicated in writing to the faculty's professors, associate professors and leaders of independent research groups, to the deanship of the Faculty of Theology, and to the doctoral candidate.

Section 11 Appointment of further evaluators

- (1) During the inspection period, the professors, associate professors and leaders of independent research groups of the faculty concerned have the right to file a request with the doctoral committee to appoint a further evaluator. The request must be substantiated in writing. The request must be acceded to. The appointment of a further evaluator should take place swiftly within three weeks of receipt of the request during term time; the person submitting the request can be appointed as a further evaluator.
- (2) If two evaluators recommend that the dissertation be rejected, the doctoral student has the right to propose another evaluator. Provided that he or she is prepared to take on this role, he or she will be appointed by the doctoral committee.
- (3) If an evaluator is appointed in accordance with subsection 2, the doctoral committee appoints a further evaluator.
- (4) If further evaluators are appointed, section 9 applies mutatis mutandis.

Section 12 Termination of the doctoral degree procedure in the case of negative evaluations

If the chair of the doctoral committee establishes that the majority of evaluations recommend a rejection, the doctoral project is rejected.

Section 13 Examination committee

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- (1) On expiry of the inspection period and once all written evaluations have been received, and provided that section 12 does not apply, the doctoral committee appoints an examination committee, and from this a university lecturer, associate professor or leader of an independent research group as chair. The examination committee must be appointed within three weeks during term time. The doctoral committee informs the professors, associate professors, and leaders of independent research groups belonging to the faculty, and the doctoral candidate of the composition of the examination committee in writing.
- (2) The evaluators plus at least one other professor, associate professor or leader of an independent research group from the faculty belong to the examination committee.
- (3) The chair of the examination committee sets the date for the oral defence, convenes the examination committee and summons the candidate to the oral defence.
- (4) The examination committee takes decisions by majority vote. If there are an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote.
- (5) The examination committee immediately notifies the doctoral committee of its decisions in writing.

Section 14 Dissertation result

- (1) The examination committee decides whether to accept or reject the dissertation. It can only reject the dissertation if at least one evaluator recommends this.
- (2) If a dissertation is rejected on the first submission, the doctoral candidate has the right to resubmit a revised version of the dissertation within one year of the date on which the dissertation was rejected. If the doctoral student does not exercise his or her right to revise the dissertation or if the revised version is not submitted in due time, the doctoral project is rejected.

Section 15 Oral defence

- (1) Once the dissertation has been accepted, the candidate takes an oral defence, which lasts about approximately two hours and covers the dissertation and topics in the subject of the doctoral studies, to be chosen by the examination committee.
- (2) As a rule, the oral defence should be held within six weeks of the end of the inspection period or after submission of all evaluations. The chair of the examination committee must communicate the time and place of the oral defence, and the designated subject areas in writing to the other members of the examination committee and to the doctoral student.
- (3) So far as space limitations allow, the chair of the examination committee may allow other doctoral candidates to attend the oral defence as spectators. However, spectators will not be allowed to attend the discussion and announcement of the examination results. The examination must be made non-public upon the candidate's request if good reasons exist.
- (4) The oral defence is conducted by the chair of the examination committee.
- (5) A concise written record of the oral defence must be prepared.

Section 16 Decision on oral defence performance

- (1) Immediately after the oral defence, the examination committee decides in closed session whether the candidate's performance in the oral defence should be accepted or rejected.
- (2) If the oral defence performance is rejected pursuant to subsection 1, the doctoral candidate can retake the oral defence after submitting a written request to the examination committee. The request must be submitted to the examination committee no later than six months after the first oral defence. Retakes are granted only once.
- (3) If the oral defence is rejected and the candidate chooses not to retake it, or if his or her performance at the retake is rejected, the doctorate is rejected.

Section 17 Doctoral result

- (1) Provided that the doctorate has not been rejected according to section 12, section 1 subsection 2, or section 16 subsection 2, the examination committee establishes in closed session the mark for the dissertation on the basis of the written evaluations, the mark for the oral defence on the basis of the candidate's oral defence performance, and the overall mark on the basis of both marks.
- (2) Section 9 subsection 4 applies mutatis mutandis to the calculation of the marks awarded for the dissertation and the oral defence performance.
- (3) The overall mark is determined as the total of the grade for the dissertation with a weighting of two-thirds, plus the grade for the oral defence performance with a weighting of one-third, as follows: for a total of 0:30 or lower: summa cum laude; for a total above 0.30 and below or equal to 1.30: magna cum laude; for a total above 1.30 and below or equal to 2.30: cum laude; for a total above 2.30 and below or equal to 3.00: rite.
- (4) The candidate must be notified of the doctoral result immediately.

Section 18 Resubmission

If the doctorate is rejected in accordance with section 12 or section 14 subsection 2, the doctoral candidate can submit a new dissertation. Approval for resubmission is granted only once.

Section 19 Publication of the dissertation

- (1) The dissertation must be published within two years after the doctorate has been awarded.
- (2) If the dissertation is not published in due time, all rights acquired with the doctorate are forfeited. In special cases, the time limit may be extended upon timely and substantiated request from the candidate. The chair of the doctoral committee decides on extensions of up to 6 months; for extensions exceeding this period, the decision is made by the doctoral committee.
- (3) Dissertations can be published:
 1. in a series of publications or as a self-contained book distributed by the publishing trade;

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2. in an academic journal;
3. by reproduction;
4. by providing a digital copy whose data format and carrier are to be approved by the university library.
5. the faculty has established specific guidelines for dissertations by publication which are to be observed

(4) The following rules apply to publication:

1. If the dissertation is published in a series or as a self-contained book, 6 copies must be submitted if proof of a minimum print-run of 150 copies can be provided.
2. If the dissertation is published in an academic journal or digitally, 6 copies must be submitted.

The doctoral committee reserves the right to decide which series, publishing houses, academic journals or compilations are suitable for publication.

3. If the dissertation is reproduced, 60 copies must be submitted.

(5) If conditions were imposed, the candidate must obtain written permission from the chair of the examination committee prior to the dissertation being published. The chair decides in consultation with the members of the examination committee.

(6) Any copies published after the doctorate is awarded must carry a publisher's imprint or a identifying the publication as a Heidelberg University dissertation. If the dissertation title is modified for publication, the original title must be indicated.

Section 20 Conferral of the degree of Dr. phil.

- (1) If the candidate submits the deposit copies in due time pursuant to section 19 subsection 2, he or she is awarded the degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie* (Dr. phil.). The last sentence of section 1 subsection 1 applies mutatis mutandis.
- (2) The doctoral degree certificate contains the title of the dissertation, the overall mark, and the date of the oral defence as the date on which the doctorate was awarded. Candidates may request the certificate to be issued in English.
- (3) The right to use the title of "Doctor" is acquired only upon receipt of the doctoral certificate.

Section 21 Conferral of the degree of Dr. phil. h.c.

- (1) For outstanding academic achievements in the field of behavioural and cultural studies, including related areas, the faculty can award the honorary degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie ehrenhalber* (Dr. phil. h.c.), subject to the approval of the Senate.
- (2) The conferral of this degree is subject to a proposal by a minimum of three professors, associate professors or leaders or independent research groups from the faculty. In preparation of its decision, the faculty board appoints from its membership two professors or associate professors as rapporteurs. Once the rapporteurs submit their opinions, the faculty council takes a decision on the basis of a three-quarter majority of its members holding a doctorate.

- (3) The degree of Dr. phil. h.c. is conferred through the handing over of an honorary doctoral certificate in which the faculty honours the academic merits of the conferee.

Section 22 Revocation of admission; nullification of doctoral results

- (1) If, prior to the handing over of the doctoral certificate, it emerges that the candidate met a condition of admission through deception, or essential conditions of admission were mistakenly taken to have been satisfied, the doctoral committee may upon request revoke the admission of a candidate to the doctoral programme. The same applies if facts become known that would justify revocation of a doctoral degree under state law.
- (2) If, prior to the handing over of the doctoral certificate, it emerges that the candidate used deception in order to meet one of the requirements for the doctorate, the doctoral committee may nullify either this particular result or all prior results. In severe cases the committee may revoke admission to the doctoral programme.
- (3) The candidate concerned must be heard before a decision is taken. The decision must be substantiated and served to him or her with instructions for appeal.

Section 23 Revocation of doctoral degree

- (1) Revocation of doctoral degrees is governed by state law. If state law does not specify otherwise, the doctoral committee is the competent body to administer revocation of doctoral degrees.
- (2) The candidate concerned must be heard before a decision is taken. The decision must be substantiated and served to him or her with instructions for appeal.

Section 24 Viewing the records

Upon the candidate's request and once the doctoral degree procedure is completed, the candidate must be allowed to view the doctoral records if knowledge of these records is required to enforce or defend his or her legal interests. A request to this effect must be submitted to the dean within one year after the doctoral degree procedure has been completed.

Section 25 Exemptions

Insofar as the Act on Higher Education of the Land of Baden-Württemberg does not preclude this, the doctoral committee may in individual cases approve exemptions from the above provisions with a two-thirds majority of all members present in a duly scheduled meeting, for example to allow for binational or interdisciplinary doctoral degree procedures.

Section 26 Entry into force

These Doctorate Regulations come into force on the first day of the month following publication in the Rector's Bulletin. They simultaneously supersede the Doctoral Regulations of the University of Heidelberg for the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural

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Studies dated 26 May 2006 (Rector's Bulletin dated 29 May 2006). Candidates who started doctoral work prior to these doctoral regulations becoming effective may upon request continue the doctorate according to the previously applicable provisions.

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