

Glossary

Doctorate procedure:	Promotionsverfahren
Doctorate board of the Faculty of Biology:	Promotionsausschuss der Fakultät für Biologie
Regulations for a doctorate:	Promotionsordnung
Doctorate board:	Promotionskomitee (Mentorat)
Principal supervisor:	Erstbetreuer, Doktorvater, Doktormutter

Guidelines for the Doctorate Procedure of the Faculty of Biology of the University of Würzburg

A Validity period of the guidelines for the doctorate procedure of the Faculty of Biology of the University of Würzburg from August 9th, 2017

These guidelines are valid for all Ph.D. projects beginning with the day of the decision of the doctorate board of the Faculty of Biology from November 15th, 2017. In case a new version of the guidelines is released during ongoing Ph.D. projects that version of the guidelines remains valid which was effective at the time of registration of the Ph.D. project.

B Enrolment for a doctorate at the Faculty of Biology

- Before enrolment for a doctorate, please read the regulations and guidelines for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology carefully!
- The general regulations for a doctorate at the University of Würzburg require an obligate enrolment at the University of Würzburg for all Ph.D. students. For registration at the student service center (office of student affairs) of the University of Würzburg, an official letter of approval of the Dean is required.

To enroll for a doctorate at the Faculty of Biology, please submit the following documents to the Deans's office.

- The completed Supervision Agreement (attachment 1) filled in (at this early time point one nominated supervisor is sufficient. If the chosen supervisor is not a member of the Faculty of Biology, a habilitated member of the Faculty of Biology has to be nominated also).
- All pivotal certificates (master certificate, the master report, bachelor certificate, the bachelor report, or pre-diploma and diploma certificate and the diploma report) have to be submitted to the Dean's office. The validation of the copies of documents and the original certificates can be checked for authenticity by the Dean's office. Otherwise, authenticated copies of the certificates must be submitted. According to §7 of the general regulations for a doctorate of the University of Würzburg all Ph.D. students has to be enrolled at the University of Würzburg as early as possible according to the usual enrolment terms. The official enrolment certificate has to be handed in together with the declaration of the starting date of the Ph.D. thesis („Start-up Report,“ see below) at the Dean's office. The enrolment at the University of Würzburg in the summer term has to take place on or before May 31st, in the winter term on or before November 30th.

- To ensure a structured form of the doctorate and qualification program a doctorate board (Mentor) has to be nominated (attachment 2) and verified by the "Start-up-Report" (attachment 3) no later than six months after enrolment for the doctorate). Also, an "Annual progress report" has to be handed in (attachment 4). At least one habilitated member of the Faculty for Biology has to be a member of the doctorate board. If these terms cannot be met, a detailed explanation with a description for the reason of predicted/possible delays has to be handed in at the Dean's office in writing. This document has to be signed by the Ph.D. student and the principal supervisor of the thesis. Neglecting these rules may cause retardations in the doctorate procedure.
- **Exceptions:** If a PhD-student has already started a doctorate at another university, the student can continue his doctorate at the Faculty of Biology after transferring to the University of Würzburg. Transfer students should submit an official registration in the Dean's office. For Ph.D. students transferring from the „Graduate School of Life Sciences“ (GSLS) of the University of Würzburg to the doctorate program of the Faculty for Biology, all achievements obtained in the GSLS will be accepted.

C Notes on the qualification program

- (1) The general aim of the qualification program is to enable the Ph.D. students to transfer practical and theoretical knowledge gained in their own scientific project to new problem statements. Thus, it is essential that the Ph.D. students acquire skills required for independent design and experimental realization of experiments, the assessment of the results and their interpretation.
- (2) In general, the courses of the qualification program are offered in English.
- (3) The doctorate board and the Ph.D. student together compile an individual qualification program consisting of mandatory and optional components. In reasonable cases and after agreement by the doctorate board of the Faculty of Biology the extent and duration of the qualification program can be modified. In cases of doubt, the doctorate board (Mentor) is in charge to decide. The doctorate board is obligated to control the participation of the Ph.D. student at the previously determined qualification program.
- (4) The qualification program per semester is as follows:
 - a) The mandatory component consists of a total of 2 hours per week (Semesterwochenstunden or SWS):
 - Lab seminar (1 or 2 SWS) in the respective working group and/or
 - Literature seminar (1 or 2 SWS) in the respective working group
 - b) Additional achievements which have to be decided upon with the doctorate board:
 - A comprehensive seminar or a course of lectures either of the Faculty of Biology or from other hosts? (Please Specify) dealing with a topic in the natural sciences
 - Scientific meetings, retreats, workshops of research networks
 - Workshops on scientific methods, Summer Schools
 - Research internships in other labs, in particular abroad
 - Courses from the „Additional Modules“ which are offered in the Master Biosciences Program of the Faculty of Biology
 - Additional skills, in particular, communication techniques, science management, self-management and personnel management, or languages
 - Participation in several courses outside of your own research area within a period of three years is recommended in particular in the fields of technology transfer/entrepreneurship and languages / cultural sciences
 - Active contribution to student courses or scientific events of the Faculty of Biology
 - Courses for University Teaching at the „ProfiLehre“ of the University of Würzburg

The participation in the courses or events has to be verified by the responsible instructor on the respective form (attachment 5). These signed forms are required when handing in your dissertation at the Dean`s office (see point D) as a proof of participation in the qualification program determined by the doctorate board.

During the Ph.D. studies, the participation at and active contribution to international scientific meetings is highly recommended.

- (5) In case the student begins a doctoral study program before completion of a Master in Biosciences according to §17 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology, the modules of the Master's program completed during the thesis period can also be credited for the qualification program of the doctoral study program.

D Documents to be provided when handing in a dissertation to obtain a doctorate at the Faculty of Biology (according to §4 Chapter 3 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology)

The following documents have to be handed in at the Dean`s office:

The printed doctorate thesis in quadruplicate (DIN A4) and once as pdf-File. More details about the form of the thesis are provided in chapter/section E.

All of the following documents have to be handed in once as a printed copy and once in electronic form:

- (1) Application of "Opening the doctorate procedure" (**attachment 6**) according to §4 Chapter 3 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty addressed to the "Promotionsausschuss der Fakultät für Biologie, Biozentrum, Am Hubland, 97074 Würzburg". The application must include the postal address of the Ph.D. student including an email address, the names of all reviewers including their full addresses, and the title of the doctorate thesis;
- (2) A curriculum vitae signed by the applicant;
- (3) All declarations signed by the applicant as requested according to § 7 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty (in addition to the declarations included in the thesis; see attachment 7)
- (4) Publication list (attachment 8): In the publication list those publications, which are directly originating from the thesis, have to be marked to be able to distinguish such publications from other publications. Except for the classic monograph in every other form of the thesis (see chapter E for more information) the equity ratio of the candidate in each publication that belongs to the thesis has to be clearly stated if more than one author is listed. This ratio has to be confirmed by the co-authors by signature. If not all co-authors respond to this request, corresponding authors have to sign instead.
- (5) The electronic circulation of the documents requires that publications and/or manuscripts which arose from the doctoral thesis have to be handed in at the Dean`s office as pdf-documents. In case of submitted manuscripts the validation of the respective journal has to be presented. Manuscripts submitted need to be handed in in the format requested by the respective journal. Also, submitted manuscript(s) have to be handed in at the Dean`s office also in two printed copies since they have to be sent to the reviewers for evaluation of the doctoral thesis. On this, please read §11 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty for information about grades. Publications and manuscripts which did not arise from the doctoral thesis are not allowed to be part of the documents included in the circulation procedure;
- (6) In case of a „fast-track“ admission to the doctorate the Master certificate and the Master report have to be filed subsequently. The validation of the copies of certificates and the original certificates can be checked for authenticity by the Dean`s offices. Otherwise authenticated copies of certificates must be submitted;

- (7) Evidence of enrolment at the University of Wuerzburg (copy of confirmation of periods of study or enrolment certificates);
- (8) Copy of the „Start-up Report“;
- (9) Copies of the „Annual Progress Reports“;
- (10) Proof of the qualification program (attachment 5);
- (11) Police clearance certificate not older than three months (criminal record certificate with the document type “0” for submission to authority) if the PhD-student is not enrolled or doesn’t have a contract with the University of Würzburg at the moment;
- (12) Declaration of agreement to plagiarism check (attachment 9) as described in detail in chapter G.

General note: Please consider when planning your final oral defence (Promotionskolloquium) that the doctorate committee of the Faculty of Biology is active only during the lecture period of each semester. A delay in the graduation procedure may occur, e.g., in case of a formal objection (see for information about the semester terms http://www.studienangelegenheiten.uni-wuerzburg.de/fristen_und_termine/).

E Notes on the form, format and transmission mode of the doctoral thesis

The doctoral thesis can be written either in German or in the English language. The thesis has to be printed on time-stable, acid- and wood free paper and bound solidly including page numbers (see §8 and §12 of the regulations for a doctoral degree of the Faculty for further details). The format of the title page and the back of the title page of the doctoral thesis is pre-determined (attachment 10). The thesis must include a table of contents, a summary in German and English language, and a list of references. The doctoral thesis can be written in various formal variants:

- i) The thesis can be written in a „classical“ format with the following sections: a summary, introduction with a description of the scientific question, materials, and methods, results, general discussion and list of references. Alternatively, the thesis can also consist of an introduction which describes the scientific background and the scientific question of the work, a general discussion of the content of all chapters, a list of references and several separate manuscript-based chapters.
- ii) In case of a cumulative thesis, the following quality standards have to be met: At least one of the reviewers is not allowed to be a co-author on a publication which is part of the graduation project. The publications selected for the doctoral thesis have to fulfill the following requirements: The publications have to be published or accepted for publication in a scientific journal with an international reputation with a peer-review-practice. It is obligatory that at least three of the publications that are part of the doctoral thesis has been written by the PhD-candidate acting as main author of the publications. In addition, these publications have to be coherent with the contents of the thesis. Cumulative theses need a comprehensive introduction to the aims of the work, a description of the methods used by the PhD-candidate and a comprehensive discussion of all results.
The publication list and, if required, the equity ratio of the candidate in each publication that belongs to the thesis, have to be handed in at the Dean`s office as separate documents when the promotion procedure is opened. In addition, these documents have to be part of the appendix in the doctoral thesis (see chapter D for further details). All additional auxiliary means have to be formally declared.

The PhD-candidates are fully responsible for adhering to copyright regulations when preparing the doctoral thesis. For further details, please consider §8 and §12 of the rules for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology.

F Notes regarding the electronic circulation procedure of the graduation documents

In case the decision by the doctorate board of the Faculty is made via electronic circulation of the documents, a panel consisting of three members of the doctorate board of the Faculty is appointed at the start of the circulation. This panel has to perform a plausibility check of the doctoral thesis and to check its adherence to all formal criteria. The members of this panel must be distinct from the members of the doctorate board of the thesis. The panel has to communicate the results of its survey to the Dean's office, and in case of an inconsistency, the panel has to submit a report to the Dean's office. In case of an inconsistency, , the Dean will evaluate together with the panel whether the fault is minor or severe. In case only minor improvements are required, the Ph.D. candidate will be asked for correction, in case of severe faults a formal objection will be made.

G Notes regarding grading

An essential but insufficient requirement for the grade „very good“ (magna cum laude) is the existence of at least one publication with the Ph.D. candidate as a first author which is submitted to a renowned international journal with a peer review based evaluation system. This fact has to be proven (see chapter D). For additional information regarding grading, please consider §11 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology.

A prerequisite for the grade „very good with honours“ (summa cum laude) is the existence of at least one publication with the Ph.D. candidate as a first author in a renowned international journal with peer review based evaluation system which is already published or at least accepted for publication. This fact has to be proven. It should be pointed out that the grade „summa cum laude“ represents an exceptional honour and only an excellent performance will justify this grade, which is far above the performance for the grade „magna cum laude. For additional regulations regarding the grade „summa cum laude please consider §9 of the regulations for a doctorate of the Faculty of Biology.

H Notes regarding good scientific practice

In addition to the recommendation to read the general guidelines regarding good scientific practice of the University of Würzburg (see §6 and §7 of the GWP-guidelines; <http://www.graduateschools.uni-wuerzburg.de/fileadmin/43030000/GWP-Richtlinien.pdf>) it is indicated that at random some doctoral theses may be checked by a specific software for detection of plagiarism. When handing in the doctoral dissertation the PhD-candidate should give written consent that the thesis may be reviewed by such software (attachment 9). In case of refusal, it should be noted that this may prolong the graduation procedure substantially, since a long-lasting individual inspection of the thesis may be carried out.