

## **Doctoral Degree Regulations**

of the Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Tübingen,

**1 March 1991**

On 13 July 1989, on 14 December 1989 and on 13 December 1990 the University of Tübingen Senate passed the following doctoral degree regulations in accordance with § 54 (3) in connection with § 51 (1)(2) of the Universitätsgesetz.

The Ministry of Science and the Arts gave its approval on 19 February 1991, ref.: II-818.810/8.

*[This translation includes the amendments of 26 February 2001 (§12a); 1 January 2005 (§1(2) and §14(1))]*

### **§ 1 Types of doctorate**

(1) The Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Tübingen confers the academic degree of Doctor of Theology (Dr. theol.) in accordance with §§ 2 - 13 of these doctoral degree regulations.

(2) It also confers the academic degree of Honorary Doctor of Theology (Dr. h.c.) in accordance with §14.

### **§ 2 Doctoral examination committee**

(1) The doctoral examination committee is responsible for all decisions regarding the doctoral qualification process unless otherwise set out in these doctoral degree regulations.

(2) The doctoral examination committee is composed of professors and other teaching staff at the Faculty of Protestant Theology, if they are employed full-time by the University of Tübingen, but not the retired professors who are released from their duties. The head of the doctoral examination committee is the Dean or Vice-Dean as his/her deputy.

(3) The doctoral examination committee has a quorum if at least half of its members are present. Decisions are passed with a majority of the vote. In the event of a tie, the motion fails.

(4) The Faculty's retired professors released from their duties may take part in doctoral examination committee meetings in an advisory capacity; § 7(4) remains unaffected.

### **§ 3 Acceptance as a doctoral candidate**

(1) A person who meets the requirements under § 4 may apply to be accepted as a doctoral candidate under (2).

(2) Acceptance as a doctoral candidate is issued by the head of the doctoral examination committee on the basis of a recommendation by a faculty professor or other member of academic staff who has agreed on the candidate's thesis topic. If no such agreement exists, the candidate shall be assigned to a professor or other member of academic staff for academic supervision. After a review of requirements this acceptance shall be confirmed by the head of the doctoral examination committee by adding the candidate to the list of doctoral candidates and by issuing a doctoral candidate identification document, if the candidate requests one. In cases of doubt, the doctoral examination committee will make the decision.

(3) Acceptance as a doctoral candidate may be withdrawn in accordance with § 49 of the Landesverwaltungsverfahrensgesetz, particularly if the candidate does not apply to begin the doctoral qualification process under § 5 within four years.

#### **§ 4 Requirements for admission to the doctoral qualification process**

- (1) Applicants may only be admitted to the doctoral qualification process if they
- a) can document that they have successfully completed a full degree in protestant theology at a university in the German-speaking world; exceptions can be made for applicants who have completed the usually eight-semester study program of protestant theology at a university in the German-speaking world,
  - b) have studied at the University of Tübingen's Faculty of Protestant Theology for at least two semesters,
  - c) are members of a Protestant church.
- (2) The requirement for documentation under 1 a) is met by the certificate of examination, or in exceptional cases the confirmation of enrollment. It must be accompanied by documentation of the required language examinations in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Other certificates, particularly those from abroad, require accreditation. Accreditation brings with it the presumption of equivalency. The doctoral examination committee shall decide on accreditation. Upon application, the doctoral examination committee may credit studies at an institution of higher education abroad or at a German-speaking institution of higher education towards the eight-semester period of study, if there is equivalency.
- (3) The requirement for documentation under 1 b) is met by the confirmation of enrollment. In well-founded cases the doctoral examination committee may waive this requirement.
- (4) The requirement for documentation under 1 c) is met by written confirmation from a Protestant church. In exceptional cases, the doctoral examination committee may with a two-thirds majority decide to admit applicants who belong to another church or confession represented on the World Council of Churches, particularly if that church or confession does not have an academic training institution which is equivalent to those of the Federal Republic of Germany.

#### **§ 5 Application for admission to the doctoral qualification process**

- (1) Applications for admission to the doctoral qualification process must be made in writing to the Dean.
- (2) The application must be accompanied by:
1. a brief curriculum vitae including education, written in German;
  2. the documentation required under § 4;
  3. a recent police clearance certificate;
  4. the doctoral thesis
  5. an assurance by the candidate that the thesis submitted was not written with the help of others, that none but the resources listed in it were used and that all quotations have been cited correctly;
  6. a declaration by the candidate that the thesis has not previously been used for assessment in an academic or church examination.
  7. information from the candidate as to whether he/she has previously qualified or attempted to qualify for a doctoral degree; the candidate must detail when, with what thesis and in which faculty the doctoral qualification or attempted doctoral qualification took place.
- (3) The Dean shall decide on admission after reviewing whether the requirements under §4 have been met. If he does not decide to admit the candidate, or if decisions by the doctoral examination committee are required under §4, the doctoral examination committee shall decide.
- (4) If the requirements set out in § 4 and § 5 (1) and (2) have been met, admission may only be denied if

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- a) circumstances exist which would warrant the withdrawal of a doctoral title,
- b) the applicant is not accepted as a doctoral candidate under § 3 and no professor or other member of academic staff at the Faculty is able to assess the thesis or the topic is clearly unsuited to a thesis at the Faculty of Protestant Theology for some other reason,
- c) the applicant has changed the topic agreed with him/her under §3 without authorization and his/her thesis cannot be assessed for reasons set out under b).

### **§ 6 Doctoral thesis**

- (1) The doctoral thesis must demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct academic work independently. It must be academically noteworthy.
- (2) The doctoral thesis must be typewritten or printed in German and twelve copies of it must be submitted. In well-founded cases the doctoral examination committee may approve the use of another language. The printed copies of the thesis must be bound and the pages must be numbered. All literature and sources used must be cited.

### **§ 7 Appointment of examiners**

- (1) The Dean appoints a first and a second examiner to assess the doctoral thesis. The first examiner shall be the professor or member of academic staff who recommended or supervised the candidate. The second examiner must be a professor if the first examiner is a member of academic staff without the title of professor.  
  
(2) The examiners shall be professors or other academic staff of the Faculty of Protestant Theology. In exceptional circumstances the dean may appoint a professor or other member of academic staff from another faculty as second examiner.  
(3) With the approval of the doctoral examination committee the Dean may appoint as examiners professors or other academic staff who are past members of the faculty but no longer with the University.  
(4) The examiners appointed under (2) and (3) have the same rights and duties in the doctoral qualification process as faculty professors or other members of the faculty's academic staff. They each have a vote on the doctoral examination committee, insofar as there is a decision to be made in the doctoral examination process. They do not count towards a quorum.  
(5) In special cases, the doctoral examination committee may release an examiner from his/her duties. In such cases, the doctoral examination committee will appoint a new examiner.

### **§ 8 Assessment of doctoral thesis**

- (1) Examiners present their written reports within an appropriate time limit. If the thesis is recommended, the possible grades are
  - summa cum laude (excellent)
  - magna cum laude (very good)
  - cum laude (good)or rite (satisfactory).  
No finer definition between these grades is permitted.

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(2) Examiners may recommend that acceptance of the thesis is made dependent upon the candidate addressing objections to the work by making improvements or additions. The thesis may be given back to the candidate for this purpose; a time limit must be set. If this time limit elapses without the improvements or changes having been made successfully, the thesis counts as rejected, unless the failure to meet the deadline is not the fault of the candidate. The doctoral examination committee shall decide.

(3) If the examiners do not agree on whether to accept or reject the thesis, or if the examiners' reports deviate by more than a grade, the Dean shall obtain a third examiner's report.

(4) All members of the doctoral examination committee receive a copy of the doctoral thesis and examiners' reports for inspection.

(5) The final decision on acceptance of the thesis, on any conditions, and on the grade rests with the doctoral examination committee. If the thesis is rejected, the doctoral qualification process ends. The final rejection of the thesis must be communicated to the candidate in writing.

(6) The copies of the thesis submitted and the examiners' reports remain with the faculty.

### **§ 9 Oral defense**

(1) Once the thesis has been accepted, the candidate must defend his/her thesis before an examination board, which is chosen by the doctoral examination committee. Only professors and other members of academic staff may be appointed to the examination board.

(2) All members of the doctoral examination committee may attend the oral defense as observers. Provided there are no reasons to prohibit it and the candidate has not applied for an in camera oral defense, other doctoral students may apply to the Dean to attend the oral defense as observers, subject to the space limitations of the examination venue.

(3) The oral defense takes the form of an academic discussion and covers the following subjects: Old Testament, New Testament, the History of the Church and Dogma, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology.

Upon application by the candidate, the doctoral examination committee may decide to test the subject Church Order instead of History of the Church and Dogma or of Systematic Theology, the subject Missiology and Ecumenical Theology instead of History of the Church and Dogma or of Practical Theology; each subject thus replaced must be taken into account in the relevant examination.

The oral defense runs for approximately one hour on the subject of the thesis and about 15 minutes on the other subjects.

(4) If the candidate has obtained an academic degree or church equivalent in Protestant Theology or the Wissenschaftliche Prüfung for teaching at German high schools (Gymnasien) with Protestant Theology as his/her main subject with a grade of "good" or better, and if his/her thesis is graded "magna cum laude" or "summa cum laude," the doctoral examination committee may upon application by the first examiner restrict the oral defense to the subject of the thesis and two more of the subjects listed under (3), as chosen by the candidate. In this case care must be taken to deal with one subject from the two following subject groups:

- a) Old Testament/New Testament
- b) Systematic Theology/Practical Theology

In this case the oral defense takes 20 minutes in each of the subjects chosen by the candidate.

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(5) The oral defense shall be conducted in each subject by a member of the board of examiners responsible for that subject in the presence of at least one other examiner (observer). Examiners and observers decide jointly on the grade according to §8(1). If they cannot agree, the examination board shall by a simple majority decide on the grade.

(6) Following the oral defense the examination board shall decide on the outcome. The oral defense has been passed if the candidate has obtained a grade of “rite” or better in each subject. An overall grade is not calculated for the oral defense.

(7) Minutes must be kept on the progress of the oral defense and the result of the final decision, and be kept on file.

### **§ 10 Grade and repetition of assessment**

(1) If the candidate has passed the oral defense the examination board, chaired by the Dean or his/her representative, the vice-dean, decides on the overall grade on the basis of all pieces of assessment. The overall grade is calculated from the grade for the thesis and the grades given in the oral defense.

Only one of the grades listed under §8(1) may be given. No finer definition between these grades is permitted. The thesis counts for a larger proportion of the overall grade.

(2) If the candidate fails the oral defense, he/she may repeat it once after at least six months and at most twelve months later. If the candidate fails the repeat oral defense, the doctoral qualification process is ended unsuccessfully.

(3) If the doctoral thesis is rejected, the candidate may apply again to the doctoral examination committee to be accepted as a doctoral candidate. (4) The topic of the new thesis must be significantly different from that of the rejected thesis.

(4) (3)(1) applies accordingly if the application for admission to the doctoral qualification process is retracted.

### **§ 11 Inspection of the files**

The applicant has the right to inspect the files on his/her doctoral qualification process including the examiners' reports in accordance with the Landesverwaltungsverfahrensgesetz.

### **§ 12 Printing and submission of doctoral thesis**

(1) If the candidate has passed the oral defense, the printed doctoral thesis must be published in the version approved by the doctoral examination committee (§ 8(5)).

The doctoral examination committee may approve changes retrospectively, provided the overall character of the thesis is not altered and the publication of the academic issues, the methods applied, and the results are not restricted.

(2) Publication may take place as

- a) the delivery of 80 copies in bound or photocopied form to the Tübingen University Library, or
- b) publication by a commercial publisher, provided a minimum of 150 copies is documented; three of these must be submitted to the University Library, or
- c) publication in an academic journal; three copies of which must be submitted to the University Library.

(3) Faculty approval including the names of the examiners and the date of the oral defense must be detailed on the reverse side of the title page. A curriculum vitae of the author is to be added at the end. Prior to publication, the title page and curriculum vitae must be submitted to the Dean for approval. The

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doctoral examination committee may waive these requirements if the thesis is being published by a commercial publisher or in a journal.

(4) If the required copies are not submitted within three years of the successful oral defense, all rights obtained by examination lapse. The Dean may extend this deadline for good reason. The application for extension must be made in good time and reasons given.

**§ 12 a)** The duty to publish and distribute the doctoral thesis may also be met by delivering an electronic version in line with the data format and data storage medium requirements of the University of Tübingen Library. In this case up to seven paper copies must be submitted in addition; they must be printed on aging-resistant, wood-free, acid-free paper and have a permanent binding. The doctoral examination committee shall decide on the exact number of copies to be submitted as required. The doctoral candidate must ensure that the electronic version corresponds to the printed copies. The doctoral candidate gives the University of Tübingen the non-exclusive right within the framework of the University Library's statutory duties to distribute the doctoral thesis and to make it available in data networks. The doctoral candidate must be informed in writing beforehand that conceding this right may prohibit or impede publication of the thesis elsewhere at a later date.

### **§ 13 Issuing and presentation of the doctoral degree certificate**

(1) The doctoral degree certificate contains the thesis title and the overall grade. It is signed by the President of the University and by the Dean of the Faculty.

(2) The degree certificate is issued when the required number of thesis copies has been submitted.

(3) The title of "Doctor" is obtained upon receipt of the degree certificate. The title of Dr. theol. may not be used before that.

### **§ 14 Honorary doctorate**

(1) The doctoral examination committee may decide by unanimous vote to bestow an Honorary Doctorate of Theology (Dr. h.c.) in recognition of outstanding services to theology as an academic discipline or to the advancement of Church life.

(2) The honorary degree certificate is signed by the President of the University and by the Dean of the Faculty.

### **§ 15 Declaration of invalidity**

If it transpires before the issuing of the doctoral degree certificate that the candidate is guilty of cheating in his/her doctoral assessment, or that significant requirements for doctoral qualification were wrongly assumed to have been met, the doctoral qualification may be declared invalid. The decision rests with the doctoral examination committee.

### **§ 16 Withdrawal of a doctoral degree**

Under current legal provisions, the doctoral examination committee may withdraw the doctoral degree.

### **§ 17 Effective date and transitional arrangements**

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(1) These doctoral degree regulations come into force on the day after they are published in the Amtsblatt des Ministeriums für Wissenschaft und Kunst. Simultaneously the doctoral degree regulations of 9 July 1946, as amended on 1 October 1981 (K.u.U. 1981, S. 1233), are rescinded.

(2) Candidates who began their doctoral studies in Protestant Theology prior to that time may apply to be assessed under the previous doctoral degree regulations if their application for admission (§ 5) is received by the Dean within four years of these doctoral degree regulations coming into force. The application to be assessed under the old regulations must be accompanied by a copy of the application for admission.

Tübingen, 1 March 1991

Adolf Theis, University President

## Guidelines for doctoral candidates (exam regulations of 1 March 1991)

To be admitted to the doctoral examination, you must submit the following documentation:

1. A letter of application for admission to the doctoral process addressed to the Dean of the University of Tübingen's Faculty of Protestant Theology;
2. Your curriculum vitae, signed
3.
  - a) your assurance that the thesis you submit was not written with the help of others, that none but the resources listed in it were used and that all quotations have been cited correctly;
  - b) Your declaration that the thesis has not previously been used for assessment in an academic or church examination;
  - c) 7. information as to whether you have previously qualified or attempted to qualify for a doctoral degree; you must detail when, with what thesis and in which faculty the doctoral qualification or attempted doctoral qualification took place.
4. Your high school leaving certificate (notarized copy)
5. Documentation of the required language skills (Greek, Latin, Hebrew) if they are not listed in your high school leaving certificate;
6. Student records from all the institutions of higher education you have attended;
7. Documentation of assessment you have passed (notarized copies);
8. Documentation that you are a member of a protestant church (recent date);
9. Police clearance certificate (§ 5);
10. Twelve copies (four hard-cover, eight soft-cover) of the work must be submitted; the second page must contain:  
"Dean:  
First Examiner:  
Second Examiner:  
Date of the oral defense: " (names and the date will be filled out by the Dean's Office) These copies of the thesis may not have a foreword!
11. The thesis shall not be longer than 350 pages. This is to be calculated on the basis of 35 lines per page and 60 keystrokes per line.
12. Printing and submission of the doctoral thesis: see § 12 of the doctoral exam regulations of 1 March 1991. The doctoral degree certificate is issued after the submission of the deposit copies of the thesis: see § 13 of the doctoral exam regulations of 1 March 1991.