

# Curriculum of the PhD Programme Advanced Theological Studies/Religious Education and the Doctoral Programmes Protestant Theology and Catholic Theology

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1<sup>st</sup> (minor) amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 24 June 2013, 32nd edition, number 203.

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## § 1 Qualification Profile

### (1) General Regulations

The doctoral programme serves to prepare doctoral candidates for academic work in the fields of Catholic Theology, Protestant Theology and Interdisciplinary Theological Research as well as in Religious Education. It provides a scientific education of international standard and aims to enable graduates to conduct independent research of international standard in their respective field of expertise.

### (2) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme in Catholic Theology

The doctoral programme in Catholic Theology enables independent, creative academic work. Doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis, which serves to demonstrate the candidate's ability to master scientific topics independently. The programme enables graduates to teach at universities and other institutions of higher education and educates highly qualified academics that are well-suited for either an academic career or important professional positions in society or the Church. The doctoral programme in Catholic Theology promotes competences in the history, philosophy, and didactics of research in the chosen theological subjects. It also furthers the sensibility towards science policies regarding the issue of the significance of theology in the Church, the university, and in society at large. The programme is embedded in the research foci of the faculty as well as

in other research projects, and therefore automatically confronts doctoral candidates with current disputes and questions of theological research, which are pursued in interdisciplinary cooperations within the diverse theological domains as well as in a dialogue with other academic fields.

## **§ 2 Scope of application and admission requirements**

### **(1) General Regulations**

- a) This curriculum applies to doctoral candidates who intend to write a doctoral thesis in the fields of doctoral research Catholic Theology or Protestant Theology corresponding to a bachelor's programme or a diploma programme in this field. The same applies for applicants wanting to write an interdisciplinary dissertation in field Advanced Theological Studies/Religious Education.
- b) Admission to the degree programme is based on the relevant provisions set out in the 2002 Universities Act as amended.

### **(2) Special Regulations for the PhD Programme Advanced Theological Studies/Religious Education**

Applicants for this field of doctoral studies have to fulfil special admission criteria. This special admission process takes place in collaboration with the Doctoral Advisory Board.

The qualifications of the applicants are checked on the basis of following criteria:

- Sufficient expert knowledge in the aspired field of doctoral research
- Motivation and capability to do scientific work

In order for these criteria to be checked the applicants have to provide following documents:

Certificate proving the academic success in previous studies, motivation letter, letter of acceptance from a supervisor of the Faculty of Catholic Theology or the Faculty of Protestant Theology. In addition following documents can be asked for: a letter of recommendation, an interview with a member of the Doctoral Advisory Board as well as passing additional courses from the master level with success.

### **(3) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Catholic Theology**

- a) This curriculum applies to students who intend to write a doctoral thesis in an area corresponding to one of the accepted fields of theology as described in § 2 of the guidelines for the study programme of Catholic Theology in Austria ("Kirchliche Rahmenordnung für das Studium der Katholischen Fachtheologie in Österreich") of 2007 (as a major). It also allows interdisciplinary topics and specialized fields specific to the Faculty

- b) Admission to the doctoral programme in Catholic Theology requires the prior completion of a “Magisterium” in Catholic Theology or a canonical licentiate in Catholic Theology.
- c) Admission to the doctoral programme in Catholic Theology on grounds of the completion of another study programme can be granted if it corresponds to the study programmes listed under section b) in both demands and extent. If this equivalence is given in principle and only specific supplements are needed to achieve complete equivalence, the Rectorate is entitled to establish nominal equivalence on the condition that specific exams are taken in the course of the respective doctoral programme. With these extra exams the coverage of the core subjects in the Catholic Theology corresponding to the “Sapientia Christiana” is to be ensured.
- d) Admission to the doctoral programme in Catholic Theology presupposes sufficient knowledge of both Latin and classical Greek.

## **§ 3 Structure of the doctoral programme**

### **(1) General Regulation**

- a) The degree programme duration is 3 years.
- b) The contents and the extent of the study achievements are to be recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement. The programme is to be completed following the respective passages of study regulations in particular those passages referring to dissertations.
- c) The doctoral course can be taken partially in English, if the situation allows.

### **(2) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Protestant Theology and the PhD Programme Advanced Theological Studies/Religious Education**

During the doctoral study programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete achievements comprising 20 to 30 ECTS credits

### **(3) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Catholic Theology**

During the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete achievements comprising 44-60 ECTS credits:

- a) Courses with or without continuous assessment of coursework and further possible achievements required in the dissertation agreement in accordance with § 5, section 2. Further academic achievements (including ECTS credits and hours per week per semester), as well as all specifications pertaining to the writing and supervision of the doctoral thesis recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement.
- b) During the entry phase of the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete the following:
  - Completion of one seminar in the field of the doctoral thesis, if possible a seminar dealing with theoretical foundations or methodology of the field (= 4-6 ECTS).

- Writing a publishable paper or a project proposal which could be submitted for funding, in the field of doctoral research, (6 ECTS) which is to be presented publicly. Writing this paper or project proposal should, if possible, be undertaken in the course of a research seminar or doctoral seminar (“Privatissimum”) (further 6 ECTS) (6-12 ECTS).
  - Completion of a theological interdisciplinary course (encompassing at least two theological disciplines), which serves to deepen, solidify and practice thinking the unity of theology in the context of related disciplines and fields. Courses that fall into this category are explicitly marked as such by the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme (= 4-6 ECTS). This course can be chosen instead of the module “Theology in the context of church, science and society” (Theologie im Kontext von Kirche, Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft) (§ 5, section 2 d). Alternatively a further course from the dissertation area can be chosen.
  - Public presentation of the intended doctoral project at the Faculty.
- c) The overall scope of required achievements should generally not exceed 44 to 60 ECTS credits. In individual, justified cases, the upper limit can be exceeded given the approval of the competent body responsible for study matters (see § 5, section 2 a).

## **§ 4 Submission of the intended doctoral project and public presentation at the Faculty**

The doctoral candidate has to submit an application for approval of the intended doctoral project, together with a confirmation of supervision by the supervisor. This application has to include a research proposal, a time schedule, as well as a list of all necessary resources. In principle, the research proposal is approved by the competent body responsible for study matters, following a public presentation at the Faculty (§ 3, section 2 c). If the intended doctoral project is part of a research project which has already been approved externally in accordance with international standards, the competent body responsible for study matters may approve the doctoral project prior to the presentation at the Faculty. The approval of the intended doctoral project is, in any case, a prerequisite for signing a doctoral thesis agreement.

## **§ 5 Doctoral thesis agreement**

### **(1) General Regulation**

As set out in the Statutes, a doctoral thesis agreement has to be concluded between the supervisor and the doctoral candidate and approved by the competent body responsible for study matters.

### **(2) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Catholic Theology**

- a) Individual promotion of competences in the field of the doctoral thesis or specialized fields of theology and in general language competences (= 0–20 ECTS).
- b) Module “Specialization”: Specializing in the field of the doctoral thesis in terms of subject matter and/or methodology as well as specializing in at least one further theological field not directly related to the field of the doctoral thesis (4- 8 ECTS), which

belongs either to Catholic Theology or to a structured doctoral programme (e.g. a graduate school). (= 18–30 ECTS in total).

- c) Module “University Didactics”: courses dedicated to theoretical and practical didactics in higher education (including e-learning) (= 4–8 ECTS). This module can be neglected if the module “Involvement in a scientific event” (“Mitwirkung an einer wissenschaftlichen Veranstaltung”) is chosen (§5(2)e).
- d) Module “Theology in the context of Church, science and society”: Furthering the development of theoretical and practical abilities to communicate and position theology in the aforementioned contexts (= 4–6 ECTS). This module can be chosen alternatively to the interdisciplinary seminar in the entry phase (§3(6)). Alternatively a further course from the dissertation area can be chosen
- e) Module “Involvement in an academic event”: Being involved in the design and organization of an academic conference, colloquium, workshop, etc. or collaborating in the preparation and conducting of a university course as well as the presentation of posters and research results. (= 4-6 ECTS). This module is to be neglected if the module “University Didactics” was chosen.
- f) Achievements made in the entry phase of the doctorate can be taken into account for the Curricula if the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme and the supervisor agree.

## § 6 Doctoral thesis

- (1) Doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis, which serves to demonstrate the candidate’s ability to master scientific topics independently (§ 51, section 2, line 13 of the 2002 Universities Act). The doctoral thesis is expected to be of a quality that allows for publication, at least in parts, in accordance with the standards in the field of research.
- (2) The publication of partial results of the doctoral project in scientific journals and their presentation at scientific conferences prior to the submission of the doctoral thesis is encouraged.

## § 7 Public defence

### (1) General Regulation

specified in § 3 have been met and the doctoral thesis has been positively assessed by the assessors, the doctoral candidate has to pass a final oral examination (public defence) in front of an examination committee. This examination consists of the presentation and defence of the scientific work. The composition of the examination committee is set out in the provisions of the Statutes of the University of Vienna.

### (2) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Protestant Theology

The oral examination includes the presentation and defence of the doctoral thesis in relation to two further fields chosen by the doctoral candidate. The composition of the examination board is set out in the provisions of the Statutes of the University of Vienna.

### **(3) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Catholic Theology**

The examination includes the presentation and defence of the doctoral thesis (Defensio) as well as a discussion of the principal findings of the doctoral thesis in the context of the field of theology as a whole, especially the specific field of the doctoral thesis or the fields chosen for specialization (final examination).

## **§ 8 Examination regulations**

### **(1) General Regulation**

Courses offered in the doctoral programme must be offered as one of the following types of courses:

**Lecture** (“Vorlesung”, VO): a course which serves to introduce doctoral candidates to the crucial issues and methods of a discipline or field. It addresses the prevalent schools of thought and teaching in a respective discipline and its component fields. Main lectures serve as introductions to the discipline as a whole, specialized lectures deal with specific sub-fields. The contents of both these kinds of courses are presented in lectures.

**Seminar** (“Seminar”, SE): a course introducing doctoral candidates to an academic discourse and its argumentative patterns. It requires continuous attendance and involves the continuous assessment (active participation in the form of oral and written contributions by the doctoral candidates, protocols and a short academic paper (“Seminararbeit”)).

**Teaching seminar** (“Lehrseminar”, LS): a course combining features of a lecture (see above) and a seminar (see above) with continuous assessment. Parts of the course’s content are presented by the course teacher, while other parts are prepared jointly (e.g. through the reading of texts and presentations by doctoral candidates). Assessment of the course relies on an exam covering the contents presented during lectures and an assessment of the student presentations handed in as written texts.

**Research seminar** (“Forschungsseminar”, FS): a course with continuous assessment enabling participants to take part in a discourse of the discipline at a high level of expertise or specialization. If possible, it will also allow students to participate in an ongoing research project led by the course teacher. Course participants are assessed on the basis of their active participation as well as a manageable research effort with independent results that, ideally, could be published.

**Seminar for doctoral candidates** (“Doktorandenseminar”, DR): similar to research seminars with the difference that these courses are only open to doctoral candidates.

**Exercise** (“Übung”, UE): a course with continuous assessment serving to learn techniques enabling a practical application of theoretical knowledge acquired by students, e.g. through teaching the use of necessary tools and/or devices.

**Practical course** (“Praktikum”, PK): a course with continuous assessment held in- or outside the university serving to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for working and conducting projects in the practical context of a church, school, or any other institutional setting. Course participants are assessed on the basis of their active participation as well as on a summary report on the practical course which has to be submitted in written form.

**Workshop course** (“Werkstatt”, WS): a course with continuous assessment in which creative ideas, methods and work techniques are used to work on pastoral-theological or religious-pedagogical issues. These issues are analyzed concerning their subject matter, concept, or methodology and results are implemented. . Course participants are assessed on the basis of their active participation conducting the project as well as on a summary report on the workshop which is to be submitted in written form.

**Doctoral seminar** (“Privatissimum”, PV): a course with continuous assessment of coursework in which scientific projects (mostly doctoral theses) are discussed and supervised in a critical but constructive fashion in terms of their subject matter and methodology. Course participants are assessed on the basis of their active participation as well as on oral and written contributions.

## (2) Special Regulations for the Doctoral Programme Catholic Theology

The courses offered in the doctoral programme are to be offered as the following types of courses and equivalent achievements are to be appraised according to these types:

- Lecture (3 ECTS or 2 hours per week per semester; or 2 ECTS or 1 hour per week per semester)
- Seminar (4 ECTS or 2 hours per week per semester)
- Teaching seminar (4 ECTS or 2 hours per week per semester)
- Seminar for doctoral candidates (DissertantInnenseminar) (6 ECTS or 2 hours per week per semester)
- Practical course or workshop course (3 ECTS or 2 hours per week per semester)
- Doctoral seminar or “Privatissimum” (2 ECTS or 1 hour per week per semester)

## § 9 Completion of the doctoral programme

- (1) The doctoral programme is successfully completed if all requirements laid down in § 3, section 2 have been met.
- (2) Graduates of the doctoral programme Advanced Theological Studies/Religious Education are awarded the degree “Doctor of Philosophy”, abbreviated as “PhD“. Graduates of the Catholic or Protestant Theology are awarded the degree “Doktor/in der Theologie”, abbreviated as “Dr. theol.”.

## § 10 Entry into force and transitional arrangements

- (1) This curriculum enters into force on 1 October 2012.
- (2) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the doctoral programme in Catholic Theology or in Protestant Theology to the entry into force of this Curriculum can voluntarily and at any time accept the provisions of this Curriculum by means of a simple statement. The competent body must decide either generally or in each individual case which courses completed and examinations passed can be recognised for this Curriculum.
- (3) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the study programmes Catholic Theology (as stated in the University Gazette of 11 May 2012, edition 22, number 163, 1) or Protestant Theology (as stated in the University Gazette of 11 May 2012, edition 22, number 164) are entitled to complete their degree programme by November 30, 2015. . If, in the course of study, courses which were originally required in the degree programme are no longer offered, the competent body specified in the organisational regulations of the University of Vienna must decide *ex officio* or at the request of the doctoral candidate which courses and examinations have to be completed and recognised instead by issuing an official notice.