

Curriculum of the Doctoral Programme in Law and the PhD Programme in Interdisciplinary Legal Studies

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§1 Qualification Profile

Beyond offering academic training for a future profession, the doctoral programme enables doctoral candidates to expand their potential and ability to contribute independently to the development and advancement of Law as a field of academic research and thus serves to educate and encourage future generations of academics. 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 Scope of application and admission requirements

- (1) This curriculum applies to doctoral candidates who intend to write a doctoral thesis in a field of doctoral research that corresponds to one of the accepted fields as defined in the diploma study programme (“Diplomstudienplan”) for Law (Doctoral Programme) and for doctoral candidates aspiring a interdisciplinary orientated research project with a focus on law (PhD programme Interdisciplinary Legal Studies).
- (2) Beyond the general prerequisites detailed in §§ 63, 64 of the 2002 Universities Act, admission to the doctoral programme at the Faculty of Law requires:
 - a) the completion of a diploma programme in the field of Law, or

- b) the completion of an equivalent, MA-level study programme in the field of Law at a recognized Austrian or international institution of tertiary education.

It is possible that specific complementary exams have to be taken.

Beyond the general prerequisites detailed in §§ 63, 64 of the 2002 Universities Act, admission to the PhD programme Interdisciplinary Legal Studies requires the completion of a diploma programme in a relevant field and an interdisciplinary orientated research project which has a focus on law. Applicants for this programme have to additionally fulfil following admission criteria. This special admission process takes place in collaboration with the Doctoral Advisory Board.

- Sufficient expert knowledge in the field of law and the other discipline of the aspired research project
- Motivation and academic potential for the realisation of the aspired interdisciplinary project

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

- Certificate proving the academic success in previous studies,
- Expert's report over up to date written theses and report on already published articles
- Evidence of professional experience if this is a special qualification which in regard to the aspired research project
- Motivation letter
- Description of the dissertation project and its methodology
- Letter of acceptance from a supervisor of the Faculty of Law for the aspired dissertation project

If necessary, in order to ensure methodological knowledge, passing of additional courses or passing of extra exams to deepen scientific knowledge in the field of law and knowledge of research in this field can be prescribed.

§ 3 Duration of the programme

The degree programme duration is 3 years.

§ 4 Structure of the doctoral programme

(1) During the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete following:

- a) One lecture ("Vorlesung", VO) dealing with methodology in the field of Law, with non-continuous assessment (2 hours per week per semester, comprising 4 ECTS credits).
- b) One course with continuous assessment, either a seminar ("Seminar", SE) or course ("Kurs", KU) dealing with the analysis of court decisions or texts (2 hours per week for a semester, comprising 6 ECTS).
- c) One seminar ("Seminar", SE) in the field of the doctoral thesis, in which work on the doctoral thesis is presented and discussed (2 hours per week per semester, comprising 6 ECTS).

- d) Two seminars (“Seminar”, SE), of which one is to be in the field of the doctoral thesis (4 hours per week per semester, comprising 12 ECTS).
 - e) Courses in the field of the doctoral thesis or in the doctoral candidates chosen fields of specialization (“Wahlfächer”) (6 hours per week per semester, comprising up to 18 ECTS).
- (2) The successful completion of the courses listed in a) to c) is a prerequisite for the approval of the research proposal (thus constituting the entry phase of the doctoral programme).
- (3) For points d) and e) specific courses which are beneficial to the work on the doctoral thesis can be set down in the doctoral thesis agreement (up to 10 hours per week per semester, comprising up to 30 ECTS). If a doctoral candidate has already participated in such courses the courses can be credited for the Curriculum but only unless they were no requirement of the precedent study programme (see § 2, section 2).
- (4) The completion of the doctoral programme requires:
- a. Submission of the application for approval of the intended doctoral project to the competent body responsible for study matters (see § 5).
 - b. Public presentation of the intended doctoral project at the Faculty (§ 5).
 - c. Approval of the doctoral thesis agreement and adhering to its terms (§ 6).
 - d. Writing and completing the doctoral thesis and receiving a positive grade (see § 7).
 - e. Public defence (see § 8).
- (5) The exact specification of additional 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 are recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement.

§ 5 Submission of the intended doctoral project and public presentation at the Faculty

- (1) 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.
- (2) The Public Presentation of the research proposal at the Faculty is a prerequisite for the acceptance of this research proposal. A written form of the presentation must also be

submitted electronically to the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme for publication on the faculty website or to be made available in another adequate form. The Director of the Doctoral Study Programme has to bring the presentation to the attention of the Doctoral Advisory Board, which can then make a statement about the presentation. 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.

- (3) The research proposal is considered approved if no rejection is filed within one month after the Public Presentation at the Faculty (see presentation at the Faculty, section 2). If the Doctoral Advisory Board makes a statement, the period in which the Studienpräses has to make a decision is extended by two weeks. The Studienpräses may only reject a research proposal if there are well-grounded objections made by the responsible Director of the Doctoral Study Programme or the Doctoral Advisory Board respectively. Before reaching a decision the doctoral candidate and the proposed supervisors must be given access to these statements and have the chance to make a counter-statement. The request for a counter-statement suspends the deadline of the decision. Legal means to complain against this rejection is through the submission of an official complaint to the senate.

§ 6 Doctoral thesis agreement

- (1) 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 Director of the Doctoral Study Programme.
- (2) If financial or material resources of the Faculty are going to be used, then the doctoral thesis agreement must also be signed by the person in charge of resources. Compatibility between the doctoral thesis agreement and a contract of employment at the university (if this exists) has to be considered.
- (3) The doctoral thesis agreement must include the following points:
1. The doctoral candidate's name, student ID number, date of birth;
 2. The supervisors' names;
 3. The topic of the doctoral thesis;
 4. The curriculum under which the doctoral candidate is studying;
 5. The field of doctoral research to which the doctoral thesis pertains;

6. The time schedule for the intended doctoral project, if necessary including a plan resource usage;
 7. The achievements required by the Curriculum;
 8. Supervision specifications, especially the frequency of feedback meetings between supervisors and the doctoral candidate;
 9. Declaration of commitment of the doctoral candidate to abide by to the rules and regulations of good scientific practice.
 10. Proposal of assessors appropriate to the subject matter as well as members for the examination board.
- (4) The research proposal as defined in § 5 is an integral part of the doctoral thesis agreement.
- (5) The doctoral thesis agreement must be supplemented with periodical, but at least annual, progress reports made by the doctoral candidate in agreement with the supervisor. All versions of the doctoral thesis agreement are to be documented.
- (6) Any changes made to the doctoral thesis agreement with respect to the points mentioned in § 6 (3), lines 1 to 5, require the approval of the competent body in charge of study matters.
- (7) Following the approval of the research proposal and the doctoral thesis agreement, the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme must constitute the examination board in charge of the public defence of the doctoral thesis.

§ 7 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 academic conferences prior to the submission of the doctoral thesis is encouraged.
- (3) The completed doctoral thesis must be submitted to the Studienpräses for evaluation and grading. He or she will then pass it on to at least two suitable assessors in terms of the research area.
In well-grounded cases the nomination of a supervisor as assessor is possible; in this

case, however, an appropriate external reviewer must be nominated. The doctoral candidate and supervisor are entitled to suggest assessors. This is done in the doctoral thesis agreement. Every supervisor of a doctoral thesis is entitled to make a statement on the doctoral thesis that must be brought to the attention of the assessors. The assessment and grading of the thesis has to be completed in no longer than four months.

- (4) If one grade is negative and one is positive, the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme has to nominate a third assessor. If two positive grades were given, the thesis will be accepted, if two negative grades were given, the thesis will be rejected.

§ 8 Public defence

- (1) Provided that all requirements specified in § 4 have been met and the doctoral thesis 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.
- (2) The examination committee consists of at least three examiners and is headed by the supervisor; all other members of the board should represent either the research field of the thesis or any other field that is meaningfully connected to it. Assessors can be nominated as members of the board.

§ 9 Grading

- (1) The doctoral candidate's performance in the doctoral programme is graded with an overall grade that comprises the evaluation of the doctoral thesis and the grade received for the public defence.
- (2) If the doctoral thesis is approved (§ 7, section 4) and the public defence received a positive grade the overall grade is "Pass" and "Fail" if not. The overall grade is "Pass with Distinction" in case none of the grades including the doctoral thesis and the public defence are worse than "Good" and at least half of the grades are "Very Good".

§ 10 Types of Courses

- (1) All courses offered in the doctoral programme are to be offered as the following types of courses:
 1. Seminar ("Seminar", SE): involves continuous assessment,

2. Course (“Kurse”, KU): involves continuous assessment, or
3. Lecture (“Vorlesung”, VO): involves non-continuous assessment. At the end of the semester, the doctoral candidates’ knowledge is tested in a written or oral examination.

(2) The number of participants in courses with continuous assessment is limited to a maximum number of 25. The course teacher accepts who can attend these courses, basing this decision on relevance to the subject matter, urgency, and the compliance with specific participation criteria.

In well-grounded cases, the competent body responsible for study matters may allow exceptions to this rule.

§ 11 Awarded academic degree

- (1) Graduates of the programme, admitted to the programme according to §2, section 2 a or b are awarded the doctoral degree “Doktorin” or “Doktor der Rechtswissenschaften“ (Doctor iuris, abbreviated as Dr. iur.) pursuant to § 54 (4) of the 2002 Universities Act.
- (2) Graduates of the PhD programme Interdisciplinary Legal Studies, admitted to the programme according to §2, section 3 are awarded the doctoral degree “Doctor of Philosophiy “, abbreviated as PhD pursuant to § 54 (4) of the 2002 Universities Act.

§ 12 Entry into force and transitional arrangements

- (1) This Curriculum enters into force on 1 October, 2009.
- (2) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the doctoral programme in Law prior 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 who pursue a degree programme which entered into force prior to this Curriculum are entitled to complete their degree programme by 30 November 2017.
- (4) The amendments to the curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 24 June 2013, edition 32, number 208 enters into force on 1 October, 2013.