

Important:

Please note that this document is a translation of the

“Promotionsordnung der Medizinischen Fakultät der Universität
Basel”

and as such is NOT legally binding.

For legal purposes, please always refer to the original German document.

PhD Regulations of the University of Basel Faculty of Medicine

Valid from 25 September 2014

Approved by the University Council on 25 September 2014

The Medical Faculty of the University of Basel issues the following PhD Regulations – subject to the approval of the University Council, based on §16 of the Statutes of the University of Basel of 3 May, 2012¹.

I. General Provisions

Purpose and Scope

§ 1. These regulations govern PhD education at the Medical Faculty of the University of Basel (hereinafter called Faculty)

² They apply to all PhD students at the Medical Faculty of the University of Basel who wish to earn the title of „Doctor scientiarum medicarum“ (PhD).

³ For structured PhD courses' supplementary stipulations, which occur in the framework of interuniversity agreements, complementary and differing regulations may be determined.

⁴ Executive provisions and further details follow the guidelines to these regulations (hereinafter called PhD Guidelines).

Terminology

§ 2. A PhD can also be acquired by attending a PhD program, i.e., a structured PhD course of studies.

² The course of PhD studies includes the thesis, courses and PhD examination.

³ The doctoral *promotion* is the granting of the PhD degree.

Awarded Degrees

§ 3. The Faculty awards the degree of PhD („Doctor scientiarum medicarum“, Dr. sc. med.) after successful completion of the PhD requirements.

Admission to PhD Studies

§ 4. The general requirements and process of admission to PhD studies are indicated in the University of Basel Student Regulations.

² Admission to PhD studies in the subjects named in Appendix 1² requires a degree from the University of Basel or other acknowledged institution, usually in the form of a master's degree in a field relevant to the planned area of study.

¹ SG 440.110

² § 4 Subpara. 2: The attachment is not reproduced here. The original German-language document can be viewed on the University of Basel homepage-<http://www.unibas.ch>-under «Dokumente» and «Rechtserlasse».

³ The PhD Board can in certain cases issue an exception allowing a student to make up for missing course requirements to a maximum of 24 credit points. Any such exceptions must be approved by the Rectorate's Office. Any exceptions must be added to the PhD agreement.

⁴ The application must be received by the University of Basel Student Services Office within the set application period. With the application form, the following should be included:

- a) The subject and a short description of the proposed dissertation project;
- b) The application to the PhD Board for the primary advisor to be entrusted with the supervision of the dissertation, including
 - a guarantee of financial support within the guidelines of the Swiss National Fund, and
 - the nomination of a secondary advisor;
- c) an assurance of the PhD student's timely availability according to the recommendations for PhD students under § 5.

A request for admission to PhD studies, including all necessary documentation, must first be submitted to Student Services. Student Services will examine the formal requirements and forward the complete dossier to the PhD Board for approval.

The PhD Board will review the application dossier, after which the Dean of Research requests that the Rectorate's admission or rejection of the application. This will be provided.

Duration

§ 5. As a benchmark, full-time PhD studies require three years. The PhD Agreement specifies the duration of the student's PhD studies. This applies particularly if the duration of the PhD studies deviates from the benchmark timeframe for the chosen course of studies or if, in approved exceptions, PhD studies are undertaken on a part-time basis (a minimum of 50% of working time stated by the law).

Enrolment Requirements

§ 6. In accordance with the Student Regulations of the University of Basel, enrolment is mandatory over the entire period of the student's PhD studies.

PhD Agreement

§ 7. A maximum of six months after the beginning of PhD studies, a PhD Agreement, along with a detailed research proposal, is to be submitted to the PhD Board. The PhD Agreement is updated yearly, or as necessary.

If the research plan is entirely insufficient the PhD studies will be terminated. This will be ordered by the Dean at the request of the PhD Board. The PhD student in question will be required to de-register for the next semester.

If a research plan is only partly insufficient, the PhD Board will order a revision within a maximum of three months.

The agreement also contains further information on the following topics:

- a) Fulfillment of all applicable requirements according to the admission decision (§ 4 Subpara. 3);
- b) General framework (institutional connections, financing, etc);
- c) Duration of PhD studies;
- d) Concept and timetable of thesis;
- e) Number of credit points to be earned;
- f) Individualized Learning agreement with deliverable goals according to § 12;
- g) Composition of PhD Committee, noting that the external expert has to be chosen by the time the PhD thesis is submitted;
- h) Timetable for regular consultations with the primary advisor regarding the thesis, as well as regular exchanges with the PhD Committee;
- i) Clarification of the role of project leader, supervisor, and dissertation advisors as necessary;
- j) Clarification of the functions of any external experts, if necessary.

II. Responsibilities

PhD Board of the Medical Faculty

§ 8. The PhD Board of the Medical Faculty consists of 9 to a maximum of 15 members, of whom at least 9 are members of the Faculty (group I or II). The Dean of Research is an ex officio member of the PhD Board. Details follow the PhD guidelines.

² The members of the PhD Board are chosen at faculty assemblies for a 4 year term of office. Reselection is possible.

³ The PhD Board performs all tasks assigned it in these regulations and oversees and observes all others. Furthermore it

- reviews the application of the primary advisor to be entrusted with the supervision of the PhD thesis. In the event that the concerned professor has insufficient capacity to act as primary advisor, the PhD Board can deny the application;
- decides in consultation with the faculty's Board of Examiners regarding the achievable number of credit points for faculty course offerings;
- checks the composition of the PhD Committee;
- is—especially in cases of conflict—responsible for review of PhD student advisors;
- decides, in accordance with the concerned PhD Committee, all issues for which no guidelines are defined.

⁴ The PhD Board is generally responsible for the candidate's course of studies, including the assurance of its quality.

PhD Committee

§ 9. At the beginning of the course of PhD studies—within a maximum of 6 months after admission—in agreement with the primary advisor, the PhD student must nominate a PhD Committee. The PhD Board approves the PhD Committee. Should no committee be in place by the given deadline, the PhD Board can dissolve the PhD Agreement.

² The PhD Committee attends to and oversees the student's assigned doctoral education.

³ The PhD Committee is composed of the Primary Advisor, the Secondary Advisor, and any external experts. External experts are to be suggested to the PhD Board at the latest when the thesis is submitted. Each expert composes a report on the thesis and has a vote on all decisions the PhD Committee makes during the oral examination (viva, defense). In agreement with the PhD Committee, each expert participates in all PhD Committee meetings. The function of each external expert is to be specified in the PhD Agreement. For multidisciplinary PhD studies, all applicable subjects must be considered. Further specifications are given in the PhD Guidelines.

⁴ Either the Primary or the Secondary Advisor has to be a Group I faculty member recognized in the area of expertise or subject applicable to the dissertation. If this is ensured, Group II faculty members, or persons from other universities with the right to award doctorates at the University of Basel may act as Primary or Secondary advisors.

⁵ Accompanying a Group II faculty member or a person employed at another University as Primary Advisor, a Group I Secondary Advisor has to be in place at the time of application for admission. The PhD Board can also appoint further advisors. In cases of interdisciplinary PhD studies the required subjects have to be considered.

⁶ The PhD Committee oversees the scientific realization of the dissertation, grades the thesis and bears the primary overall responsibility for the PhD studies as a whole as agreed in the PhD agreement. The PhD Committee provides regular feedback to the PhD student regarding the quality and progress of his or her research work, while providing and ensuring adequate and reasonable support.

⁷ In case of retirement or unavailability of a member of the PhD Committee, the Committee has to inform the PhD Board whether further support of the PhD student of the required quality can be provided, and whether the agreed deadline can still be met. Should the PhD Board conclude that this is not the case, a new advisor will be appointed in agreement with the PhD student.

Institutional Connection

§ 10. The thesis is basically to be performed at the Faculty. The Faculty can, in response to a written petition stating valid reasons, allow the PhD student to do so outside the Faculty with the following provisions:

- a) the university structural unit, the institution or the enterprise in which the dissertation is to be performed, has to confirm in writing that the dissertation's orderly execution and publication are guaranteed;
- b) the university structural unit, the institution or enterprise has to agree in writing to allow access to members of the PhD Committee for supervision of research work.
- c) concurrently, the Primary Advisor must personally have adequate access to the student to guarantee effective supervision.

III. PhD Education

Structure of the PhD Education

§ 11. The doctorate includes three evaluated parts:

- a) the provision of coursework covering the agreed scope, but representing a minimum of 12 credit points;
- b) the PhD thesis;
- c) the PhD defense

² For the coursework, the following types of courses can be offered:

- Group work
- Short courses
- Intensive courses
- Doctoral courses
- Introductory courses
- Research seminars
- Colloquiums
- Normal courses
- Examined courses
- Practicums
- Projects
- Project seminars
- Proseminars
- Revision courses
- Seminars
- Practice-based seminars
- Tutorials
- Exercises
- Lectures
- Lectures with excursions
- Lectures with tutorials
- Lectures with exercises
- Workshops

³ The Faculty's PhD Board approves the number of credit points applicable to each course.

Accrual of Credit Points

§ 12 The courses to be attended during the student's PhD studies must be laid out as an individual curriculum decided by the Primary Advisor and the student as part of the PhD agreement. Performance testing and the acquisition of credit points will be in accordance with the rules for the individual courses.

² For the successful completion of the PhD education, a minimum total of 12 ECTS credits must be acquired; of these, a minimum of two-thirds must be acquired via training of subject-specific and methodological skills.

³ Credits can also be acquired via the student's achievements outside of the University's course offerings. These cases are to be specified in a Learning agreement as part of the student's individual curriculum. They must be approved by the PhD Board.

Performance Testing

§ 13. Attendance, course type, performance testing, marks and the acquisition of credit points for each course must be in accordance with the rules of the course lecturer.

² Performance testing for the course types referred to in § 11 occurs during the courses.

- a) oral tests of 20 to 60 minutes, in the presence of an adjudicator;
- b) written tests of 30 to 180 minutes;
- c) computer-aided tests of 30 to 180 minutes;
- d) exercise sheets;
- e) reports;
- f) papers, essays, records;
- g) seminar work;
- h) project work,

³ Course performance tests will be evaluated as pass or fail.

⁴ Course performance tests take place during or at the end of courses.

⁵ Course performance tests lie within the responsibilities of the course lecturers.

⁶ Registration for performance tests is included with course attendance. Deregistration is possible until the end of the enrolment period via the cancelation of enrolment.

⁷ In cases of non-participation in a performance test, the lecturer's assessment will be entered as "not present". In-course performance tests include no option for retests. Renewed attendance in a later semester is possible.

⁸ The form, scope and times of in-course performance tests are given in the course directory.

Dissertation

§ 14. The dissertation is an autonomous work of research which must demonstrate a student's capacity to perform independent scientific study and satisfy the scientific demands of the studied subject.

² The dissertation is to be written in English or German.

³ The dissertation is to be written as a cumulative dissertation. The cumulative dissertation consists of three published articles listing the candidate as first author in peer-reviewed journals. At the time of submission of the dissertation, at least one of these articles must have been accepted for publication. In justified cases, in consultation with the Primary Advisor, the PhD Board may admit candidates to the PhD examination.

⁴ The dissertation must be a self-contained presentation of the included studies' research performance and findings. In this presentation, the student's personal contribution must be clearly evident.

⁵ No work previously used to obtain a diploma from a university-level institution can be submitted as a dissertation.

IV. PhD graduation procedure

Initiation of the PhD graduation procedure

§ 15. After completion of the dissertation, it is submitted to the PhD Committee for evaluation.

Evaluation of the Dissertation

§ 16. Each member of the PhD Committee submits an independent critique and evaluates the dissertation with a grade according to § 19. They recommend that the PhD Board accept or reject the dissertation.

² If, during the course of the formal review, a member of the PhD Committee should identify a deficiency in the dissertation, the correction of which appears necessary and possible, he or she can require the candidate to perform the necessary revisions. The fulfillment of these requirements is recorded in the test report and verified by the Primary Advisor. This is a prerequisite for the publication of the dissertation.

³ Should a member of the PhD committee evaluate the dissertation as insufficient, the PhD Board can request a further assessment to ultimately decide on the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation.

⁴ Should the dissertation assessments differ by one grade, the PhD Board will request a further assessment before deciding on whether to admit the student to the PhD defense.

⁵ In the event that the dissertation is rejected, this must be communicated to the student by the Dean.

⁶ The dissertation is approved if it is accepted by the PhD Board.

Application and Admission to PhD defense

§ 17. Admission to the PhD defense is considered at the written request of the student to the Office of the Dean by the posted deadline. It must contain:

- a) a signed Application for PhD defense form, along with the three assessments in sealed envelopes;
- b) a copy of the dissertation;
- c) proof of fulfillment of the PhD Agreement and the relevant PhD program's requirements regarding acquired credit points;
- d) a written and signed statement worded as follows: "I declare that I have written this dissertation, (title), with only the aid specified therein and that I have not submitted it to any other university or to any other faculty of the University of Basel". In cases of cotutelle (i.e., a bilateral co-enrollment agreement involving two universities), the declaration should read, "I declare that I have written this dissertation, (title), only with the aid specified therein and that, with the exception of the specified university, I have not submitted it to any other university or to any other faculty of the University of Basel".

² Based on the assessments of the dissertation and complementary content, and on the external appraisals, the PhD Board decides whether to accept the dissertation and admit the student to the PhD defense.

³ A maximum of six months may elapse between acceptance of the dissertation and the PhD defense. In the event of justified requests, the PhD Board may grant exceptions.

The PhD defense

§ 18. The PhD defense is designed to demonstrate the student's readiness for oral presentation of and discussion of scientific problems. It serves to prove that the results presented in the dissertation were actually drawn up by the student.

² Examiners are the Primary Advisor, the Secondary Advisor, the external expert, any additional advisors, and the examination chair. Elected by the PhD Board, this person must hold a professorship within the University of Basel's Faculty of Medicine and must not be a member of the PhD Committee. In consultation with the Primary Advisor and the PhD student, he or she shall set the date and time of the examination.

³ The examiners must all sign the examination report. This report also specifies all necessary changes to the dissertation, especially corrections of errors. Changes to points not specified in the report are inadmissible. The corrected version must be submitted to the primary advisor for review of any amendments.

⁴ The PhD defense is a public colloquium. It requires a minimum of 60 minutes. Upon request to the PhD Board, it can be made private.

⁵ The PhD defense will be graded by the examiners as specified in § 19. The PhD defense is passed if at least a grade of 4 is achieved.

⁶ A failed PhD defense can be repeated once. In this case, the PhD Board will set a new date in consultation with the PhD Committee.

Key to Numerical Grades and their Meanings

§ 19. To determine the grade the following table should be used:

6.0	outstanding
5.5	very good
5.0	good
4.5	satisfactory
4.0	adequate
3.5-1.0	inadequate (fail)

² The overall distinction of the doctorate will be determined using the following measures:
a) in accordance with § 16 subpara. 6, double the calculated average of the dissertation grades,
b) the grade of the PhD defense.

³ The doctoral diploma will receive a distinction based on the following lower limits:

5.8	outstanding (summa cum laude)
5.5	very good (magna cum laude)
5.0	gut (cum laude)
4.5	satisfactory (bene)
4.0	adequate (rite)

V. Promotion

Provisional Promotion and Pledge

§ 20. After passing the PhD defense, the chairperson fulfills the provisional promotion and accepts the student's oath.

² The promotion is worded: "After passing the PhD defense with a grade of ..., the Faculty of Medicine confers upon you—conditional on the performance of your obligatory duties—the degree of Doctor of Medical Sciences (Dr. sc. med.)."

³ The oath is worded: "As a deputy of the Dean, I urge you to promise and swear that you will always apply honest and responsible conduct to your scientific research, respecting it as a serious duty and always performing it with conscientious thoroughness and impartial objectivity in your future work in the service of science." The candidate answers "I will."

⁴ After the publication of the dissertation—if necessary with the changes stipulated in the examination report—and the issuing of the PhD certificate in accordance with § 21, the provisional promotion becomes a final official promotion. The provisional promotion allows the use of the title "Doctor sc. med. designatus (Dr. sc. med. des.)".

Filing and Issuance of the Confirmation of a Passed PhD defense

§ 21. Following the PhD defense the dissertation, a copy of the provisions for the printing of the dissertation, as well as a Confirmation of a Passed PhD defense will be provided to the student, for which the student will sign a receipt. The confirmation is written in German and contains the following information:

- the title of the dissertation,
- credit points awarded for the PhD studies,
- where applicable, information on the completed PhD program.

² The remaining files will be kept on file with the Faculty.

³ With the Confirmation, a Diploma Supplement, including a transcript of grades, will be issued.

Printing and Obligatory Copies (or: Publication of the Dissertation)

§ 22. Within two years of the PhD defense, the student is obliged to deliver the dissertation document, printed and bound according to the specifications of the Faculty, to the University Library.

² Requests for extension of this period must be received by the Dean before the deadline and justified. The reason(s) given will determine whether the request will be approved.

³ Should the PhD student fail to sufficiently fulfill the requirements in accordance with subpara. 1 and 2 without sufficient justification, the Dean will officially declare the conditions of promotion stipulated in § 20 subpara. 4 unfulfilled. The student thereby loses the right to use the title "Dr. sc. med. des."

PhD Diploma and Use of Title

§ 23. Following the publication of the dissertation a PhD certificate is issued. The PhD diploma is written in German and English and includes the following information:

- a) the names of the University, the Faculty and the sitting Rector,
- b) the names and signatures of the Dean of the Faculty at the time of the diploma's issuance,
- c) the name of the graduate,
- d) the awarded academic degree,
- e) the title of the dissertation,
- f) the date of the PhD defense,
- f) the rating of the promotion.

² The PhD diploma will be issued within six weeks of the fulfillment of the publication requirements in accordance with § 22. The diploma authorizes the use of the academic title of "Dr. sc. med." / "PhD".

³ The doctorate will be published in the "Kantonsblatt Basel-Stadt" (official journal of the canton of Basel).

Dishonest Conduct

§ 24. Should it be found before the issuance of the PhD certificate that the candidate unfairly influenced the examination process or knowingly made misleading statements, as decided by the PhD Board will decide whether the PhD graduation procedure is to be blocked. In case of doubt, the process will be suspended pending clarification. The PhD student must be given the opportunity to comment on the allegations raised against him or her.

² If the PhD graduation procedure is definitively stopped, the doctorate is deemed failed.

³ If the dissertation consists in whole or in part of plagiarized material, the doctorate is deemed failed.

⁴ If plagiarism in accordance with para. 3 is determined only after the granting of the doctorate, the candidate's Faculty will withdraw the PhD degree.

Hardship

§ 25. In cases of hardship the Dean can grant justified exceptions from the rules laid down in these Regulations insofar as these fall in principle within the authority of the faculty.

VI. Legal Action

Charges and Recourse

§26. Official charges regarding these regulations shall be made in writing to the concerned person, including instructions on that person's right of appeal, by the responsible office. In accordance with the contract between the cantons of Basel-Landschaft and Basel-Stadt on the joint sponsorship of the University of Basel, charges may be challenged through the Recourse Committee appointed by the University Council.

VII. Transitional and Closing Provisions

Transitional Provisions

§27. These regulations apply to all PhD students who begin doctorates at the Medical Faculty of the University of Basel in the 2015 spring semester or later.

² Students studying in accordance with the PhD Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Basel of 22 March 2010 finish their doctorates in accordance with the earlier regulations.

³ Students graduating under the earlier regulations can apply in writing for the PhD Board to conclude under the new regulations. In the case of a transfer, the academic achievements of the past five years will be considered retroactively.

Date Effective

§ 28. These regulations have been published. They took effect as of 1 February 2015.

² They replaced the regulations for the acquisition of the PhD (Dr. sc. med.) doctorate (Doctor scientiarum medicarum) at the Medical Faculty of the University of Basel of 22 March 2010.

Appendix 1 to PhD Regulations of the University of Basel Faculty of Medicine

LIST OF PHD SUBJECTS

1. Medicine Development
2. Biomedical Engineering
3. Biomedical Ethics
4. Clinical Research
5. Nursing Science
6. Public Health/Epidemiology
7. Sport Science