Doctoral Regulations of the Faculties of Natural Sciences I, II and III of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

of 13 July 1016

Pursuant to Section 18, paragraph 7 in conjunction with Section 67, paragraph 3, no. 8 and Section 77, paragraph 2, no. 1 of the Higher Education Act [Hochschulgesetz] of the Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt of 14 December 2010 (Gazette of Laws & Ordinances of Saxony-Anhalt p. 600) in the applicable version, the following Doctoral Regulations have been issued for the Faculties of Natural Sciences I, II and II of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

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Section 1
Types of doctorates/doctoral titles

(1) The Faculties of Natural Sciences I, II and III of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg confer doctoral degrees in natural sciences (Dr. rer. nat.), doctoral degrees in education sciences (Dr. paed.), doctoral degrees in engineering sciences (Dr. -Ing.), doctoral degrees in agricultural sciences (Dr. agr.), and doctoral degrees in nutritional sciences (Dr. troph.) on the basis of a written paper (thesis) and a public defence following publication of the thesis. In cases of doubt, the thesis committee shall decide.

(2) The Faculties of Natural Sciences may confer an honorary title (doctor honoris causa, Dr. h. c.) of the doctoral degrees stated in paragraph 1 for outstanding scientific contributions and special services to science.

Section 2
Doctorate Committee

(1) The Doctorate Committee of the competent faculty in each case is responsible for conducting doctoral examination procedures.
(2) The Doctorate Committee of each faculty is composed of a Chair (generally the Dean), normally two male co-examiners and two female co-examiners, and a deputy for each. The members and their deputies are elected by the faculty councils for a term of four years; they may also be re-elected. Members should be full-time professors of the faculty in question.

(3) The Doctorate Committee shall have a quorum if all members are invited and the majority of members are present. Decisions shall be taken with a simple majority. In the event of a tie of votes, the Chair’s vote shall decide.

(4) The Doctorate Committee shall not meet publicly.

(5) The Doctorate Committee may delegate the performance of individual tasks to the Chair subject to revocation.

(6) The Doctorate Committee may consult other advisory members.

Section 3
Requirements for admission to the doctoral examination procedure

(1) Attaining a doctoral degree in the Faculties of Natural Sciences is generally conditional upon holding a university degree (Diplom, Staatsexamen, Master’s) that is also offered by the Faculties. The Doctorate Committee of the Faculty in question shall decide on the acceptance of the degree or any additional fulfilment, if necessary.

Attaining a Dr. paed. degree is conditional upon providing proof of a successfully completed first state examination (erste Staatsprüfung) in teaching in the specialist field or an equivalent degree. This condition shall also be fulfilled by meeting the requirements stated for Dr. rer. nat. or Dr.-Ing. and providing proof of a teaching qualification. The latter may be obtained by sitting examinations in Specialised Teaching Methodology and in an education sciences subject. The examinations should be equivalent to the final examinations for teaching in secondary education.

Attaining a Dr.-Ing. degree is generally conditional upon holding a university degree (Diplom/Master’s, etc.) in engineering sciences.

(2) The candidate should have been supervised by an appropriately qualified professor or a full-time member of the competent Faculty with a post-doctoral degree for at least one year prior to initiation of a doctoral examination procedure. Exceptions shall be decided on by the Doctorate Committee.

(3) A degree from a university or equally-ranked higher education institution outside of the scope of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany shall be recognised as a condition for admission if the degrees of said institution are equivalent. Equivalence shall be established on the basis of the equivalence agreements approved in the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the German Rectors’ Conference. In cases of doubt, the Central Office for Foreign Education should be consulted.

(4) The Faculty that is competent in each case shall decide on exceptions and any necessary acceptance in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 3. Holders of non-equivalent certificates may be required to undertake supplementary work in the form of additional requirements specific to the field.

(5) Completion of other university degrees may be accepted if the candidate has been working on his/her intended doctoral subject area for (normally) three years after completing
the degree. If necessary, applicants may be required to sit examinations in sub-areas of the subject in question, and such sub-areas are to be determined by the Doctorate Committee.

(6) Graduates with degrees from universities of applied sciences may be admitted to a doctoral programme if they are able to provide evidence of their particular aptitude for academic work. Evidence is generally provided in the form of a Master’s degree from a university of applied sciences with an overall mark of “very good”. The Doctorate Committee may set corresponding subject-specific requirements.

Section 4
Acceptance as a doctoral candidate

(1) An applicant who fulfils the conditions for admission in accordance with Section 3 and intends to produce a thesis must apply to the Faculty for acceptance as a doctoral candidate before being admitted to the doctoral examination procedure. The application must state the topic of the planned thesis and include confirmation by way of a signature that a professor or associate professor or a Faculty staff member with a post-doctoral degree is willing to act as academic supervisor for the thesis. Applications shall be decided on by the Doctorate Committee; an application may be rejected if the conditions in accordance with Section 3 are not fulfilled.

(2) An application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate must be sent to the Dean or the representative of the competent Faculty in writing using the relevant form (Annex 1). The application must include:

- The topic of the planned thesis
- The name of the academic thesis supervisor, with his/her consent to provide supervision
- Copies of all certificates relating to the degrees held (certified copies or submitted originals)
- A declaration of whether the applicant has already participated in or initiated a doctoral examination procedure at another university, and what the outcome was
- A declaration by the applicant of previous criminal convictions and pending preliminary investigations.

(3) Applicants shall receive a confirmation from the Chair of the Doctorate Committee regarding acceptance as a doctoral candidate. This confirmation shall cease to be valid if the thesis has not been submitted within five years. This period may be extended upon request in substantiated cases.

(4) By accepting someone as a doctoral candidate, the respective Faculty declares its willingness in principle to supervise the doctoral candidate in the writing of the thesis and to assess it upon completion. Furthermore, acceptance as a doctoral candidate shall formally determine that the candidate will be admitted to the doctoral examination procedure following completion of his/her thesis if he/she submits the documents stated in Section 5. If subject-specific requirements have been set, acceptance as a doctoral candidate shall be conditional until the requirements have been fulfilled.
Section 5
Application for admission to the doctoral examination procedure

The requirements and rules in accordance with Sections 3 and 4 shall apply by analogy to admission to the doctoral examination procedure. If an applicant has already been accepted as a doctoral candidate, these conditions shall be regarded as fulfilled. Candidates must apply to the Dean or the representative of the competent Faculty in writing for admission to the doctoral examination procedure (Annex 2). The following must be enclosed with the application:

1. Title of the thesis and name of the supervisor
2. Four bound copies and one electronic copy (PDF format) of the thesis
3. Proposals for assessors
4. A declaration to the effect that the candidate has produced his/her work independently and without third-party assistance, that he/she has not used any sources or resources other than those he/she has stated, and that elements quoting directly from or making reference to the works used have been identified as such
5. A declaration as to whether the candidate has previously made unsuccessful attempts to attain a doctoral degree and whether the current version or another version of the thesis has been previously submitted to another Faculty
6. Personal details and previous education, specifically
   • Surname, present academic title, first name, date of birth, place of birth, gender, place of residence and correspondence address, nationality
   • Subject area in which the doctoral thesis is being written
   • List of higher education institutions attended and final examinations taken
   • Declaration as to whether any previous convictions exist and whether preliminary investigations have been initiated
7. Relevant evidence in the case of a grant in accordance with the Postgraduate Grants Act [Graduiertenförderungsgesetz] of 27 May 1992 (Gazette of Laws & Ordinances of Saxony-Anhalt, p. 382) in the applicable version
8. Evidence of the successful completion of a university degree in accordance with Section 3, paragraphs 1 or 3, unless documents have already been submitted with an application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate (Section 4, paragraph 2)
9. A list of publications.

Section 6
Initiation of the doctoral examination procedure

(1) The Doctorate Committee establishes whether the conditions for admission to the doctoral examination procedure have been fulfilled and the application documents are complete. If this is the case, it shall initiate the doctoral examination procedure and notify the candidate of this in writing.
An application for admission must be rejected if the conditions in accordance with Sections 3 and 5 are not fulfilled. A candidate shall be notified of rejection of his/her application in writing, stating the reason and providing information advising him/her of legal remedies.

**Section 7**

**Thesis**

(1) The thesis must demonstrate the candidate’s ability to conduct research independently and to produce an appropriate account of this research. Its academic content must justify publication.

(2) The thesis must wholly or partially concern a subject area taught in the Faculty competent in this case. It must demonstrate the candidate’s ability to carry out scientific work independently and should make a contribution towards scientific advancement. It should generally not exceed 100 DIN-A4 pages.

(3) As a rule, the thesis shall be produced by one individual. The competent Doctorate Committee may approve exceptions if a joint piece of work is justified by the subject of the research and each individual author’s contribution is clearly evident.

(4) As a rule, the thesis shall be written in German or English.

(5) Some or all of the results of the thesis may have been published prior to submitting an application to initiate a doctoral examination procedure. As a rule, three previously published papers may be submitted as a ‘cumulative thesis’ if it is possible to demonstrate the candidate’s own original work. In the case of multiple papers, these must be preceded by an abstract and a discussion of the work to be assessed (with references to publications in peer-review journals).

(6) The thesis shall include a cover page in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Faculty, and details of the author and his/her academic background in accordance with Section 5. The declaration in accordance with Section 5 should be inserted at the end.

**Section 8**

**Appointment of thesis assessors**

(1) Once the doctoral examination procedure has been initiated, the Doctorate Committee shall arrange the assessment of the submitted thesis and appoint assessors for this purpose. Only professors, lecturers, associate professors or scientists with post-doctoral degrees may be appointed as assessors. In individual cases, another specially qualified individual with a doctoral degree (i.e. a staff member with relevant expertise) may also be authorised to act as an assessor. The Doctorate Committee shall decide on such authorisation. The Doctorate Committee may deviate from the candidate’s proposal when appointing the assessors.

(2) The thesis shall be assessed by at least two assessors, one of whom must be an employee of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, while the second assessor should as a rule be an employee of another university. Generally speaking, the supervisor of the paper is one of the assessors.

(3) In the case of a thesis on an interdisciplinary topic, an assessor is to be appointed from each of the predominantly relevant subject areas.
Section 9
Thesis assessment

(1) Each assessor shall submit a substantiated, independent written opinion on the thesis to the Doctorate Committee within two months, in which he or she proposes the acceptance or rejection of the thesis accompanied by a mark. If an assessor deems amendments or additions to be necessary for the purpose of printing, he/she may suggest appropriate requirements in his/her opinion.

(2) A recommendation for acceptance must be accompanied by an assessment (mark) in accordance with the following marking levels.

- magna cum laude or very good (1),
- cum laude or good (2),
- rite or satisfactory (3).

Intermediate marks of 1.3, 1.7, 2.3 and 2.7 are also permitted.

Rejection corresponds to the marking level non sufficit or unsatisfactory (4).

(3) If rejection of the thesis is recommended in any one of the opinions, the Doctorate Committee shall appoint a further assessor. If more than one opinion recommends that the thesis be rejected, no other assessors will be appointed.

(4) Once the last opinion is received, the Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall notify the professors and all other Faculty members with post-doctoral degrees that the thesis and opinions will be available for viewing in the Dean’s Office for 14 days. The stated persons may provide an opinion on the exhibited thesis in writing during the period of its exhibition. The Doctorate Committee shall assess the submitted opinions at the end of the period.

(5) Following the end of the exhibition period, the Doctorate Committee shall decide whether to accept or reject the thesis. If two of the appointed assessors recommend that the thesis be rejected, the Doctorate Committee shall determine that the thesis be rejected; otherwise it shall determine that the thesis be accepted.

(6) If one or more opinions submitted in accordance with paragraph 1, sentence 2 propose requirements for publication of the thesis, the Doctorate Committee may decide whether to apply these.

(7) If a thesis is rejected, the doctoral examination procedure shall be regarded as completed unsuccessfully. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall notify the candidate in writing of the decision to reject the thesis, accompanied by information advising him/her of legal remedies. The rejected thesis shall remain on file with all opinions. The candidate shall be permitted once to submit a new thesis to the Faculty no earlier than one year after the previous one was rejected.

Section 10
Thesis Defence Committee

(1) Once the thesis has been accepted, the Doctorate Committee shall appoint a thesis defence committee for every doctoral examination procedure to conduct the public defence.

(2) The Thesis Defence Committee shall be composed of at least five members:
Translation of legally binding German version of the doctoral regulations

- The Chair. He or she shall be determined by the Doctorate Committee. The Chair must not be an assessor.
- The first assessor of the thesis.
- The second and third assessors of the thesis.
- A staff member with relevant expertise.
- Other persons from the groups of persons stated in Section 8, paragraph 1, sentences 2 and 3.
- The composition of the committee should appropriately reflect the technical discipline.

In the event that members of the Thesis Defence Committee are unable to attend, the Doctorate Committee may appoint deputies, but at least one of the assessors must be present in all cases.

Section 11
Public defence

(1) The defence of the thesis shall be conducted in public by the Thesis Defence Committee. The candidate shall receive a written invitation from the Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee to attend the defence within fourteen days. This period may be shortened with the candidate’s agreement.

(2) As a rule, the defence shall be conducted in German or English.

(3) The Faculty Dean’s Office shall allow the candidate to view the opinions on the thesis during the notice period.

(4) The public defence of the thesis shall begin with an academic lecture lasting 30 minutes, in which the candidate presents the results of the thesis. The lecture is followed by a discussion, which generally lasts one hour. This should cover topics and methods relating to the thesis, as well as fundamental issues in the specialist field. The discussion shall be led by the Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee, who may restrict the right to speak of individuals present.

(5) The proceedings of the defence shall be recorded in minutes.

(6) Following the defence, the Thesis Defence Committee shall decide in a private meeting on the assessment of the lecture and discussion parts of the defence in accordance with the marking levels stated in Section 9, paragraph 2.

The defence is passed if a minimum grade of “rite” is awarded for both the lecture and the discussion.

(7) If a candidate fails to pass the public defence, he/she may have only one further attempt to defend the thesis. The repeat attempt cannot take place until six weeks have elapsed and must take place within no more than six months, starting from the day on which the unsuccessful public defence took place. Should the repeat attempt of the public defence not take place within this period, the doctoral examination procedure shall be regarded as unsuccessfully completed. The Doctorate Committee shall decide on substantiated exceptions and extensions of this period.
Section 12
Final grade of the doctorate

(1) If the lecture and discussion have been awarded a mark of 3.0 or better, the Thesis Defence Committee shall establish the final grade of the doctorate following the assessment of the defence.

(2) The Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee shall establish the overall mark (N). This is determined as follows:

\[ N = 0.6 \times G + 0.2 \times V + 0.2 \times D \]

\(G = \text{arithmetic mean of all positive opinions, } V = \text{Lecture, } D = \text{Discussion}\).

(3) The following final grades shall be given:

- **summa cum laude**: For outstanding academic performance (generally when all opinions, the lecture and the discussion are awarded 1.0), the thesis is awarded the honour “summa cum laude”.
- **magna cum laude**: >1.1 ... 1.49
- **cum laude**: 1.5 ... 2.49
- **rite**: 2.5 ... 3.0

(4) The Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee shall inform the doctoral candidate of the outcome. The minutes must be signed by the present members of the Thesis Defence Committee.

(5) The doctoral candidate shall receive a certificate of successful completion of the examination procedure from the Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee or the Dean, which is valid for one year.

(6) In execution of the conferral of a doctorate (Section 15), a certificate shall be issued according to the attached template (Annex 3), featuring the title of the thesis and the final grade and signed by the Rector and the Dean of the competent Faculty of Natural Sciences of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

Section 13
Withdrawal, absence, fraud

(1) Should the candidate withdraw from the doctoral examination procedure after it has been initiated without good reason, the doctoral examination shall be regarded as failed. Should the candidate be absent on the date of the public defence without good reason, the public defence shall be regarded as failed.

(2) The Chair of the Doctorate Committee must be notified in writing without delay of the reasons claimed for any withdrawal or absence, and these must be credible. In the event of illness, the candidate is required to submit a doctor’s certificate.

(3) Should a candidate have been admitted to the doctoral examination procedure by means of fraud, or if important conditions for admission have been mistakenly assumed, any doctoral work already carried out may also be declared invalid retrospectively and the doctorate denied by the Doctorate Committee. The candidate shall be given the opportunity to provide his/her viewpoint before a decision is made. The candidate shall be notified of the decision in writing, accompanied by information advising him/her of legal remedies.
Section 14
Thesis publication

(1) To conclude the doctoral examination procedure, the candidate must publish the thesis. Once any requirements in accordance with Section 9, paragraph 6 have been met, the candidate must obtain permission to print from the Chair of the Doctorate Committee prior to publication.

(2) There are three options for publishing the thesis:

• A bound copy and an electronic version in PDF format on a CD-ROM are to be submitted to the thesis office of the University and Regional Library of Saxony-Anhalt free of charge

• If the thesis is being published as part of a series of scientific papers or in a journal or as a standalone printed work by a publisher, six mandatory copies must be submitted to the thesis office

• Publication in electronic format in accordance with the regulations of the University and Regional Library of Saxony-Anhalt is also permitted.

(3) The mandatory copies to be submitted must be labelled on the cover page as "Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät I, II oder III der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg" (Thesis to attain the title of Doctor of the Faculty of Natural Sciences I, II or III of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg”) in accordance with the attached template (Annex 4); printed standalone papers may feature the relevant stamp in place of this label.

(4) If the thesis is not published within one year of completing the doctoral examination procedure, all rights acquired as a result of the doctoral work shall lapse. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee may extend the period upon the candidate’s request; such a request must be submitted before the period expires.

(5) The execution of the conferral of a doctorate requires the publication of the thesis and the submission of mandatory copies. In the case of paragraph 2, the Dean of Faculty may approve early execution of the conferral of a doctorate with the thesis supervisor’s agreement, if it can be appropriately guaranteed e.g. by a binding declaration by a publisher or by submission of the page proof, that the paper will be published within a reasonable period.

Section 15
Execution of the conferral of a doctorate

(1) The Dean of the competent Faculty shall execute the conferral of the doctorate by handing out the doctoral certificate as soon as the conditions in Section 14 have been
fulfilled. The date of the public defence shall be regarded as the date on which the doctorate is conferred.

(2) The candidate shall have the right to use the title of Doctor upon receiving the doctoral certificate.

Section 16
Attaining a doctorate with joint supervision by a foreign institution (of natural sciences and engineering sciences) authorised to confer doctorates

(1) Doctoral examination procedures may be conducted with joint supervision by a foreign institution of natural sciences or engineering sciences that is authorised to confer doctorates, hereinafter referred to as a Partner Institution, if an arrangement has been made with the foreign Partner Institution with the agreement of the Faculty Council. The arrangement must include regulations on the details of the joint doctoral examination procedure. This also includes the provision of possible additional qualifications to be determined by the Doctorate Committee or regulations within the scope of a doctoral degree programme at the Partner Institution. Doctoral programmes under joint supervision shall be governed by the general provisions of these Doctoral Regulations unless special provisions have been made. The thesis must fulfil the formal and substantive requirements of acceptance in Germany, and fulfil the requirements that apply in the foreign country.

(2) The doctoral candidate may choose whether to submit the thesis to the competent Faculty of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg or to the foreign Partner Institution. The further procedure shall then be conducted on the basis of the regulations of the country of submission, but these must be adapted to the requirements of the Cotutelle or bi-national supervision agreement.

(3) The candidate shall be supervised by an academic tutor from each of the participating institutions. The supervisor from the foreign Partner Institution shall be appointed as an assessor in the doctoral examination procedure of the relevant faculty of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

(4) As a rule, the thesis shall be written in German or English.

(5) If the oral component of the doctoral work in the form of a defence or other equivalent form takes place at the foreign Partner Institution with the cooperation of the supervisor from the competent Faculty of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, this shall replace the oral component of the doctoral work at the relevant faculty of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. Full particulars shall be provided for in the arrangement to be concluded with the foreign Partner Institution.

(6) The doctoral certificate shall feature the seals of both participating institutions in so far as it is acceptable in both institutions. It shall contain the academic title of one of the competent Faculties and the corresponding academic title used in the foreign country. It shall also include a note to the effect that the doctoral degree stated thereon was supervised jointly. If two standalone certificates are issued, a reference or other means shall be used to show that they concern a unified certificate and that the holder of the doctorate is entitled to use the German title of Doctor in Germany and the corresponding title of Doctor in the foreign country. Particulars concerning the design of the certificates shall be provided for in the arrangement to be concluded with the foreign Partner Institution.

(7) Once he/she has received the doctoral certificate, the holder of the doctorate shall be entitled to use the relevant title of Doctor in the Federal Republic of Germany and in the country in which the participating foreign Partner Institution is located. He/she shall acquire
entitlement to use the title of Doctor only. The doctoral certificate also entails that the conferred foreign title of Doctor does not constitute an academic title attained in a foreign country in the sense of the German Act of the use of academic titles [Gesetz über die Führung akademischer Grade] of 7 June 1939 (Reichsgesetzblatt [national law gazette] I p. 985). Reference may be made in the agreement with the foreign Partner Institution to its right with regard to reproduction of the thesis and the number of mandatory copies. It must be ensured that at least four mandatory copies and an electronic version are submitted to the participating Faculty of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

Section 17
Revocation of a doctorate

(1) Should the competent Faculty establish prior to handing out the doctoral certificate that the candidate has committed fraud in connection with the doctorate, or if important conditions for conferring the doctorate were mistakenly assumed to have been fulfilled, it may declare the doctoral work invalid.

(2) The Faculty may revoke a doctorate. The proceedings for revoking a doctorate shall be based on applicable law. A doctorate may also be revoked if it emerges later that fraud was committed or it was mistakenly assumed that important conditions had been fulfilled.

(3) Before the Faculty decides whether to deny or revoke a doctorate, the individual in question shall be given the opportunity to state his/her view regarding allegations.

Section 18
Honorary doctorate

(1) The honorary title of Doctor, Dr. h. c. (doctor honoris causa) shall be conferred for outstanding intellectual contributions to a specialist field taught in the Faculty. Staff members are excluded from honorary doctorates from their own Faculty.

(2) The procedure to confer an honorary doctorate shall be initiated by a written application addressed to the Dean of the Faculty.

(3) The conditions for the conferral shall be examined by an honorary doctorate committee set up by the Faculty, which sends a resolution proposal to the Faculty.

(4) The Faculty shall decide on the conferral of an honorary doctorate on the basis of the honorary doctorate committee’s proposal. This proposal must have the agreement of two thirds of the present professors who are entitled to vote and who are members of the Faculty.

(5) If the Faculty has decided to confer an honorary doctorate, the honorary doctorate committee must draft an encomium and submit it to the Faculty for approval.

(6) The Faculty shall forward the proposal to the Rector and the Senate for their information.

Section 19
Entry into force

(1) These Doctoral Regulations shall enter into force on the day after their publication in the Amtsblatt (official gazette) of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.
(2) At the same time, the Doctoral Regulations of the Faculties of Natural Sciences I, II and III and the Center of Engineering Science of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg of 13 June 2012 (Amtsblatt volume 23, no. 2 of 26 February 2013, p. 17) shall cease to apply. These Regulations were adopted by the Faculty Councils of the Faculty of Natural Sciences I on 15 June 2016, the Faculty of Natural Sciences II on 10 June 2016, and the Faculty of Natural Sciences III on 15 June 2016. The Academic Senate issued its opinion on them on 13 July 2016, and the Rector approved the Regulations on 13 July 2016.

The Faculties may establish the terms of procedure for implementation within the scope of these Regulations, and stipulate relevant technical instructions for their proper implementation.

Halle (Saale), 13 July 2016

Prof. Udo Sträter
Rector