



# University of Hohenheim Study Programme and Examination Regulations

for the doctoral study programme (the graduate  
class) “Agricultural Sciences” of the Faculty of  
Agricultural Sciences

## Unofficial reading version

of the study programme and examination regulations from 4 November 2011  
(University of Hohenheim Official Communication No. 782) including

- the 1st statute to amend the examination regulations from 21 May 2013 (University of Hohenheim Official Communication No. 889)
- the 2nd statute to amend the examination regulations from 22 July 2014 (University of Hohenheim Official Communication No. 986)
- the 3rd statute to amend the examination regulations from 13 February 2015 (University of Hohenheim Official Communication No. 1013)
- the 4<sup>th</sup> statute to amend the examination regulations from 20 May 2015 (University of Hohenheim Official Communication Nr. 1056)

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## **Study and Examination Regulations for the Doctoral Study Programme (the graduate class) “Agricultural Sciences” in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Hohenheim**

From 4 November 2011 including the following statutes to amend the examination regulations

Unofficial reading version

Created on 20 May 2015 by the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Natural Sciences

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### **Section 1 Area of Application**

These study and examination regulations apply to the admission requirements as well as the objectives, content, and course of the doctoral study programme “Agricultural Sciences” based on the doctoral degree regulations of the University of Hohenheim for Dr.sc.agr. in the respectively valid version.

### **Section 2 Programme Objectives**

The doctoral study programme is to provide structural assistance in completing a dissertation in the context of achieving the degree “Doctor of Agricultural Sciences” - doctor scientiarum agriculturæ - (Dr.sc.agr.) and is to convey in-depth and current subject knowledge, abilities, and methods of agricultural science research and scientific work.

### **Section 3 Admission Requirements and Admission Procedure**

(1) The requirement for acceptance in the doctoral study programme is acceptance as a doctoral candidate according to the provisions in the doctoral degree regulations for Dr.sc.agr. in the respectively valid version. Any additional requirements set down by the doctoral committee in the context of the decision about acceptance as a

doctoral candidate also apply in every case for participation in the doctoral study programme.

(2) Admission to the doctoral study programme is done with a written request (informal application) to the Faculty upon the nomination of the supervisor. The decision is made by the doctoral committee.

(3) Acceptance in the doctoral study programme is given in principle with admission as a doctoral candidate. In the session following the submission of the application, the doctoral committee decides on admission to the doctoral study programme, the advising team according to Section 4, the modules to be completed according to Sec. 6(3-5), and the assignment to a research training group according to Sec. 7 and informs the applicant and supervisor of the result.

(4) The informal application, which should include the motivation, areas of scientific interest, and discussion of the planned career path, should also include:

- a) a CV
- b) a brief description of the doctoral project with the project objective and work and time schedule with a maximum of 4 pages in German or English
- c) a recommendation from the supervisor for admission to the doctoral study programme with suggestions for the modules to be completed according to Sec. 6 and for the assignment to a research training group according to Sec. 7.

and, insofar as they have not already been submitted to the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences for acceptance as a doctoral candidate:

- d) a request for acceptance as a doctoral candidate (completed form) with the supervisor's signature
- e) certified copies of transcripts and certificates, if necessary with certified translations into German or English
- f) proof of language proficiency according to the provisions of the doctoral degree regulations in the respectively valid version.

## **Section 4 Advising Team**

The advising team assists the doctoral candidates during their doctorate. The advising team is usually made up of three professors or university or private lecturers (*Hochschul- oder Privatdozentinnen oder Hochschul- oder Privatdozenten*) from the University of Hohenheim, another university with the right to award doctorates, a university of applied sciences (*Hochschule der angewandte Wissenschaften*), or a Baden-Württemberg cooperative state university (*Duale Hochschule*). The members of the advising team come from differing scientific areas. The supervisor is a member of the advising team.

## **Section 5 Standard Period of Study**

(1) The standard period of study is three years and includes the time after acceptance into the doctoral study programme in which the doctoral candidate has

the right of admission to an examination to successfully complete three modules according to Sec. 6(3 and 4). Additional requirements according to Sec. 6(6-10) do not need to be completed within this time period.

(2) If a module is failed, the deadline in Sec. 5(1) may be extended by up to one year upon the candidate's request. The provisions in Sec. 9 are to be observed.

## **Section 6 Organization, Duration, and Contents of the Programme**

(1) First and foremost, the doctoral candidates complete scientific research work.

(2) Between 1.5 and 2 years after beginning the programme, the advisory team according to Sec. 4 gives an interim report on the candidate's progress in education and on the thesis. The interim report includes recommendations to the candidate and is to be included in the Faculty's file on the candidate.

(3) The modules to be successfully completed during the doctoral study programme according to Sec. 6(4) should typically consist of 4 contact hours per week and a workload of 6 ECTS credits. The modules be graded according to Sec. 10. The dissertation and an oral examination total a workload of 180 credits. In the research training group "Global Food Security", by way of derogation from Sec. 6(3)(1), within the first six months either module 1 or module 2 according to Sec. 6(4) must be successfully completed.

(4) The modules will be offered at least once per year. They are designed for candidates at any stage of their doctoral work and set down as follows:

**Module 1:** Methods of Scientific Working

**Module 2:** A subject-related specialist module

**Module 3:** An elective module that should be related to the dissertation topic.

In the research training group "Global Food Security", as module 2 the module "Interdisciplinary Aspects of Food Security" is compulsory.

In the research training group "Water for Life", as module 2 the module "Water - People - Agriculture" is compulsory. In the research training group "Water for Life", module 3 is to be a subject-specific course closely related to the dissertation topic totalling 6 ECTS credits that is coordinated with the advising team and may be completed as a marked module at a national or international institution other than the University of Hohenheim.

A module completed in a previous degree programme may not be chosen.

(5) The modules are typically set at the beginning of the doctorate upon acceptance into the doctoral study programme according to the prior agreement with the supervisor from the doctoral committee. The results of the module examinations are to be documented in writing and submitted to the Faculty.

(6) In the research training group according to Sec. 7, seminars for doctoral candidates are to be carried out in addition to the modules. Participation in a seminar for doctoral candidates for at least two semesters can replace module 2 or module 3 insofar as they are done during the standard period of study. In this case, the doctoral candidates' contributions are to be graded by their advising team in a joint

final meeting according to Sec. 10. In the research training group “Global Food Security”, Sec. 6(6)(2 and 3) apply only for module 3. In the research training group “Water for Life”, Sec. 6(6)(2 and 3) do not apply.

(7) The research training groups offer interdisciplinary seminars for doctoral candidates and doctoral study programme modules that concentrate on the scientific handling of foundational theoretical, methodological, and subject knowledge. The majority of the modules should be offered in the scientific language English. The modules according to Sec. 6(4) are set by the doctoral committee.

(8) In addition to the module examinations and seminar attendance, it is expected that during the doctorate at least one national or international conference is attended at which the results of the doctoral work are presented as a poster or presentation.

(9) In addition to individual research work, the participants in the doctoral study programme are to participate in teaching and advising tasks, if possible. The goal is to gather experience in university teaching and to obtain and train important qualifications in conveying information. It should be ensured that it is still possible to finish the doctorate in a timely manner.

(10) At the end of the doctoral study programme come the completion and defence of the dissertation in the context of a colloquium according to the specifications in the doctoral degree regulations for Dr.sc.agr. in the respectively valid version.

## **Section 7 Research Training Groups**

In the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, there are the following research training groups:

- a) Soil Resources and Landscape Ecology
- b) Plant Production Systems, Plant Nutrition, and Quality Assurance
- c) Plant Breeding, Plant Protection, and Biotechnology
- d) Animal Sciences and Biotechnology
- e) Agricultural and Environmental Technology
- f) Economics and Social Sciences of the Agri-Food System
- g) Tropical Agricultural, Food and Resource Sciences
- h) Global Food Security
- i) Water for Life

Assignment of a doctoral candidate to the research training group “Global Food Security” or “Water for Life” is only possible if the dissertation is being written in English.

Additional research training groups (for example as research training groups funded by the German Research Foundation) may be established. Their establishment requires the consent of the doctoral committee. In these cases and upon decision by the doctoral committee, changes to the modules listed in Sec. 6(4) are possible. Sec. 6(5)(2) applies *mutatis mutandis*.

## **Section 8 Unexcused Absence, Withdrawal, Cheating, and Protection Periods**

(1) An examination shall be graded with “fail” (F; mark 5.0) if the candidate misses an examination date without valid reason or withdraws after the start of the examination without a valid reason. The same applies if a written examination is not completed within the set time period.

(2) The reason given for missing a deadline or withdrawing must be immediately given to the doctoral committee in writing and proof must be provided. If the examined person is ill or a child or relative for whom the candidate is responsible is ill, a medical certificate and, in cases of doubt, a medical certificate from a doctor named by the University is required. If the reason is recognized, the doctoral committee shall set a new date. Any already completed examination results will be counted in this case.

(3) If the candidate tries to influence the result of his or her examination by cheating or with the use of prohibited aid, the respective examination shall be graded with “fail” (F; mark 5.0). Persons who disturb the proper procedure of an examination may be excluded from continuing the coursework or examination by the person examining or the invigilator; in this case, the coursework or examination shall be graded with “fail” (F; mark 5.0). In serious cases, the doctoral committee may prohibit the examined person from completing any additional examinations.

(4) Within one month, the affected person may request that the decisions according to Sec. 8(3)(1 and 2) be reviewed by the doctoral committee. Affected persons are to be informed immediately in writing of decisions made against them. Reasons are to be provided and information on legal remedies must be included.

(5) Upon request by a candidate, the maternity leave protection periods as set down in the respectively valid Protection of Working Mothers Act (MSchG) are to be taken into consideration. The required proof is to be included with the request. The length of the maternity period interrupts any and all deadlines in these regulations; the length of the maternity period shall not be calculated in the deadlines. The periods of parental leave according to the respectively valid law (BErzGG) are also to be taken into consideration upon request. The candidate must inform the doctoral committee of the period of parental leave in writing with the necessary proof at least four weeks before starting parental leave.

(6) Candidates with a child under three years of age for whom they have custody, who lives in their household, and whom they primarily care for alone have the right to complete individual coursework and examinations or re-sit examinations after the deadlines named in these study and examination regulations. The right expires with the completion of the semester in which the conditions listed in Sec. 8(6)(1) no longer apply. The candidate must include appropriate proof. The doctoral committee sets the extension of the deadlines upon the candidate's request and immediately informs the candidates of the extension.

(7) Upon request, periods before deadlines in which the students must fulfil familial duties shall be taken into consideration. The request is to be submitted informally to the doctoral committee. The required proof is to be submitted with the request.

## Section 9 Repeating the Module Examinations

Module examinations that are not passed or graded with “fail” (F; mark 5.0) according to Sec. 6(3-5) may each be repeated one time. If the second attempt is not successful, the module examination is finally failed and admission to the doctoral study programme is revoked.

## Section 10 Evaluation of the Examinations and Overall Evaluation

(1) The evaluation of the examinations is done with *grades* and marks. The evaluations will be carried out by the respective examiner.

(2) The following *grades* are to be used:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| A | = | outstanding performance;<br>( <i>very good</i> )  |
| B | = | performance that is significantly above the average requirements;<br>( <i>good</i> )                    |
| C | = | performance that corresponds to the average requirements;<br>( <i>medium</i> )                          |
| D | = | performance that is sufficient to satisfy the requirements despite its shortcomings;<br>( <i>pass</i> ) |
| F | = | performance that does not meet the requirements due to significant deficiencies.<br>( <i>fail</i> )     |

For differentiated evaluations, the following additional grades are permissible:

- |        |                       |
|--------|-----------------------|
| A-     | ( <i>very good</i> ), |
| B+, B- | ( <i>good</i> ),      |
| C+, C- | ( <i>medium</i> ),    |
| D+     | ( <i>pass</i> ).      |

(3) The following *grade points* are assigned to the *grades*:

- |    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| A  | = | 1.0 |
| A- | = | 1.3 |
| B+ | = | 1.7 |
| B  | = | 2.0 |
| B- | = | 2.3 |
| C+ | = | 2.7 |
| C  | = | 3.0 |
| C- | = | 3.3 |
| D+ | = | 3.7 |
| D  | = | 4.0 |
| F  | = | 5.0 |

(4) Examination components are oral, written, or computer-supported examinations on a sub-area or sub-aspect of a module that are graded according to Sec. 10(3) and are calculated proportionally as part of the module examination.

(5) A module is passed if a grade of at least a "pass" (D; 4.0) is achieved.

(6) The module marks are weighted according to their respective ECTS credits. The overall mark is calculated as the weighted average of all module marks. When calculating the overall mark, only the first place after the decimal point is considered; all other places are dropped without rounding.

The total evaluation is given as follows with the average grades:

between 1.0 and 1.5 = *very good*

between 1.6 and 2.5 = *good*

between 2.6 and 3.5 = *medium*

between 3.6 and 4.0 = *pass*

(7) Additional modules in which examinations were taken are not included in the calculation of the average mark.

### **Section 11 Loss of Right of Admission to an Examination**

(1) The right of admission to an examination is lost if the modules according to Sec. 6(3 and 4) are not successfully completed within the standard period of study or the extension deadline set in Sec. 5(1 and 2). The right of admission to an examination is not lost if the candidate is not at fault for missing the deadline or if protection periods as described in Sec. 8(5-7) were taken during this time. With the loss of the right of admission to an examination, the admission to the doctoral study programme and the right to receive an examination record for the work already completed in the doctoral study programme are revoked.

### **Section 12 Certificate**

(1) After the successful completion of the doctorate and successful completion of the modules, the doctoral study programme graduate receives a certificate of participation in the doctoral study programme on which the name of the successfully completed modules, the marks and grades received, and the ECTS credits for each of the modules are listed.

(2) The certificate is to be issued bilingually in German and English and signed by the Dean. It is dated on the day on which the oral doctoral examination was completed.

### **Section 13 Entry into Force**

(1) These study programme and examination regulations take effect as of 1 October 2011. The statutes to amend the examination regulations take effect on the day on which they are published in the Official Notifications.