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## **FACULTY OF THEOLOGY OF THE INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY OF THE EELC**

### **Regulation for Submission, Approval and Defence of a Dissertation**

The process of writing and defending a dissertation requires that the student, the supervisor, the pre-reviewer and the opponent use as a basis the “Instructions for Writing a Paper at the IT EELC” and the present Regulation.

#### **I. Preparing and Submitting a Draft of Bachelor’s and Master’s Dissertation in Professional Higher Education**

- 1.** A student can choose the topic for their dissertation based on their interest and *curriculum* related subject area. The topic must have a researchable problem statement. Preparation for writing a dissertation starts with finding a supervisor and delimitating the topic, and its theoretical and/or practical justification.
- 2.** The supervisor must have at least Master’s degree or an equivalent qualification. Supervisors can be lecturers and specialists also from outside the Institute, if necessary, but they must have at least Master’s degree or an equivalent qualification, and their participation must be coordinated by the Dean’s Office.
- 3.** The student submits during the semester before the planned defence of the dissertation, but not later than October 15, a free-format application for the planned professional higher education dissertation or Master’s dissertation, which contains the topic of the dissertation and preliminary bibliography or description of the planned fieldwork, being agreed and signed by the supervisor.
- 4.** The supervisor’s consent means that there has been concluded a supervision agreement between the supervisee and supervisor. The topic of the dissertation is approved by the Dean. Making a draft for Master’s dissertation is supported by the module “Scientific Theory, Research Methods and Planning of a Research”. Making drafts of papers by parts for Master’s examination in Master’s studies of Christian Culture is supported by the seminar for writing a final paper.
- 5.** When preparing a dissertation, the following points must be considered: 1) the objective of the dissertation and justification of the choice of the topic; 2) theoretical and/or practical importance of the paper; 3) possible volume. When preparing the first draft, it already is advisable to divide

the paper into two to four main topics or main chapters, and their subchapters will be elaborated later.

## **II. Quality Requirements for Dissertation of Professional Higher Education, Master's dissertation and Partial Papers of Master's Examination in Master's Degree in Christian Culture**

- 1.** The dissertation of the professional higher education is clearly and adequately formulated research paper that makes explicit student's capability to use and analyse the sources relevant to the paper, paraphrase and make references as required by the guidelines, as well as draw logical conclusions.
- 2.** Master's dissertation and partial papers of Master's examination are clearly and adequately formulated research papers, in which a problem is posed and then solved by using academically acceptable methods, and which end with well formulated conclusions. Master's dissertation and partial papers of Master's examination demonstrate the student's capability to analyse and synthesise the information autonomously and their paraphrasing and reference making skills as required by the guidelines. The Master's dissertation can develop further the topic of the professional higher education or bachelor's dissertation, providing it a new methodological quality.
- 3.** Dissertations are designed in A4 format, of text font 12 and footnotes 10, line spacing is 1,5 and in footnotes 1,0, the recommended font is Times New Roman. The sheets of paper are single-sided, the width of the edge is 4 cm on the left and other edges are from 2,5 to 3 cm.
- 4.** The volume of the professional higher education dissertation (6 ECTS) is **20–30** pages (1800 characters with spaces *per* page) without bibliography, appendices and summary. If the paper does not meet these requirements, it is not allowed to the defence procedure.
- 5.** The volume of the Master's dissertation in the *curricula* of Theology (30 ECTS) is **40–80** pages (1800 characters with spaces *per* page) without bibliography, appendices and summary. If the paper does not meet these requirements, it is not allowed to the defence procedure.
- 6.** The recommended volume of the partial papers for the Master's examination in Christian Culture is based on the volume of partial either **20–30** pages (5 ECTS) or **30–50** pages (10 ECTS). If the paper does not meet these requirements, it is not allowed to the defence procedure.
- 7.** A summary in a foreign language is added to the dissertation of the professional higher education and Master's dissertation. The summary must comprise the title of dissertation in the same language as the dissertation is written, but it has to be translated into English as well (in case the work is written in other language than English).

## **III. Submission of the Dissertations**

- 1.** Dissertations of professional higher education and Master's dissertations of *curriculum* of Theology are submitted to the Dean's Office in electronic form provided with written evaluation by the supervisor. The dates of submission, pre-defence and defence of the dissertations are determined by the academic calendar.

2. The Dean of the Faculty appoints the Head of the Pre-defence Board, who forms a board and appoints 2 pre-reviewers for each dissertation, one of them is the lecturer of given subject area or an expert and the other is a student participating in the pre-defence.

3. The objective of the pre-defence is to check the quality of the drafts of the dissertations, enhance the student's presentation skills and enrich the students' knowledge about the topics of the dissertations to be defended and their results. The pre-defence takes place in spring semester during the first half of February. Two weeks before the pre-defence the student presents the draft of their dissertation, which consists of the following essential parts: (1) title; (2) content or disposition; (3) objective, and if possible, also the assignments based on the objective; (4) methodology; (5) one coherent text of the dissertation for *ca* 10–15 pages; this can be one or two entire main chapters of the dissertation, but not an introduction; (6) list of sources and literature.

The drafts are made public to the participants of the seminar.

4. The pre-defence takes place in the form of a seminar, which consists of:

- a. presentation of the work by the author (5 minutes);
- b. reviewers' questions and comments and the responses of the defender (15 minutes);
- c. general discussion (10 minutes).

d. The Board assesses the defence either passed or not passed. In case of failure the Board makes recommendations for amending the weak points and making changes and corrections. In one month the Board will review the corrected paper and makes a decision to allow or not to allow the paper to the defence.

5. The Head of the Defence Board appoints an opponent to the dissertation. The opponent is generally the same person who pre-reviewed the dissertation. The opponent submits the signed opposition to the Dean's Office at least 3 working days before the defence of the dissertation.

6. To defend the partial papers of Master's degree examination of Christian Culture, the Dean forms an Examination Board. The partial papers are submitted to the Dean's Office in one hardbound copy and its electronic form on the date determined by the academic calendar.

#### **IV. Defence of the Dissertations**

1. The dissertation of professional higher education and Master's dissertations are submitted to the Dean's Office three weeks before defending. The dissertation is allowed to the defending procedure by the supervisor. The dissertations are submitted to the Dean's Office in one hardbound copy and its electronic form. The defended dissertations are made public.

2. In the defending of the dissertations of the professional higher education and Master's dissertations participates a Board of at least three members. The defending procedure is presided by the Head of the Defence Board. If possible, both the opponent and supervisor of the correspondant dissertation also participate in the defending process.

3. As a rule, the defending of the dissertation of professional higher education lasts up to 30 minutes, and Master's dissertation defence up to 45 minutes

4. The defending procedure is divided into the following steps:

- 1) presentation of the work by the author (5–7 minutes),

- 2) opponent's speech and questions, defender's response;
- 3) opinion of the supervisor;
- 4) questions by the Board and defender's responses;
- 5) open discussion;
- 6) short conclusion by the defender.

The use of the time during the whole procedure of the defending is managed by the Head of the Defence Board.

**5.** The defending of the partial papers of Master's degree examination of Christian Culture takes place in front of the Master's examination Board and consists of the following parts:

- 1) presentation of the partial work by the defender (10–15 minutes)
- 2) questions by the Board members and defender's responses.

**6.** The dissertations are assessed by the Board in closed session after the end of defending. The results of the defending are announced immediately after the Board has made the decision. The supervisor and the opponent can participate in the Board session with the right to speak.

**7.** The Institute expects the defender and the Defence Board members adhering to the best academic behaviour practices.

## **V. Criteria for Assessment of Dissertations and their Proportions in the Final Assessment**

The Defence Board proceeds from the following criteria in assessment of dissertation and the proportion of assessment grade in the final assessment:

### **1. Choice of the topic of the dissertation, its methodology and structure:**

the theoretical and/or practical justification of the choice of the topic; sufficient delimitation of the topic; adequate formulation of the research task/problem; compliance of the chosen methodology to the topic of the dissertation; sufficient explanation of the used methodology in the introduction; the compliance of the methodology to the subject area; optimum and logical structure of the dissertation; optimum coverage of the indispensable subtopics; (20 %).

### **2. Relevance of used selection of sources and literature, and the skills of using them:**

optimum selection of the sources and literature; skills of using them adequately; quality and priority of the sources and literature; ability to make difference between the primary, secondary and less important sources; (20%).

### **3. Solving the research task/problem, *i.e.* the content of the dissertation:**

correspondence between the title, introduction and the content of the dissertation; how the research problem is solved; the logic of the solution process and compliance with the topic of the dissertation; clarity in presenting the results of the research; appropriateness and consistency in using the notions and definitions (40%).

### **4. Format and volume of the dissertation:**

presence of all required components of a dissertation; optimum volume in accordance with the requirements; sufficient justification if the volume exceeds or does not meet the requirements of written work (see above II 4 and 5); sufficient distinguishableness of the references from the author's own statements and conclusions (avoiding plagiarism); unity and clarity of the referencing system and correct formatting of the list of the used literature; compliance of the list of referencies and sources to each other; optimum volume of referencies, quality of language, style and orthography (10%).

**5. Defending the dissertation:**

adequacy and clarity of the work; accuracy and relevance of the responses of the defender to the questions; self-confidence and compliance with the academic practices (10%).