

Conclusion of the PhD study

Automatic English translation of the Czech guide "Závěr doktorského studia"

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About the chapter

The **Final phase of the Phd study** chapter is a small guide to the final events of the PhD in Study of Religions.

The content of that guide is fully identical to the content displayed on the IS website under the sections related to doctoral studies.

Have you found ambiguities or have questions? The chair of the Doctoral board is responsible for the content of the documents, see <https://www.muni.cz/en/about-us/organizational-structure/faculty-of-arts/oborova-rada-24166>.

If you find formal errors or have comments on the way the information is presented, please write to the Secretariat of the Department.

Thank you very much!

The schedule of state examinations and dissertation defence

The path to graduation from the PhD programme is lined with a series of "finalising" study events - the State Doctoral Examination, the Internal Defence and the final Dissertation Defence.

Doctoral State Examination

In the 5th semester or, at the latest, the 7th semester of study (taking into account the period of any interruption), learners register for the Doctoral State Examination and take the Doctoral State Examination. Students in the old programme (matriculation up to and including PS 2021) may also take the examination at the end of their studies together with their dissertation defence at their own choice.

Please note that the prerequisite for the PhD examination is the completion of the course RLDra09 Article Preparation! We have introduced this prerequisite as a checkpoint to remind students that they need to submit their article for review well in advance so that it is published by the time they conclude their studies.

Advanced version of the dissertation, Internal defence and final version of the dissertation

In the penultimate semester of study, students register for RLDra12 Doctoral Seminar IV: Advanced Dissertation and submit an advanced version of their dissertation for internal defense during the exam period of this course.

In the penultimate semester, learners register for RLDra14 Doctoral Seminar V: Internal Opposition and Dissertation Completion.

In this course, the supervisor and the designated internal opponent read the thesis and give feedback to the learners on the completion of the thesis at the internal defense, possibly in the form of written comments on the thesis.

The internal defence takes place physically, online or hybrid and resembles a defence (it is in fact a mock defence).

The learner then completes the dissertation based on his/her own reflection, the supervisor's feedback, and the experience of the internal defense and submits the final version by January 31 (fall semester) or August 31 (spring semester).

Dissertation defence

In the last semester of study, at a date determined by the chair of the departmental board, the dissertation defense is held.

State examination, internal defence and final defence of the dissertation

State examination, internal defence and final defence of the dissertation

The State Doctoral Examination (I) and the Dissertation Defense (III) are two distinct events in the current Doctoral Program in Religious Studies. The State Doctoral Examination in Religious Studies (SDZ) takes place in the 5th or 7th semester of study at the latest (taking into account the time of any interruptions) according to the recommended curriculum. Students who have still entered the old programme (matriculation up to and including PS 2021) may, at their own choice, take the examination and the defence either separately according to the parameters of the current programme or together at the end of their studies.

I. State Doctoral Examination

The course of the State Doctoral Examination is obligatorily described in the IS MU and should be identical to the following extended description.

The State Doctoral Examination in Religious Studies (SDZ) takes place in the 5th or 7th semester of study at the latest (taking into account the time of any interruption) according to the recommended study plan.

The entry requirement for the examination is the completion of a study to be submitted for peer review (course RLDra09).

The application for the SDZ is made by the PhD student at the beginning of the semester through the study department on the prescribed form. He/she informs the supervisor and the chair of the departmental board about the submission of the application.

SDZ is conducted orally and consists of the following parts:

1) Presentation and defence of theses on topics in contemporary religious studies for the state doctoral examination

At least ten working days prior to the SST, the PhD student shall submit a brief argumentative text - thesis summarizing the main content of the presentation - by email via the Institute's secretariat.

The thesis should be in the form of a text file of 3-5 standard pages (5400-9000 characters including spaces and bibliographical references). They must be accompanied by a title, the author's name and surname, and a running footnote (there is no bibliographic standard, but we recommend the Harvard "parenthetical" standard rather than footnotes in this case).

The thesis should present a creative position on a current, more general religious studies topic that is not identical to the dissertation topic. Theses must be based on a clear and convincing argument understandable to a non-specialist religious studies audience. They should therefore not get bogged down in highly specialized details, but should present a more general argument that can be critically debated in the examination.

In the examination, the PhD student will present the thesis in a maximum of 15 minutes. He/she may use presentation software (PowerPoint, etc.; in most cases this is recommended).

The committee evaluates the originality, quality and persuasiveness of both the written theses submitted and their presentation and subsequent performance in the debate. The weighting of this part in the overall assessment of the examination is 50%.

2) Discussion of concepts and topics in contemporary religious studies

Together with the thesis, the doctoral candidate shall submit a list of literature divided into two groups by email via the Institute's secretariat at least ten working days before the state doctoral examination:

- (a) theory and methodology of religious studies and
- (b) the chosen thematic specialisation.

Each of these groups will contain a minimum of five and a maximum of ten book titles (in the case of a major contribution, this may include a journal study or a contribution to a conference proceedings), including brief annotations written by the doctoral candidate. Taking into account this list of references, the committee will pose a sub-question on which the PhD student will discuss; this will be followed by a discussion. The weighting of this part in the overall evaluation of the oral examination is 50 %.

II. Internal defence

The internal defense is a mock defense that takes place approximately halfway through the 7th (or expected penultimate) semester of study in the course RLDra14 Doctoral Seminar V: Internal Opposition and Dissertation Completion. It takes place after the acceptance of the advanced version of the thesis by the supervisor (i.e., after successful completion of the course Doctoral Seminar IV: Advanced Version of the Dissertation) and is conducted in a similar manner to the actual dissertation defense, i.e., as a conference presentation of the dissertation in the presence of the supervisor and the internal opponent(s) or others present. The presentation is followed by questions and discussion. Around the date of the internal defence, the PhD student also receives written feedback from the supervisor on the dissertation, which is then incorporated into the final dissertation by the submission date.

III. Defence of the dissertation

The dissertation defence takes place at the very end of the study. The doctoral student applies for it after fulfilling his/her study obligations through the study department on the prescribed form.

For the submission of the dissertation, see the Dissertation Submission Procedure.

Along with the application form, the PhD student submits electronically the so-called autoreferat (dissertation thesis).

Autoreferat (dissertation thesis)

The abstract (thesis) is an extended summary of the main results of the thesis.

Use the prescribed template (Czech template for Czech or Slovak written dissertation, English template for English written dissertation) to prepare the thesis statement. Mandatory components of the autoreferat are (the template will guide you):

1. Czech or Slovak annotation including a list of keywords (for dissertations written in Czech or Slovak);
2. English abstract including English version of the title and list of keywords;
3. your own abstract, i.e. an extended summary of the main results of the dissertation in the language of the dissertation, with a minimum of 10 pages in the formatting according to the prescribed template.
4. a list of references (identical to the list of references in the dissertation itself);
5. a list of the doctoral student's publications related to the study;
6. a list of other scientific activities (internships, presentations at conferences, etc.).

Submission

It is submitted electronically to both the study department and the secretariat of the institute (sekretariat-reli@phil.muni.cz) at the same time as the application for the dissertation defence or by agreement with the study department at a later date, but always no later than 10 working days before the examination.

Form

See the prescribed template. The minimum length of the actual thesis abstract is 10 printed pages. This does not include other mandatory components (see table of contents).

Dissertation: format and form

During their studies, students produce a dissertation. The thesis must contain original and significant research results.

Two dissertation formats

In accordance with the MU Study and Examination Regulations, it may be either 1) monographic or 2) a collection of thematically related works already published or accepted for publication, accompanied by a comprehensive introduction to the subject and a commentary.

1) Dissertation as a monograph

In the first case, it is a monographic study of between 180 000 and 270 000 characters including spaces (100-150 standard pages).

2) Dissertation as a collection of studies

In the second case, there is no set scope, but the set must contain either at least three publications as lead author or at least two publications as lead author and two more as co-authors. The publications must have been published or accepted for publication in journals included in the Scopus or Web of Science databases, with one exception, which may be an article in a journal not included in these databases, a book chapter or a contribution to a collection of proceedings (here, inclusion in the databases is not monitored).

The file must be accompanied by (1) a preface (or acknowledgements) with a detailed explanation of the doctoral student's contribution and bibliographic data of the individual contributions, (2) a comprehensive introduction to the subject, and (3) a final summary commentary. In the case of the results of a collective scientific work in which the doctoral student has contributed, the MU CFR (Article 31.4.b) further requires "a statement by the supervisor confirming the authorship of the student and evaluating the student's contribution to the marked parts of the work". In practice, this statement is part of the supervisor's opinion, which is submitted as a basis for the defence.

Required formal elements of the text

The obligatory part of the thesis is the title page, which includes the name of the university, faculty and institute, the title of the thesis, the name of the preparer, the name of the supervisor, the place and year of completion. Furthermore, the thesis must be accompanied by a statement by the author on the originality of the thesis, a table of contents, a list of references used and a running commentary. We recommend using the thesis template at the Faculty of Arts of MU.

It is not necessary to submit the dissertation in physical copy.

The procedure for submitting a dissertation in 9 points

Important information about completing your doctoral studies is provided on the website of the study department. We have added a clear procedure.

1. The student first requests by e-mail to the Study Department to set up a thesis archive in the IS MU (phd@phil.muni.cz). In the same message, he/she communicates to the Registrar the final title of the dissertation in the language of the thesis and in English, consulted with the supervisor.
2. The student consults the supervisor about the final version of the thesis, appendices, annotation and keywords.
3. The student will upload the complete text of the dissertation including appendices, annotation in Czech and English and keywords in Czech and English. At that point the archive is properly populated.
4. The student then closes the archive.
5. The supervisor checks the dissertation in the dissertation archive and confirms the legibility of the file and the originality of the dissertation.
6. The student fills in any missing data in the Individual Study Plan application in IS MU and informs the supervisor, who checks the Individual Study Plan and, if everything is in order, confirms its completion.
7. The student will make sure that all courses enrolled in the semester have been completed.
8. The student submits an application for defence to the Study Department using the form by sending an e-mail from the official address in the IS MU (external e-mail box cannot be used) to phd@phil.muni.cz.
 - Together with the application form, or later, as agreed with the Study Department, he/she also sends electronically all the obligatory annexes to the thesis listed on the Study Department website.
 - The Registrar checks whether the student meets the graduation requirements and has completed all courses. The status of the Individual Study Plan in the application and its confirmation by the supervisor is also checked. At the same time, the Study Department sends a list of completed courses to the Institute's Secretariat to be checked and signed by the Chair of the Departmental Committee (this task is sufficient to be completed in the coming weeks, it is not a condition for the acceptance of the dissertation). ATTENTION: The dissertation, including the

application for the doctoral examination and defence, must be submitted at least one semester before the maximum period of study expires.

- For the defense in the spring semester (or by the end of September), the dissertation, including the application for examination and defense and all required appendices, must be submitted no later than January 31.
 - The deadline for the defence in the autumn semester (or by the end of February) is 31 August. However, dissertations can be submitted continuously throughout the academic year.
9. If everything is in order, the Office of Studies will ask the chair of the departmental committee to nominate referees and an examining committee.

Autoreferat

Autoreferat (thesis)

Autoreferat (thesis) is an extended summary of the main results of the thesis.

Use the prescribed template (for a Czech or Slovak dissertation, the Czech template, for an English dissertation, the English template) to prepare the autoreferat. Mandatory components of the autoreferat are (the template will guide you):

- Czech or Slovak annotation including a list of keywords (for dissertations written in Czech or Slovak);
- English abstract including English version of the title and list of keywords;
- your own abstract, i.e. an extended summary of the main results of the dissertation in the language of the dissertation, with a minimum of 10 pages in the formatting according to the prescribed template.
- a list of references (identical to the list of references in the dissertation itself);
- a list of the doctoral student's publications related to the study;
- a list of other scientific activities (internships, presentations at conferences, etc.).

Submission to

It must be submitted electronically both to the study department and to the secretariat of the institute (sekretariat-reli@phil.muni.cz) at the same time as the application for the dissertation defence or, by agreement with the study department, at a later date, but always no later than 10 working days before the examination.

Form

See the prescribed template. The minimum length of the actual thesis abstract is 10 printed pages. This does not include other mandatory components (see table of contents).