

State examination, internal defence and final defence of the dissertation

State examination and final defence of the dissertation

The Doctoral State Examination (I) and the Dissertation Defense (II) 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 semester of studies.

I. Doctoral State Examination

The course of the State Doctoral Examination is 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 semester** of studies. A prerequisite for the examination is the completion the course RLDra09 Draft Article.

The application for the exam is made by the candidate at the **beginning of the semester** through the Office for Studies on the prescribed form.

The doctoral state examination is conducted orally and consists of the following parts:

1) Position paper in the study of religions

At least ten working days prior to the state exam, the candidate submits a brief argumentative **position paper**, summarizing the main content of their presentation, sending it by email to the managing assistants of the department (sekretariat-reli@phil.muni.cz).

The position paper should be in the form of a text file of 3-5 standard pages (5400-9000 characters including spaces). It must contain a title, the author's name and surname, running references (there is no bibliographic standard, but we recommend the Harvard style rather than footnotes), and a final list of references.

The position paper should present an original position concerning a current, more general religious studies problem that is not identical with the dissertation topic. It must be based on a clear and convincing argument understandable to a non-specialist audience in the study of religions. They should therefore not drown in highly specialized details, but present a general argument that can be critically debated at the examination.

At the examination, the candidate presents the position paper in a maximum of **15 minutes**. The use of slides is recommended.

The committee evaluates the originality, quality and persuasiveness of both the written position paper and its presentation and subsequent participation in the debate. The weight of this part in the overall assessment of the examination is 50%.

2) Discussion of concepts and topics in study of religions

Together with the position paper, the candidate submits a **list of readings** by e-mail to the managing assistants of the departments. The list must be sent ten working days before the state doctoral examination at the latest, and will have two parts:

- (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 be a study in a journal or in conference proceedings), including brief annotations written by the doctoral candidate. Taking into account this list of references, the committee will ask a question which the candidate will discuss. This will be followed by a discussion. The weight of this part in the overall evaluation of the oral examination is 50%.

II. Defence of the dissertation

The dissertation defence takes place at the very end of studies. Candidates submit an application through the Office for Studies on the prescribed form after fulfilling their study obligations.

For the submission of the dissertation, see a special page.

In the semester of the defence, the PhD student submits electronically the **Extended thesis summary**.