

State examination, internal defence and final defence of the dissertation

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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).

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