

University of Potsdam – Potsdam Graduate School

Dissertation Agreement

The following is an agreement between

the doctoral student

Ms./Mr. _____

and the dissertation advisors

Ms./Mr. _____ (first advisor) and

Ms./Mr. _____ (second advisor).

The student will submit a dissertation with the (working) title

written in German/English.

1. Purpose of the agreement, duration and foundation of the dissertation project

This agreement establishes the contractual rights and responsibilities of the doctoral student and her/his advisors. The dissertation agreement ensures the continuing support and advising of the student's dissertation project and specifies the mutually agreed-upon requirements set for the advisors and advisee. Both student and advisors recognize the content of this agreement as the foundation of their academic relationship and agree to carry out the project to their best of their efforts.

The dissertation project will be conducted on a full-time/part-time or [...] % basis. The student and her/his advisors agree to strive for completion of the dissertation design and execution within a period of 3 years (4 years, in case an additional year of preparation is required). When planning the duration of the project, the student's personal and professional obligations will be taken into consideration.

Both parties agree to adhere to the "Principles of Good Scientific Practice" for the entire duration of the project.

2. Student responsibilities

- a) Mid-year report: Within the first six months after admission, the doctoral student must introduce her/his research concept, including the projected time and work schedules, in a presentation or other suitable format. If necessary, the research concept will be modified to the suggestions of the advisors in attendance following the presentation.
- b) Year-end reports: At the end of the first and second years, the doctoral student will submit a short written report detailing the progress made toward completion of the project. Based on these reports, the work schedule will be modified in collaboration with the advisors.
- c) The doctoral student agrees to participate in any and all events organized in support of the dissertation (e.g. colloquia, literature seminars) by her/his working groups.

3. Advisor responsibilities

- a) Advisors are responsible for continuously following and assisting the student's progress in order to ensure adherence to the schedules and modifying them when necessary. The schedules must take into account any additional responsibilities and teaching assignments. Meetings with at least one of the advisors should take place at least once a month; group meetings with all participating advisors should take place at least once a semester.

Advising responsibilities until completion of the project remain independent of the duration of financial support for the dissertation.

- b) Advisors are to support the student's professional development by establishing a schedule with clear assignments, introducing the student to the field of specialty and the relevant academic environment, and encouraging participation in conferences both within the country and abroad as far as financially feasible. Specific, detailed advice about opportunities for publication is desired.

Advisors are requested to include the doctoral student in her/his working group if such exists.

- c) Advisors are to advise the student regarding additional qualifications and personal development and to support the timely progress of the dissertation. Where appropriate, advisors should discuss with the student her/his perspectives on the academic career track.
- d) Advisors' report: At the end of the first and second years, the advisors evaluate the student's progress in a written report. The progress report will be discussed by the advisors and the student in a group meeting.
- e) Advisors agree to issue the initial evaluation promptly after submission of the dissertation. The evaluation should be submitted within approx. 3-4 months after submission.

4. Additional mentors and trusted third parties

Doctoral students may also identify additional (possibly external) mentors outside of the advising team. These mentors can provide different (e.g. gender-specific) perspectives from other academic fields, as well as act as mediators in conflict (e.g. advising-related) situations.

In addition, trusted third parties from the University of Potsdam can mediate between the doctoral student and her/his advisors as an independent third party and, along with the other mentors, can make recommendations for conflict resolution.

5. Supportive measures

a) Special measures for consideration of family and academic responsibilities: Advisors are to consider the student’s individual circumstances, especially with regard to balancing family and academic responsibilities, in the scheduling, choice of topic, and design of the dissertation project. The student is obligated to inform her/his advisors of any relevant circumstances in this respect.

b) Working conditions:

The first advisor shall offer the doctoral student appropriate working conditions in the _____ (institute/facility) with the following amenities:

- workspace with computer and telephone
- access to laboratory space
- all necessary tools and equipment

Potsdam, _____

Doctoral Student

First Advisor

Second Advisor