

**Regulations for a doctorate from the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy of the
Freie Universität Berlin**

**This English version of the doctoral rules and regulations for the Department of Biology,
Chemistry, and Pharmacy from Sept.4, 2007, is for information only and is not legally binding.**

Preamble

Based on § 14, para. 1, no. 2 of the partial constitution (trial model) of the Freie Universität Berlin that was issued on October 27, 1998 in the *FU-Mitteilungen* 24/1998 in conjunction with § 70, para. 5 of the Berlin Higher Education Act (Berliner Hochschulgesetz – BerlHG as amended and promulgated in the amendment from February 13th, 2003 (GVBl. pg. 81), which was last legally amended on July 6th, 2006 (GVBl. pg. 713), the extended faculty council of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy has issued the following doctoral degree regulations on January 10th and July 11th, 2007.*

Contents

- § 1 Definition of the doctorate and doctoral degree
- § 2 Doctoral board
- § 3 Admissions requirements
- § 4 Admissions procedure
- § 5 Registration for doctoral proceedings as a student
- § 6 Supervision of the dissertation and prescribed period of time for the work
- § 7 Dissertation
- § 8 Evaluation of the dissertation
- § 9 Doctorate committee
- § 10 Decisions on the dissertation and scheduling of the disputation
- § 11 Disputation
- § 12 Decision on the disputation and doctorate
- § 13 Additional doctoral subjects
- § 14 Publication of the scientific results (dissertation) and publication requirements
- § 15 Doctoral degree certificate
- § 16 Counter arguments
- § 17 Joint doctorates with higher education institutions abroad or equivalent educational or research institutions
- § 18 Honorary doctorates
- § 19 Revocation of a doctor's degree
- § 20 Closure of, withdrawal from, and new doctoral proceedings
- § 21 Legal validity, expiration, and interim rules

§ 1 Definition of the doctorate and doctoral degree

(1) The Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy of the Freie Universität Berlin awards the academic degree of "Doctor of Science" (Doctor rerum naturalium, which is abbreviated Dr. rer. nat.), or a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) upon completion of an official doctoral procedure according to the regulations below. The written doctoral work consists of a research work (dissertation) or several individual works (a cumulative work) and an examination colloquium (disputation) in the area of doctoral study.

(2) The doctoral degree attests to the ability to perform in-depth and original scientific research that is beyond that of a successfully completed degree in one of the study areas of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. The doctoral work consists of a research work (dissertation) and an examination colloquium (disputation) in the area of doctoral study. Furthermore, the promotion to a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) is proof of the successful completion of a doctoral course of study in one of the disciplines offered by the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy within the framework of the Dahlem Research School (DRS) or an equivalent course of study provided there is certified proof of performance.

(3) For special scientific performance in one of the disciplines assigned to the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy the honorary doctorate degree of the natural sciences (doctor rerum naturalium honoris causa, which is abbreviated Dr. rer. nat. h. c.) may be conferred.

(4) A degree according to para. 1 may be conferred only once per discipline.

(5) In doctoral proceedings, where the written doctoral work consists of several individual works, the rules and regulations of the dissertation apply analogously.

§ 2 Doctoral board

(1) The faculty council assigns a doctoral board to carry out the doctoral proceedings.

(2) The faculty council appoints the members of the doctoral board at the beginning of its term of office. It should consist of four full-time faculty members who should each represent one of the disciplines offered by the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy.

(3) The doctoral board determines whether the applicant and his or her dissertation plan may be admitted to the doctoral proceedings. It is required to advise the applicant. In the case of an interdisciplinary doctoral proceeding the doctoral board makes sure that the other disciplines are appropriately represented. The meetings of the doctoral board are not open to the public.

(4) The doctoral board may delegate decisions for individual cases and specific powers in general to the head of the doctoral board. It may cancel such delegations at any time.

(5) The doctoral board is accountable to the faculty council and must inform the faculty council of its decisions.

(6) The president and legal office must be informed of any procedural questions by the head of the doctoral board and through the dean of the faculty council.

§ 3 Admissions requirements

(1) For admission to the doctoral proceedings one must have successfully completed a course of study at a higher education institution within the scope of the Berlin Higher Education Act in a discipline that is essential for the doctoral degree by passing

- a master's exam
- a "diplom" exam
- the second part of the pharmaceutical exam or
- the first state teacher's exam at schools for general education or vocational schools

with at least a total grade of "good."

After passing a bachelor exam in an essential discipline for the doctoral studies, an applicant may be accepted, if the degree is given the highest possible grade according to the grade scale of the corresponding examination rules and regulations and if the applicant passes an assessment exam with two full-time faculty members in an area of study that is fundamental for the doctoral studies. The doctoral board decides how the assessment examination should be made.

(2) If the applicant has a different degree than stipulated in para. 1, he or she may be admitted to a doctoral proceedings, if his or her qualification for the area of doctoral study has been assured. The doctoral board may admit an applicant to the doctoral proceedings, if academic performance with the proficiency required for the proposed doctoral studies can be proven and provided by the applicant within a set period of time, either through higher education studies like those usually accepted in para. 1 or through supplementary proficiency by the applicant.

(3) An equivalent degree from a higher education institution outside the scope of the Higher Education Act may also be accepted as a degree for a course of study according to para. 1. If the Federal Center of Foreign Education for the Secretary of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education for the states of the Federal Republic of Germany has not already determined the degree to be generally equivalent, an equivalency confirmation must be obtained from it. If there is no classification for the grades from the foreign higher education institution by the Federal Center of Foreign Education, a representative of the corresponding discipline from the doctoral board will evaluate the equivalency of the grades from this higher education degree with a total grade of at least a "good." If an equivalency cannot be established, the doctoral board will review whether equivalency may be fulfilled according to para. 2.

(4) If the degree has been obtained from an applied higher education institution, a corresponding competence must be proven according to § 35 para. 3 of the Higher Education Act. This may be done if the final degree examination from the applied higher education institution is in a subject that is essential for the doctoral studies and has been given the best possible overall grade on its grade scale. The doctoral board decides from case to case whether to follow para. 1, sect. 2 and 3, or para. 2.

§ 4 Admissions procedure

(1) Before beginning the experimental and theoretical work for the planned dissertation, the admissions application for doctoral study must be submitted to the doctoral board with:

- a) the required documents, in particular, the certificates and proof of qualification according to § 3,
- b) a listed review of the relevant activities and experience in regard to the proposed doctoral study plan,
- c) an explanation of whether a doctoral study plan has previously been submitted or if doctoral proceedings have been carried out at another higher education institution or department, in which case all details must be given.
- d) Additionally, the applicant must confirm that he or she has read and understood the rules and regulations in force.
- e) If an applicant, whose mother tongue is not German and whose degree is from a foreign or equivalent higher education institution, wishes to do the doctoral work in German, he or she must provide proof of his or her German language ability by successfully passing the language test for German for admission to a higher education institution (DSH) or provide an equivalent form of proof according to the rules and regulations for German language tests for foreign higher education applicants to the Freie Universität Berlin. If the doctoral work is to be done in English, proof of proficiency in the English language must be provided in the form of a Certificate of Proficiency in English or a C 2-level of the Common European Framework of Reference or in an equivalent form of proof.

(2) A statement describing the goals and methods for the planned doctoral work should be included with the application. The proposed doctoral work must be approved of by at least one full-time faculty member of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy and must be in an area that is being taught and researched by at least one faculty member. The doctoral candidate proposes a supervisor who must confirm to the department that he or she does teaching and research in this area.

(3) As a rule, the doctoral board decides on whether to admit a doctoral application or not within one month. Rejections must be in writing.

(4) A doctoral application will be rejected if

- (a) the requirements according to §3 have not been fulfilled,
- (b) the documents according to §4, para. 1 and 2 are missing,
- (c) doctoral proceedings in the same academic field or subject area have already been successfully completed,
- (d) doctoral proceedings in the same academic field or subject area were carried out. The doctoral application may be rejected for professional incompetence as in § 4 para. 2.

§ 5 Registration for doctoral proceedings as a student

(1) Doctoral students, who are not already members of the Freie Universität Berlin as an employee or through enrolment in a course of study, must register as a doctoral student or get enrolled.

(2) If registration is not applied for within the time period stated in the admissions letter for the doctoral proceedings or within a deadline extension, admission to the doctoral proceedings will expire. This does not mean that an application for doctoral proceedings may not be renewed.

§ 6 Supervision of the dissertation and prescribed period of time for the work

(1) Upon admission of the doctoral student to the doctoral proceedings, the Department assumes the responsibility for the supervision and later evaluation of the proposed doctoral work.

(2) Dissertation supervisors are generally professors from the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. Supervision of a dissertation is an ongoing obligation for the professor involved and may not be delegated.

(3) Notwithstanding para. 2, directors, research group leaders, or independent junior research group leaders and other equivalent members of non-university research institutions and educational institutions, who have been given the right to do so from the Freie Universität Berlin within the framework of a cooperation agreement with the Department, may act as supervisors, reviewers, or examiners at doctoral promotions with the rights and duties of a part-time professor. This also applies to third-party funded junior group leaders, who have been institutionally accepted into the Freie Universität Berlin and who have been granted per legal contract with the Department the right to supervise doctoral students.

(4) In some well founded cases the doctoral board may appoint professors who do not belong to the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy, in which case the doctoral board appoints a full professor of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy to support the external supervisor. External supervisors must then guarantee, even if their official field of activity is largely outside of the State of Berlin, that they will regularly supervise and have personal contact with the doctoral students.

(5) The topic for the dissertation may be freely chosen, but it must have the supervisor's approval. As a rule, the dissertation should be submitted within three years and the proceedings finished within four years (the prescribed period of time for the work).

(6) If a doctoral student takes longer than the prescribed period of time for the work described in para. 4, he or she must submit a certificate from the doctoral board to the student administration that indicates the present status of the doctoral work and the expected amount of time still needed. If this certificate is not submitted within three months after the doctoral student has been requested to provide a reasonable explanation, the doctoral student's admission to the doctoral proceedings will expire.

(7) The supervisor must confirm in written form to the doctoral student and the Department that he or she is willing to supervise the doctoral work for a period of up to three years. The doctoral board may decide to prolong the supervision, if this is requested and desired by the supervisor. If, in the course of the doctoral work, the supervisor or doctoral student feels it is necessary to end the supervision for important reasons, they must inform the head of the doctoral board without delay and give their reasons.

(8) If the supervisor leaves the Freie Universität Berlin, he or she retains the right to supervise a dissertation that had already been begun to its end and to belong to the doctorate committee for the following three years. This time limit does not apply to former full professors of the Freie Universität Berlin, whose teaching and testing authorization continue.

§ 7 Dissertation

(1) The written doctoral performance should prove the ability to perform in-depth, independent research work and aim towards an advance in scientific knowledge.

(2) The written doctoral performance may be written in either German or English and may be submitted either as

(a) an unpublished or a fully or partly published work, which presents the research work and results in a form that is complete in itself. Previous publication is only permitted if both the doctoral student and supervisor agree.

or

(b) a cumulative work of published and/or unpublished individual works that altogether represent a dissertation that is equivalent with the work in letter (a). A cumulative work must have a title as a whole and contains, in addition to the data outlined in § 7, para. 5, a list of titles for the individual works, an introduction, and a unifying text that comprehensively interprets, evaluates, and discusses the individual works included in the cumulative work.

(3) In a written doctoral work according to para. 2 that has resulted from cooperation with other scientists, the work done by the doctoral student must be clearly defined and appraisable. The doctoral

student is obliged to present his or her part in the conception, execution, and preparation of the report in detail.

(4) The doctoral student must refer to all forms of aid and help received and affirm that the work was independently done on this basis. The work may not already have been accepted in an earlier doctoral procedure or have been judged to be insufficient. If necessary, work from a previous doctoral procedure must be submitted for comparison

(5) The dissertation must have the name of the author, the term "dissertation submitted to the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy of the Freie Universität Berlin," and the year of submission on the title page. It must also include the names of the reviewers on a front page. In the appendix there must be a short summary of the results in English and in German as well as a list of any earlier publications that resulted from the dissertation. It should also include a short curriculum vitae of the doctoral student, if he or she agrees.

(6) Three printed copies of the dissertation must be submitted. Each reviewer receives a copy and one copy is kept by the Department for the archives. Three reprints must be handed in for each earlier, partial publication of the work..

§ 8 Evaluation of the Dissertation

(1) After submission of the dissertation, the doctoral board appoints the reviewers for the dissertation and doctorate committee in accordance with § 9.

(2) The supervisor of the dissertation is always appointed as one of the reviewers. The doctoral board appoints a further reviewer in consultation with the doctoral student. At least one of the reviewers must be a full professor in the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. At least one of the reviewers must belong to the area of expertise of the dissertation. If important methodological or factual aspects of the dissertation lie in a field that is primarily taught by another department, another full professor from that department must be appointed as a reviewer. § 6 sect. 3 remains unaffected.

(3) The reviews must be written independently of each other and handed in within six weeks after they are requested. Failure to meet the deadline must be explained in written form to the doctoral board. The members of the doctoral board and doctorate committee must treat the reviews confidentially. The reviews must acknowledge the significance of the dissertation and its results in an overall perspective and present any deficiencies that may arise. If a reviewer sees deficiencies in the work that appear to be necessary and possible to improve, he or she should describe them in detail in the review. In this case, he or she may recommend that the dissertation be reworked and must give instructions accordingly. In the overall evaluation each reviewer must recommend that dissertation either be accepted with a grade under § 10, refused, or returned for elimination of specific deficiencies and then resubmitted. If the review does not clearly indicate the required evaluations, the doctorate board will return the review for reworking.

(4) If the evaluation in the reviews differs by more than one grade, the doctoral board will appoint an additional reviewer.

(5) When the reviews are finished, the dissertation and reviewers' grade proposals must be made available for examination for two weeks or for four during semester breaks. All professors and members with doctoral degrees in the Department may look at the dissertation and grade proposals and submit a written statement on them, which will be added to the doctoral student's doctoral documents. The doctoral board must appropriately notify this group of people that the dissertation may be viewed. Moreover, the members of the doctoral board and relevant doctorate committee also have the right to look at the reviews during the viewing period. The doctoral board may also appoint an additional external reviewer if comments are submitted within the viewing period.

§ 9 Doctorate committee

(1) The doctoral board forms a doctorate committee for the doctoral proceedings that are about to take place and selects a chairperson and substitute chairperson who must both be full professors in the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy.

2) The doctorate committee consists of the reviewers and at least two additional professors of whom three at least must be members of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy in addition to an academic researcher with a doctoral degree, who has a position with the Freie Universität Berlin or with one of the members of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. There should not be more

than one professor in the doctorate committee who has been relieved of his or her duties or who has retired. § 6 sect. 3 remains unaffected.

(3) The doctoral board will replace any members of the doctorate committee who leave or are hindered for any length of time for important reasons according to the measures in para. 2.

(4) The duties of the doctoral committee are to:

(a) evaluate the dissertation based on the submitted reviews and possible comments according to § 8, para. 5,

(b) schedule and carry out the disputation,

(c) evaluate the disputation,

(d) and determine the overall grade taking into consideration the individual grades for the dissertation and disputation according to § 11 and 12.

(5) The meetings of the doctoral committee are not open to the public.

(6) Decisions are determined in the doctorate committee by the majority of members with the right to vote. Voting on an evaluation of performance is done per open ballot. There is no abstaining from voting.

§ 10 Decisions on the dissertation and scheduling of the disputation

(1) After the viewing period is over, the doctorate committee decides to accept, refuse, or return the dissertation, determines whether or not to admit the doctoral student to the disputation, and uses the following grades for the dissertation:

- with distinction (summa cum laude)
- very good (magna cum laude)
- good (cum laude)
- satisfactory (rite).

The grade “summa cum laude” may only be used for the dissertation, if the work has been given a “summa cum laude” by both reviewers and if the dissertation has not been returned by the reviewers to the doctoral student before the final evaluation for remedial corrections and resubmission. If the dissertation has been rejected, the doctoral committee gives the doctorate a failing grade. It does not schedule a disputation and states its reasons for its decision. The head of the doctoral board notifies the doctoral student of the failing and reasons for it in writing.

(2) If a dissertation has been accepted, the doctorate committee informs the candidate about its decision and sets a date for the disputation that is agreeable for the candidate. This should be within four months after receipt of the last review. Exceptions and reasons for them must be submitted to and decided on by the head of the doctoral board. The head of the doctoral board is responsible for the invitations to the disputation.

(3) If the dissertation is returned, the disputation will first be scheduled after submission and evaluation of the reworked dissertation and end of the viewing period under § 8 para. 5.

(4) If the doctoral student declares his or her decision to forego the disputation, the doctorate will be graded as failed. The head of the doctoral board must notify this to the doctoral student in writing.

(5) When the reviews are finished, the dissertation and reviewers' grade proposals must be made available for examination for two weeks or for four during semester breaks. All professors and members with doctoral degrees in the Department may look at the dissertation and grade proposals and submit a written statement on them, which will be added to the doctoral student's doctoral documents. The doctoral board must appropriately notify this group of people that the dissertation may be viewed. Moreover, the members of the doctoral board and relevant doctorate committee also have the right to look at the reviews during the viewing period. The doctoral board may also appoint an additional external reviewer if comments are submitted within the viewing period.

§ 11 Disputation

(1) The purpose of the disputation is to prove the ability of the doctoral student to orally present and discuss scientific problems. The candidate may choose to have the dissertation in either German or English. The disputation is open to the university public, unless the candidate objects. All doctorate committee members must take part in the disputation.

(2) The disputation begins with a lecture of about thirty minutes, in which the doctoral student presents and discusses the results of the dissertation and their significance in terms of the field as a whole. The doctoral student then defends the dissertation by responding to the doctorate committee members' criticism and questions. The questions should be related to the problems presented in the dissertation in terms of the general scientific perspective. Afterwards the head of the doctorate committee may accept questions on the disputation topics from the public. The discussion must take at least thirty but not more than sixty minutes.

(3) The head of the doctorate committee coordinates the scientific discussion and decides on the priority and, if needed, permissibility of the questions. He or she may decide to exclude the public, which does not include the doctoral board members, if this is necessary for carrying out the disputation in accordance with the rules.

(4) The members of the doctorate committee appoint one of their members to take minutes on the disputation process. These minutes are included in the doctoral degree documents and must contain the following:

- date/time/place of the disputation
- attendance list of the doctorate committee members
- dissertation grade
- notes on the main points made in the contributions to the discussion
- grade for the disputation
- overall grade according to § 12
- any special incidents.

The minutes should be signed by the both the minutes taker and the head of the doctorate committee.

(5) If the doctoral student does not attend the disputation and does not provide an excuse, he or she will fail the disputation, which must be notified to the doctoral student in writing.

§ 12 Decision on the disputation and doctorate

1) Directly after the disputation, the doctorate committee grades the disputation in a meeting that is not open to the public according to § 10, para. 1. When determining the grade for the disputation, the discussion should be given more weight than the presentation. In the overall grade the dissertation has more weight than the disputation. The doctorate committee then sets the overall grade using the grading system according to § 10, para. 1. It informs the candidate of the individual grades for the dissertation and disputation, as well as of the overall grade. The grade "with distinction (summa cum laude)" may only be given as the overall grade, if the dissertation was given this grade.

(2) After determination of the overall grade, the doctoral student receives a preliminary certificate from the doctorate committee, which contains the title of the dissertation, the individual grades for the dissertation and disputation, in addition to the overall grade. This preliminary certificate does not authorize the right to use the doctor title.

(3) After conclusion of the doctoral proceedings, the whole doctoral degree process should continue to be treated confidentially. The doctoral degree holder or former doctoral student has the right to look at the doctoral degree file for up to one year.

(4) If the disputation has been failed, the head of the doctoral board must communicate this to the doctoral student with reasons in writing within two weeks. The disputation may be repeated at the earliest in three months and by the latest in six months.

5) If the second disputation is also failed, the doctorate committee declares that the doctoral degree has been failed and gives the reason for this decision. The head of the doctoral board must notify this to the candidate in writing within two weeks.

§ 13 Additional doctoral subjects

(1) If desired, the doctoral student must be given an opportunity to be examined in additional areas of knowledge that have been obtained within the framework of his or her research related education.

(2) Before admission to an examination in such a subject, the minimum admission requirements must be determined and agreed upon with the department that is responsible for the subject. An examination in an additional subject should take about 30 minutes. It must take place after the dissertation has been submitted and before and independent of the disputation.

(3) The doctoral student may apply to the head of the doctoral board for the examination results from an additional subject to be included in the doctoral diploma in accordance with para. 1. The results are to be graded according to the respective examination regulations in force.

§ 14 Publication of the scientific results (dissertation) and publication requirements

(1) The dissertation must be reproduced and distributed so that it is available to the scientific community in an appropriate manner. This means that, in addition to the three required copies in accordance with § 7 para. 6, the doctoral student must deliver to the University Library at no extra cost:

- a) 40 copies in book or photocopy form,
- b) three original publications, if the publication of the whole dissertation occurs in a periodical,
- c) three original copies, if a commercial publisher has undertaken the distribution through book stores and if an edition of at least 150 copies can be proven,
- d) three typed copies that can be photocopied in addition to a master copy and 50 additional copies in the form of microfiches, or
- e) an electronic version with a data format and carrier in coordination with the University Library as well as five printed copies.

In the case of (a), the University Library is required to keep an appropriate amount of surplus copies for exchange for four years. In the cases of (b) and (c) reference must be made to where the dissertation was published. For (a) and (d) the doctoral student transfers the right to make and distribute additional copies of his or her dissertation to the University.

(2) If a dissertation has been distributed by a commercial publisher and if a grant from public sources has been awarded for printing costs, the University Library must be provided with an appropriate number of copies for exchange.

(3) Publication and fulfillment of the obligation to supply copies under para. 1 must be done within one year starting from the date of the dissertation. The doctoral student may write an application to the doctoral board stating the reasons for his or her request to extend this deadline. It is not required to publish work for a doctoral proceeding if it has already been published in the form of individual works or as a whole, or if the individual works for a cumulative work have already been published.

§ 15 Doctoral degree certificate

(1) The doctoral degree certificate will be issued in German and, if requested, also in English.

(2) The doctoral degree certificate must contain:

- a) name of the Freie Universität Berlin and of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy,
- b) name as well as date and location of birth of the doctoral graduate,
- c) the academic degree granted: a Doctor of Science (doctor rerum naturalium which is abbreviated Dr. rer. Nat.) or a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.),
- d) title of the dissertation,
- e) date of the disputation, which is the date of the doctoral degree,

- f) grades for the dissertation and disputation in addition to the overall grade for the doctoral degree,
- g) grades from exams in additional subjects according to § 13 if applied for by the doctoral student,
- h) names of the reviewers,
- i) name and signature of the Dean,
- j) seal of the Freie Universität Berlin.

(3) Doctoral students who have fulfilled the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) may apply for the granting of a Doctor of Science (Dr. rer. Nat.) degree instead.

(4) If it is determined before the doctoral degree diploma has been issued that

1. the applicant has been deceptive about the basic requirements for the granting of a doctorate or
2. if important prerequisites for the granting the doctorate degree were thought to have been fulfilled by mistake, but not as in 1,

the doctoral diploma will not be issued, unless the doctoral board decides to the contrary. Furthermore, in the event of doctoral proceedings under §§1 to 12, the entire examination will be declared as not having been passed.

(5) The doctoral diploma should be issued within six weeks after notification of the obligation to fulfill the delivery requirement according to § 14 para. 1 and 3. The doctoral diploma entitles one to the use of the academic degree, Doctor of Science, doctor rerum naturalium, which is abbreviated Dr. rer. Nat.

§ 16 Counter arguments

Counter arguments about the results of the doctoral proceedings must be addressed in writing with reasons to the head of the doctoral board within three months after the announcement of the results. The head of the doctoral board is responsible for appropriately carrying out the proceedings for the counter arguments. He or she forwards the counter arguments to the members of the doctorate committee. The head of the doctoral board informs the concerned person of the doctorate committee's decision on the counter arguments. As a rule, the doctorate committee decides on counter arguments within one month, whereby the evaluation in concern and evaluation of the reasons for this will be examined. The results of both the reexamination and grades are to be explained in written form.

§ 17 Joint doctoral degrees with higher education institutions abroad or equivalent educational or research institutions

(1) The doctoral proceedings may be jointly carried out with higher educational institutions abroad or equivalent educational or research institutions if

- a) the applicant has fulfilled the requirements for admission to the doctoral proceedings of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy of the Freie Universität and
- b) the educational institution abroad has the right to grant doctoral degrees according to its national legal provisions and the academic degree to be granted from the university abroad may be accepted within the framework of the Higher Education Act (HRG).

(2) The carrying out of the joint doctoral proceedings should be regulated by a contract. The regulations for the contract as well as this doctoral degree are valid. When the requirements and proceedings are negotiated, it must be taken into account and ensured that the rules and regulations for this doctoral degree have equal weight. Which rules doctoral rules and regulations are to be applied should be amicably determined. The foreign doctoral rules and regulations must be provided in German or English so it can be ascertained whether their requirements and proceedings are equivalent with those of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. If the foreign doctoral rules and regulations are to be applied, it must be assured that the doctoral rules and regulations of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy of the Freie Universität Berlin are essentially applied as well.

(3) The doctoral student must have been admitted to both participating institutions.

(4) The work may be written in either German or English but must contain, in addition to the German and English summaries, a summary in the third language, where required.

(5) Each participating higher education institution or equivalent research or educational institution is equally represented by two professors in the doctorate committee in addition to the postdoctoral research member from the Department. Both reviewers are members of the committee. The committee may be extended by up to two more professors, if applied for, but equal representation must be maintained. It must be guaranteed that the doctorate committee members are able to speak and understand the language of the examination.

(6) If the grading systems of the two countries differ, an agreement on the terms for the examination grades must be worked out together and uniformly documented. The grading system for the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is as follows:

A = with distinction = summa cum laude,

B = very good = magna cum laude,

C = good = cum laude,

D = satisfactory = rite,

F = failed = non rite.

(7) The doctoral degree diploma will be jointly and bilingually issued by both universities in the form that was developed by the Association of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions in Germany (HRK). Therefore, the doctoral student is granted the doctor's degree in either the German or foreign form. However, only one doctor's degree may be awarded.

§ 18 Honorary doctorate

The granting of an Honorary Doctor of Science (Dr. rer. nat. h.c.) degree for outstanding scientific performance in the natural sciences in a subject that is important for and taught by the Department may be applied for to the faculty council by the dean, the research commission, or at least three full professors in the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy. The doctoral board appoints a doctorate committee according to § 9 to evaluate the performance and prepare a recommendation for the faculty council taking into account two external reviews. The decision is reached in the faculty council by a majority of the faculty council members with doctoral degrees.

§ 19 Revocation of a Doctor's degree

The revocation of a doctor's degree according to § 1 is based on the legal requirements.

§ 20 Closure of, withdrawal from, and new doctoral proceedings

(1) If more than six years have passed since admission to the doctoral proceedings, the doctoral board may close the proceedings upon a written agreement and explanation by the supervisor after he or she has listened to the doctoral student. Reasons for the decision must be given in written form to the head of the doctoral board. This does not exclude a renewed application for admission to the doctoral proceedings.

(2) The doctoral student has the right to withdraw up to the receipt of the first review. The procedural steps up to the withdrawal do not count as doctoral proceedings.

(3) If entire doctorate was failed, admission to new doctoral proceedings may be applied for, and a new dissertation may be submitted, but at the earliest after one year.

§ 21 Legal validity, expiration, and interim rules

(1) These rules and regulations will come in effect after they are published in the *Mitteilungen* (official journal of the Freie Universität Berlin) and will be valid for all doctoral proceedings that are applied for and begun after this time point according to § 4.

(2) Doctoral students, who are working on a dissertation when these doctoral rules and regulations come in effect and who have been admitted to the doctoral proceedings according to §§ 2, 3 of the doctoral rules and regulations of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Pharmacy from February 14, 2001,

may conclude the doctoral proceedings according to the existing rules and regulations, if an interim period of four years after these rules and regulations have come into effect has not yet passed. § 14 of these rules and regulations is also valid for all proceedings that have not yet been concluded according to the previously applicable rules and regulations.