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First Ordinance on the Amendment of the Doctoral Regulations at the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin

Preamble

On the basis of Section 14.1.2 of Freie Universität Berlin's supplemental rules and regulations (*Teilgrundordnung [Erprobungsmodell]*) from October 27, 1998, published in *FU-Mitteilungen* No. 24/1998 (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin), and in conjunction with Section 70.5 of the Berlin Higher Education Act (*Berliner Hochschulgesetz – BerIHG*) of July 26, 2011 (GVBl. p. 378), last amended on July 5, 2022 (GVBl. p. 450), the Extended Department Council (*Erweiterte Fachbereichsrat*) of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following First Ordinance on the Amendment of the Doctoral Regulations at the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy (*FU-Mitteilungen* No. 21/2018 from May 31, 2018) on November 16, 2022: *

Article I

1. Section 1.4 shall be deleted.

2. Section 4.1.f shall be replaced with the following:

f) a declaration confirming that the applicant has not submitted a dissertation on this or a similar topic at another university or department,

3. Section 4 shall receive a new paragraph (4.4) containing the following text:

¹The date of admission shall be considered the date upon which the applicant begins their doctoral degree program.

4. Section 5.1 shall be replaced with the following

¹Doctoral students must be able to prove that they maintain a continuous affiliation with Freie Universität (enrolled at and/or employed by the university) until they submit their dissertation. ²Doctoral students must prove their affiliation with Freie Universität at the doctoral office within two months of their successful admission to the doctoral degree program (dated from the date of the admission notification).

* The Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin approved these regulations on March 31, 2023.

5. Section 6.7² will be replaced as follows, with new content inserted as 6.7³:

²In these cases, the doctoral board will make a decision at its discretion and within six months as to whether the doctoral project is to be continued or terminated; any suggestions made by the doctoral student regarding a new supervisor are to be taken into consideration here. ³Admission to the doctoral degree program is revoked where it is decided that the doctoral project shall be terminated.

The previous content of 6.7² will become 6.7⁴.

6. Section 6 will be expanded to include 6.a:

Supervision agreement

¹The supervisor and the doctoral student enter into a supervision agreement. ²By signing this supervision agreement, the supervisor agrees to supervise the doctoral project for at least for the duration of the standard time to completion for the doctoral degree.

7. Section 7.6 shall be replaced with the following:

¹The dissertation is to be submitted in the form of one printed copy and one identical electronic copy. ²Prior publications of parts of the work are also to be submitted as special prints in the form of one printed copy and one identical electronic copy. ³Each reviewer receives an electronic copy of the dissertation, as well as any electronic special prints, from the doctoral office. ⁴The printed copy of the dissertation, as well as any physical special prints, are kept by the department for archival purposes. ⁵The dissertation may be subjected to an electronic plagiarism check; data protection regulations are to be upheld during this process.

8. Section 8.3 shall be replaced with the following:

¹Evaluations are to be completed independently of one another and submitted within six weeks of being requested. ²Reasons for exceeding this deadline are to be provided in writing. ³As a general rule, the reviewers may exceed the original deadline twice; in each case they will receive a formal warning and a new deadline by which to submit their evaluation. ⁴If, following expiry of the second deadline, no evaluation has been submitted and no reasons for the delay have been provided, the doctoral board and the doctoral student may relieve the reviewer of their role and appoint a new one. ⁵The members of the doctoral board and the doctoral committee must treat the evaluations as confidential. ⁶The evaluations must convey the significance of the dissertation, present its results in a wider context, and acknowledge any shortcomings. ⁷If one of the reviewers believes that any of these shortcomings can and must be remedied, they must clearly indicate this in their evaluation. ⁸In cases such as these, the reviewer may recommend that the doctoral student revise the dissertation; however, the reviewer must then provide a list of shortcomings and recommendations for remedying them.

⁹In their overall evaluation, each reviewer must recommend that the dissertation is accepted (providing a grade for the work in accordance with Section 10), rejected, or returned to the doctoral student to remedy certain shortcomings before being presented for evaluation once more. ¹⁰If an evaluation does not provide information to the extent required for making a final decision regarding the dissertation, the doctoral board will return the evaluation to the reviewer for improvement. ¹¹If, following receipt of both evaluations, a reviewer has recommended that the dissertation be returned to the doctoral student for revision, the doctoral board will invite the doctoral student to revise and re-submit their dissertation based on the reviewers' evaluations, which must be made available to the doctoral student (with the recommendation for revision as well as specific indications of what needs to be revised) – something which the doctoral student may do only once. ¹²Generally, the doctoral student will be given three months to make the necessary changes to their dissertation, whereby requests for an additional extension beyond this deadline may also be submitted to the doctoral board. ¹³The resubmitted dissertation is to be submitted as one finalized (“clean”) printed copy, one finalized (“clean”) electronic copy, and one electronic copy in which all changes to the first submitted dissertation are clearly visible.

9. Section 9.2 shall be replaced with the following:

¹The doctoral committee shall consist of both reviewers, two professors, and one academic staff member employed by Freie Universität Berlin who holds a doctoral degree. ²In cases where a third reviewer is appointed in accordance with Section 8.4 or Section 8.5⁶, the doctoral committee shall consist of the three reviewers, one professor, and one academic staff member employed by Freie Universität Berlin who holds a doctoral degree; where a fourth reviewer is appointed in accordance with Section 8.4 and Section 8.5⁶, these four reviewers shall comprise the group of professors for the doctoral committee in its entirety. ³In the event of interdisciplinary doctoral projects, the doctoral committee can be expanded at the discretion of the doctoral board. ⁴The doctoral committee must include at least two professors within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy whose primary employment is with the university. ⁵The committee should not contain more than one professor who has been released or retired from their position. ⁶The majority of doctoral committee members must belong to the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy. ⁷One alternate shall be appointed to stand in for members of the doctoral committee who were appointed in the capacity of professor, and another alternate shall be appointed to stand in for academic staff who hold doctoral degrees. ⁸Section 6.3 remains unaffected, i.e., the group of individuals listed in Section 6.3 may be appointed as members of the doctoral committee under the provisions specified there.

10. Section 11.1 shall be replaced with the following:

¹The defense is intended to demonstrate the doctoral student's ability to verbally present and discuss scientific problems. ²The defense must be held in either German or English. ³The defense may take place in person – either on Freie Universität Berlin's

campus or in the immediate vicinity – or online via video conference. ⁴The doctoral board shall determine the individual details surrounding the types of formats in which a defense may be held, including hybrid types that combine both formats mentioned in Section 11.1³. ⁵The final decision about the format of the defense shall be made by the chairperson of the doctoral committee; this decision shall require the agreement of all committee members and the doctoral student; where no agreement on the format of the defense can be made, the doctoral board shall determine the format thereof by resolution and in consultation with the doctoral student. ⁶Unless the doctoral student objects to this, the defense shall be open to the public.

11. Section 12 will be expanded to include 12.a:

Meetings and examinations by audiovisual means

(1) ¹Meetings of the doctoral board/committee may take place via audiovisual means, provided data protection regulations are followed. ²Secret ballots may only be carried out when the corresponding technologies used provide for this. ³The chairperson will make the decision as to whether to carry out meetings and examinations by audiovisual means at their own discretion.

(2) ¹The defense may also take place via audiovisual means, provided data protection regulations are followed and the doctoral student agrees to this. ²The chairperson of the doctoral committee will make the decision as to whether to carry out the defense by audiovisual means at their own discretion.

12. Section 14.1² shall be replaced with the following:

²This has been achieved when the doctoral student delivers the following to the university library free of charge in addition to the printed copy and the electronic version specified in Section 7.6.

13. Section 22.2 shall be replaced with the following:

¹Doctoral students who have already been admitted to a doctoral degree program at the time these regulations enter into force may still complete the doctoral degree program according to the previous regulations provided that they submit a request to their department (doctoral office) to remain in the previous regulations; this request must be submitted within one year of these regulations entering into force and before submitting their dissertation. ²All other procedures shall apply from the time that these regulations enter into force. ³Section 22.2² shall apply provided that Section 6.a only applies to new admissions.

Article II

These regulations enter into force on the day following their publication in *FU-Mitteilungen* (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin).