

CDoct Decisions

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CDoct 115 (Feb. 2017)

Videoconference for candidacy examination

The doctoral program director may allow videoconferencing upon request and with the explicit (i.e. in writing) agreement of the PhD candidate for candidacy exam for one jury member.

CDoct 110 (Jan. 2016)

Videoconference for oral thesis exam

As long as the president of the jury and the PhD candidate agree on the chosen option, any videoconference system (Skype, Jabber guest, etc.) can be used; however, we should always try to offer the best solution we can, which remains the videoconference room.

Guidelines:

- Offer the best solution we can to the participants (responsibility of program directors). The order of preference is:
 - a) A videoconference room on both sides
 - b) An EPFL videoconference room, Cisco Jabber on the other side
 - c) Alternative systems like Skype, Bluejeans, etc.
- Jury President & PhD candidate need to agree in writing ahead of the exam with the chosen option
- External expert needs a fast internet connection and participates at a calm location
- System should be tested at least one hour prior the exam.

CDoct 109 (Nov. 2015)

Thesis made of combined Articles

The thesis must include :

- An introduction that puts the entire thesis into context and gives global objectives of the research to be presented in the thesis (a thesis must have glue - a red line - that connects the different papers/chapters together)
- Each section that was, or is to be, published as an article must comprise on its first page
 - a complete list of authors
 - a detailed description of the doctoral candidate's contribution to the article (modified text decided in Cdoct 110)

- a full bibliographic reference if available
- A general conclusion chapter, summarizing the main contributions of the “thesis”
- A section presenting possibilities for future development of the work presented in the thesis

It is recommended that the thesis includes :

- A (single) review of the literature covering the entire domain of the thesis

To the fullest extent possible, repetitions between the chapters should be eliminated

CDoct 107 (May 2015)

Thesis jury requirements

- A thesis jury examiner cannot be a previous or current, official or de-facto, (co-)director of the thesis being evaluated
- Jury examiners must not have hierarchical relations to one another
- Jury examiners must not be in the same laboratory as the thesis director or the candidate (also for external students, examiners, and thesis directors)
- Jury examiners must not have a close personal or professional relationship with the candidate or thesis director (married, etc.)

Credits for transferable skills courses

After voting, everyone (12 out of 12 members) agrees that 4 credits - but not those required for the first year - out of the total required amount ($12 \leq X \leq 30$) can be chosen by the doctoral candidate from all EPFL doctoral program’s course lists without the approval of neither the program committee nor the thesis supervisor (This requires a change of Directives, as approval of advisor is currently required, and some program regulations). The doctoral course book will be enhanced with a set of courses for transferable skills, open to all doctoral programs, which can also be chosen as part of these 4 credits. These transferable skills courses, and the number of ECTS credits each carries, will be validated at CDoct meetings.

CDoct 106 (Mar. 2015)

PhD mandatory for members of the thesis jury

It was voted during Cdoct62 (2009) that jury members must hold a PhD as a minimum qualification. However, for some theses or disciplines (notably in architecture) a desirable jury member might not hold a PhD, therefore :

If a jury member does not hold a PhD, a dispensation can be requested, case-by-case, by the program director to EDOC (gestion.edoc@epfl.ch). The request must be justified with a letter from the program director and CV of the person in question. The person's qualifications will be evaluated based on his/her CV.

The doctoral school will not keep track of the dispensations' requests. Therefore, even if an expert without a PhD has already served on an EPFL thesis jury, a new dispensation has to be requested for each exam.

CDoct 105 (Jan. 2015)

Procedure for voting a new program director

Members voted for the following procedure for voting a new program director:
Procedure for voting a new program director:

- Step 1. Program director/admin collect the candidate files (call to all labs.)
- Step 2. Candidate names are communicated to EDOC
- Step 3. VPAA/EDOC give green light for the candidates
- Step 4. The program organizes a faculty meeting for discussion and vote
- Step 5. The VPAA approves (if opportune) and nominates for 3 years

With some precisions voted in CDoct 106 :

- At the end of the selection process, the doctoral program documents that a majority of the program faculty approve of the selected candidate (also in the situation where there is only one candidate standing). When needed a second vote (i.e. 2nd round) is organized
- A doctoral program director can be elected by electronic vote, without physical faculty meeting

CDoct 73 (Jul. 2010)

Evaluation of doctoral level courses

After discussion, members agreed to allow evaluations no matter how many participants, with 11 for, 3 against and no abstentions

CDoct 63 (Apr. 2009)

Credits for attending conferences / summer schools

CDoct AGREED that conference attendance cannot be eligible for credits. Participation in summer schools and workshops with proper pedagogical content however are to be strongly encouraged.

ECTS Credits (European Credit Transfer System)

When the ECTS credits were introduced to the EPFL in 2004, the definition taken by the Doctoral School was agreed to be 14 contact hours plus 14 hours of independent work for one credit. The actual ECTS definition is for 25 to 30 hours of work for one credit, without distinction as to the type of work carried out. The EPFL will adhere to this definition; with the semester system the BAMA credit is for 28 hours of work. J. Giovanola asked members to adhere to this definition of one credit for 28 hours of work. While the separation of types of work should be provided, all courses' stated number of hours of work should correspond to this calculation and total 28 hours.

CDoct 57 (Jul. 2008)

Decision on a minimum time limit for the attainment of first year requirements

CDoct agreed that the Research Plan may be submitted between 6 to 12 months after immatriculation.

CDoct 54 (Mar. 2008)

Participation of doctoral students at CDoct and program meetings

J. Giovanola proposed the participation of doctoral students at every meeting of CDoct. Items of particular sensitivity or confidentiality would be on a separate agenda, and the delegation of doctoral students duly informed. CDoct agreed to this proposal, with 1 against.

In regard to doctoral student participation at Program committee meetings, J. Giovanola proposed that the same rule be applied and that regular meetings have to take place. It is for each Program to decide how to separate the agenda, on the clear understanding that candidate dossiers and personal issues could not be included where doctoral students are in attendance. CDoct agreed to this proposal, with none against and no abstentions.

CDoct 44 (Dec. 2006)

Doctorants ayant commencé une thèse dans une autre institution

L'admission de doctorants ayant commencé une thèse dans une autre institution n'est en règle générale pas autorisée. Nous ne voulons pas "voler" les étudiants des autres unis.

CDoct 43 (Oct. 2006)

Cours de langues

Les secrétariats et directions de programmes ont été informés par mail que les cours de langues ne permettent en aucun cas d'obtenir des crédits doctoraux, contrairement à ce que laissaient

entendre les informations émanant du centre de langues. Le centre de langues octroie des crédits pour les cours qu'il offre, cependant ni le Bachelor, ni le Master ni l'Ecole doctorale ne permettent la prise en compte de ces crédits pour l'obtention des diplômes.

Suppression de cours

La coordination des plans d'études est de la responsabilité des commissions de programme. Lorsqu'un cours est supprimé, un simple message de l'enseignant relayé par la secrétaire du programme n'est pas suffisant. Il est demandé de fournir à l'avenir une copie du procès-verbal de la séance durant laquelle la suppression du cours a été acceptée par la commission du programme. Certains problèmes liés à l'organisation des cours et à leur qualité parfois inadaptée sont remontés jusqu'au CEPF qui nous a formellement enjoins de veiller à la qualité de nos plans d'études.

CDoct 36 (Feb. 2005)

Contrôle de connaissance des cours

L'ordonnance sur le contrôle des études s'applique par analogie aux cours d'Ecole doctorale, tout en admettant une certaine souplesse en ce qui concerne les experts.

Un doctorant ne peut pas se présenter plus de deux fois à un examen pour un cours d'école doctorale. Il n'est pas obligatoire qu'il suive le cours une deuxième fois avant de se présenter à nouveau à l'examen.

CDoct 35 (Nov. 2005)

Délai pour le dépôt de la version finale des thèses

Les nouveaux docteurs demandent fréquemment un délai pour le dépôt de la version finale de leur thèse, une fois qu'elle a été admise sans réserve. La Commission accepte que le délai normal d'un mois soit prolongé de deux semaines en fin d'année, quand cette période chevauche les vacances de Noël et de Nouvel An.

Composition du dossier de candidature

La Commission demande que la longueur de la lettre de motivation soit limitée à 2 pages A4, interligne simple (7 votes pour alors que 6 votes étaient en faveur d'une limitation à 1 page seulement)

CDoct 28 (Mar. 2005)

Les crédits obtenus pour des cours de l'Ecole doctorale suivis avant l'immatriculation

Les crédits obtenus avant le début de la thèse ne peuvent pas être validés pour l'Ecole doctorale. La seule exception, votée en CDoct 15 du 13.11.2003, point 4.2, étant la suivante :
« Les crédits obtenus pour des cours de l'Ecole doctorale suivis avant l'immatriculation du candidat peuvent être validés, moyennant l'accord de la commission de programme, selon le critère suivant (critère de "non double emploi") : (i) que les crédits ne soient pas utilisés pour d'autres

diplômes, et (ii) que ces crédits ne soient pas pris en compte lors de l'admission du candidat au programme doctoral (car là aussi ils feraient double emploi) . »

CDoct 26 (Jan. 2005)

Jurys de these

La commission accepte par 11 voix que les professeurs EPFL travaillant à l'extérieur ainsi que les professeurs EPFL à la retraite soient considérés comme des rapporteurs internes lors de jurys de thèse.

CDoct 18 (Mar. 2004)

Dispense de cours

A. Mortensen reçoit fréquemment des demandes de dispenses de cours pour des doctorants qui ont déjà "une certaine expérience". La commission vote en faveur de refuser ce genre de demandes.