Regulations for the Degree of PhD

The present Regulations enter into force on 1st January 2024 and replace any Regulations currently in force.
1. The present Regulations set out the conditions, procedures, and the competent authorities responsible for awarding the doctoral degree of the Faculty of Economics.

2. The Faculty awards the following degrees of Doctor of Philosophy corresponding to the four Doctoral Programmes (Art.8):
   - PhD in Economics; or, in Italian: *PhD in Economia con specializzazione in Economia Politica*
   - (SFI) PhD in Finance; or, in Italian: *PhD in Economia con specializzazione in Finanza*
   - PhD in Management; or, in Italian: *PhD in Economia con specializzazione in Management*
   - PhD in Econometrics and Statistics; or, in Italian: *PhD in Economia con specializzazione in Metodi Quantitativi*.

The Faculty awards the degree "PhD in Economic and Social Sciences" (or, in Italian, "*PhD in scienze economiche e sociali*") to those candidates who do not follow the study plan of one of the four Doctoral Programmes.

2. The degree of PhD attests that its holder is the author of a personal and original research of high academic distinction.

3. The title is awarded to the candidate who has satisfied all the requirements specified by the present Regulations and successfully defended the thesis in an oral examination. Candidates must satisfy the corresponding guidelines and regulations of their Doctoral Programme (Art.8). Candidates who do not follow the study plan of a Doctoral Programme and instead follow an individual study plan approved by the Graduate Studies Committee (Art.9) must satisfy the present Regulations.

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1 Whenever possible, the present document maintains gender neutrality. If not otherwise possible, the masculine grammatical gender is used and is to be read as referring equally to its feminine counterpart.
The bodies responsible for the PhD are:

- The Thesis Director
- The Graduate Studies Committee and the Directors of the Doctoral Programmes
- The Board of Examiners [Jury].

1. The Graduate Studies Committee consists of the four Directors of the Doctoral Programmes (Art. 8). They must be assistant or tenured professors of the Faculty.

2. The members of the Graduate Studies Committee are approved by the Faculty Council for a two-year mandate, renewable, allowing for the different subject areas.

3. The Graduate Studies Committee designates its coordinator from among its members.

4. The Graduate Studies Committee reaches its decisions on the basis of a simple majority of the persons entitled. In the event of a draw, the coordinator's vote prevails.

5. The Graduate Studies Committee is invested with the tasks defined in the present Regulations and with any other issue connected with the objectives of the present Regulations or other Regulations of the University, at the request of the Faculty Council.

1. The Thesis Director shall monitor and direct the research of the Ph.D. Candidate and guarantee that the work conducted under the Thesis Director's supervision fully meets the internationally recognised academic standards.

2. Generally, the Thesis Director is an assistant, associate, or full professor of the Faculty of Economics. Moreover, the Graduate Studies Committee may authorise joint supervision of a thesis by an adjunct professor, a titular professor, or a Maître d'enseignement et de recherche (MER) and an assistant, associate, or full professor of the Faculty, or authorise an adjunct professor, a titular professor, or an MER of the Faculty to be the Thesis Director. The Graduate Studies Committee's decision regarding such authorization is based on the experience of the applicant in conducting, on an ongoing basis, research in line with internationally recognized academic standards, as demonstrated by high-quality international publications and by the pursuit of externally funded research activity. Finally, the Graduate Studies Committee may authorise the joint supervision of a thesis, assured by two professors from different faculties or universities, provided that relations between the two faculties or universities are regulated by ad-hoc agreements or guidelines.

1. The Board of Examiners (Jury) shall consist of at least three professors: the Thesis Director, a professor of the Faculty, and one external professor.

2. The Faculty Council selects the members, on the advice of the Thesis Director, and the approval of the Director of the corresponding Doctoral Programme or the Graduate Studies Committee if the candidate is not part of a Doctoral Programmes (Art. 8).

3. The Jury designates a chairperson from among its members. The Thesis Director is not eligible to chair the Board of Examiners.

4. In case of joint supervision, the Board shall be composed in accordance with the appropriate agreements and/or regulations.

1. The following may be admitted to the status of PhD candidate: holders of a Master’s degree or of a Licentiate degree (under the previous higher degrees system) from a Swiss university, or holders of a Swiss or foreign degree recognised as equivalent by the Graduate Studies Committee.

2. Once admitted to one of the four Doctoral Programmes (Art. 8) by the Graduate Studies Committee or to an individual study plan approved by the Graduate Studies Committee if the candidate is not part of a Doctoral Programmes, the candidate is regularly matriculated with PhD status in the Faculty, regardless of whether the candidate is a member of USI staff. The matriculation expires on the last day of the month in which the candidate has delivered the definitive version of the thesis.

1. The admission procedures are regulated by the ad hoc guidelines of the four Doctoral Programmes (Art. 9).

2. If the candidate does not follow the study plan of one of the four Doctoral Programmes (Art. 2), the Thesis Director, in agreement with the candidate, defines an individual course of study within two months of the candidate's admission to Ph.D. status. This individual study plan must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

3. The individual course of study prescribes doctoral-level courses certified by exams for a total value of at least 30 ECTS. If necessary, the course of study may additionally require some complementary exam papers.

1. The Faculty sets up four doctoral programmes in designated special fields as defined in Art. 2, with course subjects and related examinations run by the Faculty itself or by other academic institutions.

2. The Graduate Studies Committee approves the content of each Doctoral Programme (as detailed in the Programme's Guidelines), the way it is run, and its mandatory nature.
3. The four Directors of the Doctoral Programmes ensure the conduct of their Doctoral Programme in the fields specified in Art. 2.

1. The thesis is a paper that presents the findings of a research project characterized by originality and considerable academic value.

2. The thesis may also be ‘cumulative’, that is to say integrate individual separate academic papers; in this case, it shall consist of at least three such papers.

3. The topic of the thesis must be connected to one of the subject areas covered by the Faculty (Art. 2).

1. From the day of admission to the status of PhD candidate, the candidate is granted 12 semesters to complete and defend the thesis.

2. In the event of maternity or paternity, or for serious health problems, the doctoral candidate is entitled to extend said duration by a maximum of one year.

3. Granting an extension is a matter for the Thesis Director; if the Thesis Director advises against an extension, this will be referred to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Unless otherwise regulated by the ad hoc guidelines of the four Doctoral Programmes, the candidate writes and discusses the thesis in one of the Swiss national languages or in English, in agreement with the Thesis Director.

1. Unless otherwise regulated by the ad hoc guidelines of the four Doctoral Programmes, the candidate shall report regularly on progress made on the research work to the Thesis Director.

2. Should the Thesis Director deem that the candidate's progress is unsatisfactory, the Graduate Studies Committee, after hearing both parties, shall present to the candidate a list of conditions to be met, and impose a deadline.

Alternatively, in serious cases, the Board will initiate the dismissal procedure, described in Art. 14.

1. When the Thesis Director deems that the thesis may be reasonably accepted and defended, the Thesis Director forwards it to the other members of the Jury and organizes a defence. The defence consists of an oral presentation and discussion lasting one hour at least, during which time the candidate expounds the subject of the thesis and is asked questions by the members of the Board of Examiners regarding the subject area studied. The defence may be held by video conference.

2. The oral presentation and discussion of the thesis are public. The Board of Examiners withdraws to deliberate in strict confidence on the evaluation.

3. After the defence, the Board of Examiners accepts, defers, or rejects the thesis.

4. In case of acceptance, the Board of Examiners may still request changes and revisions of the final draft.

5. In case of deferral, the Board sets the terms and conditions for the second discussion.

6. In case of rejection, the candidate is excluded from PhD degree studies.

1. The candidate is awarded the PhD degree only after delivering the original of the thesis as required by the Faculty, with due consideration for the changes and revisions requested by the Board of examiners.

2. The diploma shall mention the author’s name, academic title (Art. 2) obtained, the exact title of the thesis, and the date of its public oral examination.

3. The degree diploma is issued by Università della Svizzera italiana and is signed by the Rector and by the Faculty Dean.
Art. 17
The thesis protected by copyrights

The writer of the thesis is regarded as its author according to the existing law on copyrights and, as such, enjoys all the rights associated with it.

Art. 18
Publication

1. Once accepted by the Board of examiners, the thesis may be published.
2. If the author chooses not to publish the thesis, the Faculty is entitled, as a non-profit operation and to promote the dissemination of the content of the thesis, to proceed to its publication and/or use some parts of it, if during the research phases it provided the author with financial or logistic support.

Art. 19
Differences and litigation

1. Should conflicts arise between the candidate and the Thesis Director, which cannot be settled in their context, the two parties may refer the matter to the coordinator of the Graduate Studies Committee, who intervenes in its mediating capacity.
2. If the conciliation process fails, the Graduate Studies Committee settles the question, after hearing the parties. The Committee’s decision is notified in writing to the parties.
3. The decisions of the Graduate Studies Committee may be appealed against. Grievances must be addressed to the Faculty Council no later than 30 days after notification. A further appeal may be lodged against the Faculty Council, with the Canton’s Administrative Court. The Law on Administrative Procedure (24 September 2013) applies.

Art. 20
Substitutions

The Graduate Studies Committee in its overseeing capacity endeavours to ensure that the candidate can carry on with the work also if the Thesis Director is for some reason unable to fulfil her obligations.

Art. 21
Fees

Fees are determined in accordance with Art. 16 of the Regulations for admission and matriculation at USI.

Art. 22
Enforcement

The present Regulations come into force on 1 January 2024 and replace all other related Regulations currently in force. It is applicable to all candidates registered for a PhD degree since then, except for articles 20 and 21, which come into effect immediately and apply to all matriculated PhD candidates.