GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN

GGNB Göttingen Graduate Center for Neurosciences, Biophysics, and Molecular Biosciences

Countdown to your doctoral degree

(according to RerNat-O)

- Checklist -

The final part of your PhD entails three major steps:
thesis submission, thesis defense and **thesis publication.**
You can get your degree only after completing
all three steps within the deadlines (see below)!

All relevant documents can be found on **GGNB Internal.**

Time	Task	☑
	Step 1: Thesis submission	
6 months before submission	In your last thesis advisory committee meeting, discuss the **thesis format** (monography or chapter-based), submission and possible members of the examination board for the thesis defense with your TAC members. Ask possible members if they would be willing to serve on your examination board (or even write an evaluation of your thesis!), and if they would be available for the thesis defense (between 6-7 weeks after submission). **Rules** for **composition of examination board** (acc. to RerNat-O §11): – Min. six members, incl. the three members of your thesis advisory committee. – Thereof min. three from your program, including the two reviewers (= TAC members 1 and 2) (acc. to RerNat-O §11) – The two reviewers have to have examiner status in your Ph.D. program; at least one of them has to be full professor (*Hochschullehrer*) of Göttingen University (not honorary professor or apl. professor). – At least one of the reviewers must not be your co-author – suggest an alternative! – Examination board members 4-6: max. one may be an external (=non-GAUSS) member (single examiner status has to be applied for). The others have to have full examiner status in GAUSS. In case of an external member keep in mind that they will have to attend the thesis defense in person! → Check the "People" section of our website: – members with a *****: do not have full examiner rights = cannot be members of your extended examination board, – members with a **#**: former faculty members, only in very exceptional cases can they be members of your extended examination board. – CSN programs: at least one member in the examination board must have full affiliation with the Faculty of Biology; check the "People" section of our website for members with "(Uni-Bio)" after their names.	
5-6 months before submission	Make sure that you have fulfilled the **credit requirements** according to RerNat-O Appendix 11 part C and that you have attended the mandatory *Seminar on Good Scientific Practice*. Check your online credit database account Make sure we have received all **TAC Meeting confirmations/Progress Reports**. **IMPORTANT**: for students enrolled in **Chemistry/Physics,** special **requirements** reg. **teaching** credits apply. Please check the regulations well in advance and make sure you have fulfilled all requirements!	

Min. 3 months before submission	Discuss with your supervisor if you will write a **monography** (§10.2), or a **manuscript-based thesis** (§10.3) and if you will **apply for an embargo** (see below). In case of manuscript-based dissertation: make sure to check possible copyright issues for publication of your thesis with the journal publishers well in advance! See also the info page of the SUB.	
2-3 months before submission	Ask your supervisor when he/she would have time to proofread the final draft of your dissertation. Plan accordingly!	
Min. 5-6 weeks before submission	– Inform GGNB / IMPRS / MolMed / CVS Office of **planned submission** (informal, by e-mail) and send proposal for examination board (see above). – **Arrange date, time and location** for thesis defense with members of your examination board. See below. – In exceptional cases (e.g. one of the reviewers cannot attend in person): if your thesis defense needs to be held in a hybrid format, please make sure your examination board members and the speaker of your PhD program confirm (shortly after thesis submission at the latest) to GGNB / IMPRS/ MolMed / CVS Office by email that they agree to a hybrid disputation and to the video-conferencing tool you plan to use. – Please discuss with your examination board whether a member may request a **printed version** for his/her personal use; we will only distribute the digital version. **IMPORTANT:** – Date, time and location of your thesis defense are required for submission of your thesis. Without it, your submitted thesis cannot be processed. – The **thesis defense has to take place as soon as possible** but **not sooner than 6 weeks** after your admission to the doctoral examination. No exceptions. In case your defense takes place more than 8 weeks after submission, the admission to the examination procedure may be put on hold. – At the thesis defense, at least **2/3 of the members of the examination board have to be present, incl. the reviewers of the thesis**. The exam can go ahead as long as only 1 or 2 members (not the reviewers) are absent. – In case of scheduling conflicts with more than 2 members of the examination board, please find a new member who will be available for your thesis defense (approval is required). – After thesis submission, a change of the examination board is not possible.	
2-3 weeks before submission	Discuss with your supervisor whether you will **apply for an embargo/restricted online publication** (see handout on GGNB Internal and RerNat-O §21.8): upon completing the publication process, only an abstract will be accessible for one year after the thesis defense; the doctoral candidate may already receive his/her degree certificate. ***Important note:*** *If you are considering **pursuing an academic career**, please make sure that you familiarize yourself with the **eligibility criteria** of various funding agencies concerning the cut-off dates for applying for fellowships. Especially the highly attractive longer term or junior group funding schemes (e.g. Emmy Noether, Sofja Kovalevskaja, Helmholtz, Fritz Thyssen) are varying in this regard. For some the cut-off date is the date of your PhD certificate, for some it is that of your thesis defense, which makes a noteworthy difference when, for example, you can only apply up to four years after your PhD. In this regard, please make yourself familiar with these regulations early on and*	

	check the cut-off dates of a selection of fellowships here (please note the list is not exhaustive).	

Format of dissertation	**For templates and details** on what to include in the dissertation see *GGNB Internal* and RerNat-O §10.5:
	– cover page ,
	– page 2 [use the mandatory template *Backpage*, which includes the TAC, the two reviewers of the thesis, all members of the examination board and date of thesis defense, for exact order see our e-mail!],
	– No other format requirements apply.
	– Use of AI Tools – Declaration Requirement
	  – In accordance with the rules of Good Scientific Practice, you **must** clearly **state if you have used AI** in your thesis. This includes specifying **where, for what purpose, and to what extent**. The University recommends using its Guiding Questions for Transparency in the Use of AI in Examinations.
	  – It is recommended to include the declaration in Material and Methods, but it may also be included on page 3, before the references, as specific footnotes, or before individual chapters.
	  – For further information see https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/declaration+of+ai+use/703823.html
	– **Do not include**:
	  – Place of birth on cover page
	  – Affidavit (already included in the *Promovierendenerklärung* you submitted at the beginning of your PhD)
	  – CV	

Supplements, code etc.	If you plan to provide original data, code or other relevant supplements, please use a repository that offers a permanent link and reliable long-term storage such as **GRO.data** (Göttingen Research Online.Data) and include the DOI in your thesis.	

Day of submission	Submit your dissertation and application for the doctoral examination **online** via eCampus and **by email**. Please use the form *Application for doctoral examination* ("Antrag auf Promotionsprüfung").
	Upload the following documents via the **online form:**
	1. Two electronic versions (PDF) of the dissertation:
	  a) one complete version (max. 100 MB), identical to bound version (see below)
	  b) one 'anonymous' version without the title page, the second page (examination board), and the acknowledgements page, which will be used for the similarity check. (max. 100 MB)
	2. CV (PDF)
	3. Preliminary Transcript (signed by doctoral student, i.e. you)
	4. First-author publications in connection with dissertation (if applicable)
	Submit the following documents as scans (PDF) by **e-mail** to the GGNB / IMPRS / MolMed / CVS Office (the examination procedure can only start once these documents are received):
	1. Signed PDF *Application for doctoral examination* (which you receive *via* e-mail after filling the online form)
	2. Signed Consent for alumni webpage/alumni portal	

	3. If applicable: Signed application for embargo/restricted online publication (Please note that it is not possible to apply for this after your defense.)	
Thereafter: admission to doctoral examination	Once we have received all relevant documents, we will inform you via e-mail of your admission to the doctoral examination. Once your thesis is accepted by the reviewers, we will officially invite you by e-mail to your thesis defense (approx. 1 week before defense).	
Approx. 3 days after submission	A printed and bound copy of your dissertation is no longer required! **Submit original copies of all documents** you have submitted via eCampus and e-mail: 1. "Application for doctoral examination" (signed), 2. Consent for alumni webpage/alumni portal (signed), 3. Application for embargo/restricted online publication (signed) (if applicable).	
Step 2: Thesis defense		
Min. 6 weeks after submission: Thesis defense	– At least 2/3 of the members of the examination board have to be present, including the reviewers of the dissertation (see above). The exam can go ahead as long as only 1 or 2 members (not the reviewers) are absent. – The defense has to take place in person. In exceptional cases and with good reason (e.g. sickness) may the defense take place in a hybrid format. This has to be pre-approved by all members of the examination board and by the Office! – Audio and/or video recordings are not permitted.	
After thesis defense	– Should you need a **preliminary certificate**, inform the GGNB /IMPRS / MolMed / CVS Office. We will prepare it and send it to you (allow 7-10 days). – You may now exmatriculate. If you do so within one month after the official start of lectures in the current semester, i.e. approx. 6-7 weeks after 1 April/1 October, you can apply for reimbursement of the semester fees here. – You may **inspect the thesis evaluations** and **minutes of the thesis defense**. As these documents are part of the formal examination process, please treat them with confidentially if you receive the copies. Please contact the GGNB / IMPRS / MolMed / CVS Office. – **Revise dissertation** (check with supervisor and examination board members if revisions are required). Prepare publication. – **IMPORTANT**: you may use the doctoral title only after receiving the official degree certificate, not the preliminary certificate!	
Convocation ceremony	With your admission to the doctoral examination, you are registered for the next **convocation ceremony** in the *Aula am Wilhelmsplatz* (see the e-mail "Zulassung zur Promotionsprüfung" for the date and time). Your participation is very much welcome, and expected. To be able to take part, the minutes of your thesis defense have to reach our office at least one week before the ceremony – no exceptions. Check here to rent a handcart for the Gänseliesel part of the festivities (if applicable). **IMPORTANT**: If you are unable to attend this event, please inform the GGNB/IMPRS/MolMed/CVS Office one week before the ceremony at the latest.	

Step 3: Thesis publication		
Within one year after date of thesis defense	– **You** have to **publish** your thesis – this is not done automatically. See Handout: Publication of dissertation. The **confirmation of publication** of your thesis has to reach us **within one year** of the thesis defense. **If you miss the deadline, you lose all rights to the doctoral degree!** – Have your supervisor sign the **revision certificate/*Revisionsschein***. **Send it** to GGNB Office/IMPRS Office/MolMed/CVS Office. You may publish only *after* the revision certificate has been signed and submitted to the responsible office. – Make sure to **start the publication process at least two weeks before the deadline** (= one year after your thesis defense) to ensure a timely publication! – In exceptional, well-founded cases and within one year of your defense date, you may apply for an extension of the one-year deadline for the publication. Make sure to send us the application well in advance. – **Publish your thesis.** – SUB sends proof of official publication to the office once you have completed the publication process, incl. the uploading of the electronic final version and sending two bound copies to SUB. – *If applicable*: together with your thesis, upload approval of embargo to SUB as well. Only an abstract of your thesis will be accessible online until one year after your thesis defense. – In case you publish it as a book: send us confirmation by publisher. **IMPORTANT**: **You** have to keep the deadline for publication in mind. We will not remind you. **If you miss the deadline, you will lose all rights to the doctoral degree! No exceptions!**	
After completing the publication	– We prepare your degree certificate, the transcript of records (*Prüfungszeugnis*) containing a summary of your credits and their categories, and an additional *official transcript* of doctoral studies (listing in detail all courses you attended incl. credits). – After approx. 4-5 weeks, the Office gives or sends you your certificate and other documents. – In vacation periods it might take a little longer - please understand that we have no influence on this. – Once you have received the degree certificate (hard copy), you're done. – You may now officially call yourself *Dr.rer.nat.* or *Ph.D.*! Congratulations! Important: Because of the risk of fraud with the information on the certificate, we strongly recommend that you do not post a photo of your doctoral certificate on the Internet (e.g. on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook). **For international students**: Please check with the authorities of your home country whether you will need a special authentication (***Apostille***) for your certificate (which is much easier to obtain while still in Göttingen). For further information, see Information on pre-certification of University documents for use abroad.	