

Guide for the chairperson of the doctoral defence and the opponents in connection with doctoral theses at the Faculty of Science

I. Introduction to the doctoral defence

Per tradition, the candidate for the doctorate, the opponents and the chairperson assemble in a room behind the lecture hall together with members of the audience who have a doctor's degree in the topic related. In practice, all doctors present may participate in this group. Precisely at the scheduled time, this group enters the lecture hall in procession. At Studiestræde (Copenhagen), a master of ceremonies is present to lead the course of the events. At other locations, the chairperson must give instructions. The procession walks in single file, first the doctoral candidate, second the foreign opponent(s), the local opponent, the chairperson, and third any representatives from the deanship. Finally, the participating doctors end the procession. The candidate for the doctorate then goes to the lectern where he/she remains during the entire defence. Opponents and doctors take their seats and the chairperson goes to the other lectern. From this other lectern the opponents will speak, and the chairperson makes announcements. There should be flowers at the candidate's lectern.

II. Publication of the defence

The defence may take place no earlier than **four weeks after** the authors have submitted their thesis to the faculty as a pdf. file or in printed copies, and the thesis has been made otherwise available to the public, possibly electronically. The time and place of the defence must be announced **no later than four weeks before** the defence is to take place. The Faculty Secretariat will ensure publication of the defence on the website of the faculty and possibly also in the University Post.

The candidate for the doctorate will agree the time and date for the defence with the officially appointed opponents and the person(s) who will be leading the defence.

III. Chairperson

The defence is open to the public. The defence is usually lead by the relevant head of faculty or another academic member of staff appointed by the head of faculty.

The chairperson sends out invitations for the defence to the Academic Council and to the deanship.

Prior to the defence, the chairperson must arrange details with the persons participating. The doctoral candidate is entitled to speak for 30 minutes, but is not required to exercise this right. Normally, the external opponent starts and the local opponent finishes. The chairperson should make arrangements as to when he and the opponents are to replace one another at the lectern.

The doctoral candidate should be permitted to make personal remarks, including give thanks to the opponents.

IV. Official opponents

The Academic Council appoints the two members of the evaluation committee (typically from among ordinary members) to act as official opponents. Only two official opponents will be appointed.

V. Unofficial opponents

Any unofficial opponents must report to the chairperson of the defence before the defence commences. However, the chairperson of the defence may later allow the persons announced to take the floor, but may not deprive previously announced persons their right of priority.

VI. Venue and refreshments

The chairperson's Institute must ensure booking of rooms with AV equipment, projector, screen and lectern for the defence, and a special meeting room for the opponents immediately after the defence. The same room may also be used for both purposes.

The chairperson of the Institute Secretariat ensures that there are refreshments (water, coffee, etc.) and possibly flowers in the defence room, and for the opponents after the defence.

VII. Recordings

It must be possible to document the defence; therefore the defence will be recorded and a summary will be drawn up. The chairperson is responsible for announcing at the beginning of the defence that the recording will take place. The recording must subsequently be kept in a sealed envelope in the Faculty Secretariat. The sealing may be held off until the official opponents have listened through the recording prior to submitting their report.

VIII. Language

The defence will be in English. On determining the language, consideration is taken to the opponents.

IX. Duration of the defence

The entire defence may last a maximum of six hours, including breaks. The chairperson decides the time, number and extent of any breaks.

If requested by the doctoral candidate, he/she will be given the right to introduce the defence in a lecture lasting up to 30 minutes in which he/she provides an overview of the topic and research results presented in the thesis and submitted for evaluation.

Generally, each of the two official opponents will be given an hour and a half and every unofficial opponent will be given 45 minutes; this includes the time given for the doctoral candidate to give a response. The time given to the opponents may, however, as appropriate, and following the decision by the chairperson, be restricted or extended.

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring compliance with the times mentioned.

X. "Script" of the defence (the following should be considered the chairperson's "script")
The chairperson must remember to:

- Signal the technician that the recording should begin
- Present him/herself by name and title
- Inform everyone that the recording is taking place
- Inform everyone that the defence must take no more than six hours and that there may be breaks
- Welcome everyone with these words, for example:

Dear doctoral candidate, honoured opponents, doctors, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the University of Copenhagen , I welcome you to this defence, in which

.....
title name

will defend his/her thesis, entitled

””
Name of thesis

for the doctorate of natural/agricultural sciences.

The evaluation committee established by the Academic Council comprises the following members:

.....(Chairperson)
title name

.....
title name

.....
title name

The Academic Council has appointed two official opponents:

The first opponent is:
title name

The second opponent is:
.....
title name

The following unofficial opponents have shown their interest:

.....
title name

.....
title name

References:

Reference is made to the regulations laid down in the "Defence and report by the official opponents" which are found in sections 16-20 in Executive Order no. 750 of 14 August 1996 on doctorates, see also the supplementary regulations and procedures from the Faculty of Science.