

Guidelines for the review process before the decision on the public defense at the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Revision of local guidelines for the review process before the decision on the public defense at the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, established by the Board of the Department on 2018-11-07, last revised on 2024-10-23

At the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, the following applies to the review of doctoral theses:

1. Compulsory seminars (in accordance with to the General Study Plan for Doctoral Studies)

- The thesis work is presented to, and reviewed by, other researchers and teachers at the department in at least three seminars, as well as in a final seminar.
- The first seminar should include a research plan and an approximate timetable and should be presented within the first year of study (10%).
- The second seminar should be held when at least half of the dissertation is completed (50%). It is advisable that at the second seminar an external researcher with relevant competence in the subject area of the dissertation participates. Possibly the external researcher could be from neighbouring languages/areas of expertise.
- The third seminar should include a more or less complete analysis and preliminary results (80%). At the third seminar, an external researcher with special expertise in the subject area of the dissertation shall participate.
- A final review of the thesis takes place in the form of a final seminar with an external opponent and normally takes place six months prior to the planned date for the dissertation. See 2. below
- Prior to the dissertation, the thesis must also be reviewed by two researchers in accordance with 3. below.
- The compensation level for external examiners at the mandatory seminars is set at SEK 3,000. For the external examiners who participate on campus, travel and hotel costs are also reimbursed and they are offered to give a lecture at the department, which is remunerated according to the usual fixed rate for lectures.

2. Final seminar

- The final seminar is mandatory.
- When the doctoral student, main supervisor, and supervisor have decided on the final seminar, a discussant is appointed on the proposal of the supervisor and doctoral student.
- Scheduling takes place in agreement between the parties involved and is posted in the department's calendar.
- The discussant is remunerated with 5,000 SEK, and, if applicable, travel expenses are also paid.

Conducting the final seminar

- The final seminar should address a draft of the **complete dissertation** manuscript with all central sections in place (including introductory and concluding chapters) and reviewed style (language, footnotes, and references). However, language review should take place after the final seminar and the comments of the internal readers.
- The seminar usually takes at least 2 hours.
- The chairman of the seminar is a person other than the supervisor.
- The discussant should be a Ph.D., external, and have particularly good knowledge in the area of the dissertation project.
- In their review, the discussant should be based on the examination objectives as stated in the general study plan for the doctoral program.
- The discussant is responsible for the organization of the seminar, but in broad terms, the standard model of the defense should be followed (short summary 15-20 minutes, dialogue between discussant and respondent 60-90 minutes, time for questions from other seminar participants 30-45 minutes).
- The discussant is instructed by the Director of Doctoral Studies before the seminar about their task.

After the final seminar

- The discussant, supervisor, and doctoral student meet immediately after the final seminar to discuss the quality of the dissertation text to make an overall assessment of what needs to be done to achieve acceptable quality of the text before the defense (the doctoral student may choose not to attend the meeting).

- The committee compiles a written **final seminar protocol** that takes into account the Examination objectives for the doctoral student specified in the General Study Plan (ASP) for the relevant doctoral program subject.
- The final seminar protocol should be conveyed to the doctoral student, the Director of Doctoral Studies, and appointed final readers so that they have access to information from the final seminar and the assessment committee's overall assessment. The main supervisor is responsible for circulating the protocol to the parties mentioned. It is the responsibility of the supervisors to follow up that the changes proposed in the protocol are carried out by the doctoral student.
- After the doctoral student has revised the manuscript based on the comments made at the final seminar, the supervisors should review the new version of the manuscript; further revisions or minor corrections may be required.

3. Final readers

- The head of department and the main supervisor, in consultation, appoint at least two final readers.
- The final readers should have a Ph.D., and they can be appointed externally. The discussant at the final seminar may act as a final reader.
- External final readers are remunerated with 2000 SEK.
- At least one of them should represent the subject of the doctoral studies at the department.
- The final readers should each provide an opinion on whether the defense is recommended or not. The recommendation may be conditional on minor corrections being made to the manuscript. In such cases, the correction requirements should be clearly stated in bullet list in each final reader's opinion. The opinion should be briefly motivated and sent to the main supervisor and the Director of doctoral studies no later than approximately 8 weeks after receiving the dissertation manuscript, unless there are specific reasons. If the work is delayed, the main supervisor and the Director of doctoral studies should be informed.
- If any of the final readers advise against the defense, a detailed written account of the possible supplements and adjustments that must be made for the defense to be recommended should be provided to the main supervisor and the Director of doctoral studies.



4. Decision on defense

- The decision on whether the defense should be recommended or not is made by the head of department in consultation with the main supervisor.

5. Faculty discussant and grading committee

- The faculty discussant and grading committee are appointed by the Humanities Faculty Board on the proposal of the department's head. The head should consult with the main supervisor before submitting the proposal to the faculty board. The faculty discussant should, according to the current rules, be external and must not be identical to the discussant at the final defense. Individuals who have previously been appointed as reviewers or final readers may not be members of the grading committee.

6. Defense

- The defense is carried out in accordance with the "Rules for education and examination at the doctoral level at the Faculty of Humanities," ref SU FV-1.1.2- 1266-19, and the "Instructions for the defense ceremony at the Faculty of Humanities," ref SU FV-1.1.2-1934-19.
- Compensation for costs associated with the defense is regulated in accordance with the "Instructions for the defense ceremony at the Faculty of Humanities," ref SU FV-1.1.2-193419.

7. Time from manuscript to defense

It is difficult to specify exactly how long it takes from the completion of the manuscript until the defense can be conducted. The following is an approximate estimate of the various stages that remain after the completion of the manuscript. This time should be counted in the doctoral period.

- a) From manuscript to final seminar. The discussant should be given at least three weeks of reading time.

- b) After the final seminar, revisions should normally be made. This can take 4-8 weeks depending on the extent.
- c) After revisions, the text should be given to two internal readers, who are given approximately 8 weeks of reading time (see above).
- d) After final reading, some revisions may need to be made. Normally, this should not take more than about 3 weeks.
- e) While final reading is ongoing, supervisors and the doctoral student can discuss the discussant and members of the grading committee.
- f) After final reading, provided that the final readers recommend the defense, a date for the defense should be determined, an application for the defense should be submitted, and a venue should be booked. The discussant and committee members should be specified in the application.
- g) When the revisions suggested by the final readers have been implemented, the text should be sent for language review, unless the doctoral student is a native speaker of the language in which the dissertation is written, Swedish, or English. Even if a native speaker has written it, a proofreading should be done, which can take about 4-6 weeks.
- h) After language review, 1-2 weeks should be counted for corrections.
- i) When the final language corrections have been made, and if applicable, an index has been made, the manuscript should be sent for printing. The discussant and the members of the grading committee should be given access to the dissertation at least three weeks before the defense. Printing, including proofreading, can take 2- 3 weeks or more.

The result is that it takes between about 25 and 33 weeks (5.75 and 7.59 months) from manuscript to defense. Since one normally has to assume that the above process does not run exactly week by week, one should count on at least three extra months. This depends on factors such as vacation times, how quickly the final seminar can be scheduled, when the final readers have time to read (about eight weeks), and also the meeting times of the faculty board (the discussant and grading committee are appointed by the faculty board). This puts us at about 810 months from a finished manuscript to defense. If you want to be sure, 10-12 months might be a good estimate with some margin."