

Instructions for Public Defence Seminars at the Faculty of Humanities

Type of document	Instructions
Approved by	The Board of the Faculty of Humanities
Date of approval	2019-09-10
Reg. No.	SU FV-1.1.2-1934-19
Period of validity	2019-10-01 - until further notice
Replaces document	Instructions for Public Defence Seminars at the Faculty of Humanities, Reg. No. SU FV-1.1.2-2802-13, 2013-12-10 and the Board of the Faculty of Humanities' Decision 2005-01-25, p.9
Responsible administrative unit	The Office of the Faculty of Humanities
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Description:

This document describes the responsibilities of the chairperson, faculty external reviewer, and members of the Examination Committee, both before and during the public defence of a thesis or dissertation. The department can supplement this document with detailed information about, e.g. labels, compensation, and other practical details that may be relevant to external members.

Instructions for Public Defence Seminars at the Faculty of Humanities

General

Rules for public defence can be found in Stockholm University's Rules for Education and Examination at the Third-Cycle Level and in the Faculty of Humanities' Rules for Education and Examination at the Third-Cycle Level.

This document describes the responsibilities of the chairperson, external reviewer and members of the Examination Committee before and during the public defence, as well as how public defence seminars at the Faculty of Humanities are normally conducted. The department can supplement this document with further information about, e.g. procedures and other practical details.

The Chairperson of the Public Defence

The chairperson has overall responsibility before and during the public defence. This entails the following:

- To act as the department's representative and primary contact person for the external reviewer and members of the Examination Committee.
- To inform the external reviewer and members of the Examination Committee about their roles and responsibilities, as well as rules and procedures relating to the public defence. It is especially important to inform foreign external reviewers and members of the Examination Committee about the rules for a Swedish public defence seminar.
- To lead the public defence seminar
- To intervene during the public defence seminar, if necessary, and reprimand anyone who behaves inappropriately or disruptively.
- To be responsible for the preparation and sending of the minutes of the public defence seminar to the registrar after the public defence has been completed, and for ensuring that a copy is kept at the department for registration in Ladok.

The External Reviewer

The external reviewer's responsibility is to conduct a deeper critical scientific review of the thesis/dissertation. As far as compilation theses are concerned, this means that both the introductory (summarising) chapter and the in-depth parts of the work must be reviewed.



During the public defence seminar, it is the external reviewer's task to engage in an in-depth discussion of the various parts of the thesis with the author of the thesis/dissertation. In this discussion, the external reviewer should highlight both strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, while also giving the author the opportunity to respond to the criticism and argue for her/his position. In the discussion, theoretical and practical aspects should be highlighted, as well as how the results of the thesis can be framed in a larger scientific context.

If during her/his preparatory work the external reviewer finds that the thesis has serious deficiencies, the chairperson of the public defence seminar should be notified as soon as possible.

The Members of the Examination Committee

Members of the Examination Committee act as examiners of doctoral theses/dissertations and their public defence.

The responsibility of these members prior to its public defence is, if the thesis/dissertation is a monograph, to review the entire work and all its sections, as well as the framework description in the case of a compilation thesis, and to assess the thesis/dissertation in its entirety, and not only the part that is considered to relate to the individual member's area of expertise.

When determining a grade for the work, the member must take into consideration both the content of the thesis/dissertation and its public defence.

If during her/his preparatory work the member of the Examination Committee finds that the thesis has serious deficiencies, the chairperson of the public defence seminar should be notified as soon as possible.

The Chairperson of the Examination Committee

Upon convening for deliberations and grading decisions, the Examination Committee must appoint a chairperson from among its members. The chairperson of the Examination Committee has overall responsibility for the meeting of the Examination Committee. This entails the following:

- To maintain the order of speakers during the meeting of the Examination Committee.

- To give the external reviewer and the supervisor the opportunity to answer the questions that are raised, and to notify the external reviewer and supervisor when they should leave the room so that the Examination Committee can deliberate and render its decision.
- To publish the decision and submit the adjusted minutes to the chairperson of the public defence seminar.

The Public Defence Seminar

The public defence seminar aims to give both subject experts and interested members of the public the opportunity to take part in the review of a current thesis/dissertation and participate in the discussion of the subject area.

The public defence may be conducted in any of the languages specified in the general study plan for third-cycle studies in each subject.

The public defence seminar is not subject to a time limit, but normally takes about two hours. If the seminar is prolonged, the chairperson may interrupt it for a break. The seminar ends only when the opposition has been completed and the author of the thesis/dissertation has answered all questions and contributions to the discussion from the external reviewer, the members of the Examination Committee, and the auditorium.

The public defence is chaired by a chairperson, and all members of the Examination Committee are present. It is usually implemented as follows:

Introduction

- The chairperson of the public defence opens the seminar and presents the author, the thesis/dissertation, the external reviewer and the members of the Examination Committee.
- The author of the thesis/dissertation is given the opportunity to provide corrections.
- The external reviewer gives a brief summary of the thesis and its main results. The author of the thesis/dissertation is given the opportunity to comment on the summary and, if necessary, to supplement it.

Opposition

- The main part of the public defence seminar is devoted to the external reviewer's critical review of the thesis. This part of the public defence should be conducted as a dialogue between the external reviewer and the author of the thesis/dissertation.
- The external reviewer should end this part of the defence with a brief summary.
- After the external reviewer has completed her/his review, the chairperson gives the Examination Committee and the audience the opportunity to ask the author questions and to comment on the thesis/dissertation.

When there are no more questions, the chairperson completes the public portion of the public defence.

The Deliberations and Decisions of the Examination Committee

The Examination Committee convenes in direct connection with the public defence, and renders a decision when all members are present.¹²

Only the members of the Examination Committee may be present when the Examination Committee renders its decisions. In determining the decision of the Committee, the opinion on which the most members agree (the majority opinion) shall apply. An individual member has the right to record her/his dissent in the minutes. See further instructions on the public defence minutes.

Doctoral theses/dissertations are assessed with a grade of 'Pass' or 'Fail'. When determining a grade for the work, both the content of the thesis/dissertation and its public defence must be taken into consideration.

During the first part of the meeting, the external reviewer and a supervisor are invited to answer questions from the members of the Examination Committee. The public defence minutes state which

¹ At the public defence there must be an Examination Committee consisting of three or five members. At the Faculty of Humanities, the general practice is that the Examination Committee consists of three members. Reserve members participate only as a replacement for a permanent member.



of the supervisors has the right to attend the meeting. If an individual member requests individual consultations, the external reviewer and supervisor must leave the room immediately.

The chairperson of the Examination Committee publishes the decision and submits the adjusted minutes to the chairperson of the public defence seminar.

Compensation for Expenses Incurred in Connection with the Public Defence

The Faculty Board determines the level of compensation for fees to the external reviewer (currently SEK 10,000)³. The Department Board decides on any fees paid to the members of the Examination Committee and, if fees are to be paid, also determines the level of compensation.

The department covers all costs associated with the public defence. This includes the production and reproduction of the thesis/dissertation for the part of the edition resulting from the Faculty Board's decision on the publication of the smallest editions, the Act on Mandatory Copies, and the department's decision about the number of additional copies that are to be provided to the department, as well as other costs (e.g. costs for any reception at the department).

The department is responsible for ensuring that the external reviewer's fee is paid and, where applicable, that compensation is provided for any travel and accommodation expenses incurred by the external reviewer and members of the Examination Committee.

³ The Board of the Faculty of Humanities 2014-05-05