

## **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 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.

#### *Announcement of the doctoral defence:*

- The institute must announce the doctoral defence under 'Events' on the institute's external website and tag it with science, so that it can also be included in the overall list of events at the faculty.
- The institute announces the doctoral defence under 'Events' on the institute's KUnet page and forwards the link to SCIENCEnews/nyt, so that the event can also be announced internally at the faculty.  
The institute also sends the link to SCIENCE Research & Innovation.
- The institute may also send information about the doctoral defence to the University Post's online edition.
- SCIENCE Research & Innovation sends the announcement of the defence to the Academic Council and the Dean's Office.

### **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:*

<i>title</i>	<i>name</i>
<i>title</i>	<i>name</i>

*If there are other unofficial opponents, they may notify me of their interest before the first opponent has ended his/her contribution. You must do this by writing your name, title and affiliation on a slip of paper and handing it to me.*

**or**

*No unofficial opponents have notified their interest. If there are any opponents, they may notify me of their interest before the first opponent has ended his/her contribution. You must do this by writing your name, title and affiliation on a slip of paper and handing it to me.*

*Note that the official opponents each have a maximum of one and a half hours and that this includes the time given to the doctoral candidate to give his/her response.*

*The unofficial opponents each have a maximum of 45 minutes, including the time allotted to the doctoral candidate.*

*Does the candidate for the doctorate wish to exercise the right to introduce the defence with a lecture of up to 30 minutes' duration?*

If the answer is "yes" the chairperson will give the floor to the candidate for the doctorate. Then to the first opponent.

If the answer is "no" the chairperson will give the floor to the first opponent.

*I will now give the floor to the first official opponent:*

<i>title</i>	<i>name</i>
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After the first opponent:

*No unofficial opponents have notified their interest. I will therefore give the floor to the second official opponent.*

**or**

*The following (additional) unofficial opponents have notified their interest:*

<i>title</i>	<i>name</i>
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*title*                      *name*

.....  
*title*                      *name*

.....  
*title*                      *name*

*Therefore, before I give the floor to the second opponent, I will give the floor to the unofficial opponents (who will speak in the order of priority in which they have notified their interest).*

When the unofficial opponents have finished commenting:

*I will now give the floor to the second official opponent:*

.....  
*title*                      *name*

After the second opponent:

*On behalf of the University of Copenhagen, I would like to thank the official opponents for their good work on evaluating the thesis presented. Immediately after the defence, the official opponents will retire to vote and they will later announce the result.*

*I now give the floor to the candidate for the doctorate for a brief comment.*

After the candidate for the doctorate has had the floor:

*I now declare the defence finished.*

The chairperson will signal to the technician to turn off the recording.

After this, any speeches of thanks, announcement of reception etc. may be made.

## **XI. Report by the official opponents**

Immediately after the defence, the opponents must be ensured the possibility of discussing and evaluating the process of the defence with a view to signing the report, stating whether they found the defence to be satisfactory. For this purpose, a room must be reserved in advance and made available for the opponents.

The report must include:

- Title and name of the candidate for the doctorate
- Title of the thesis and date of the defence
- Titles and names of the official opponents
- Name(s) of any unofficial opponents

The official opponents may submit:

1) a positive report, i.e. that the two opponents agree that the defence was satisfactory.

**or**

2) a report in which both opponents or one of them considers the defence to be unsatisfactory. Full justification will be required in each case.

***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.