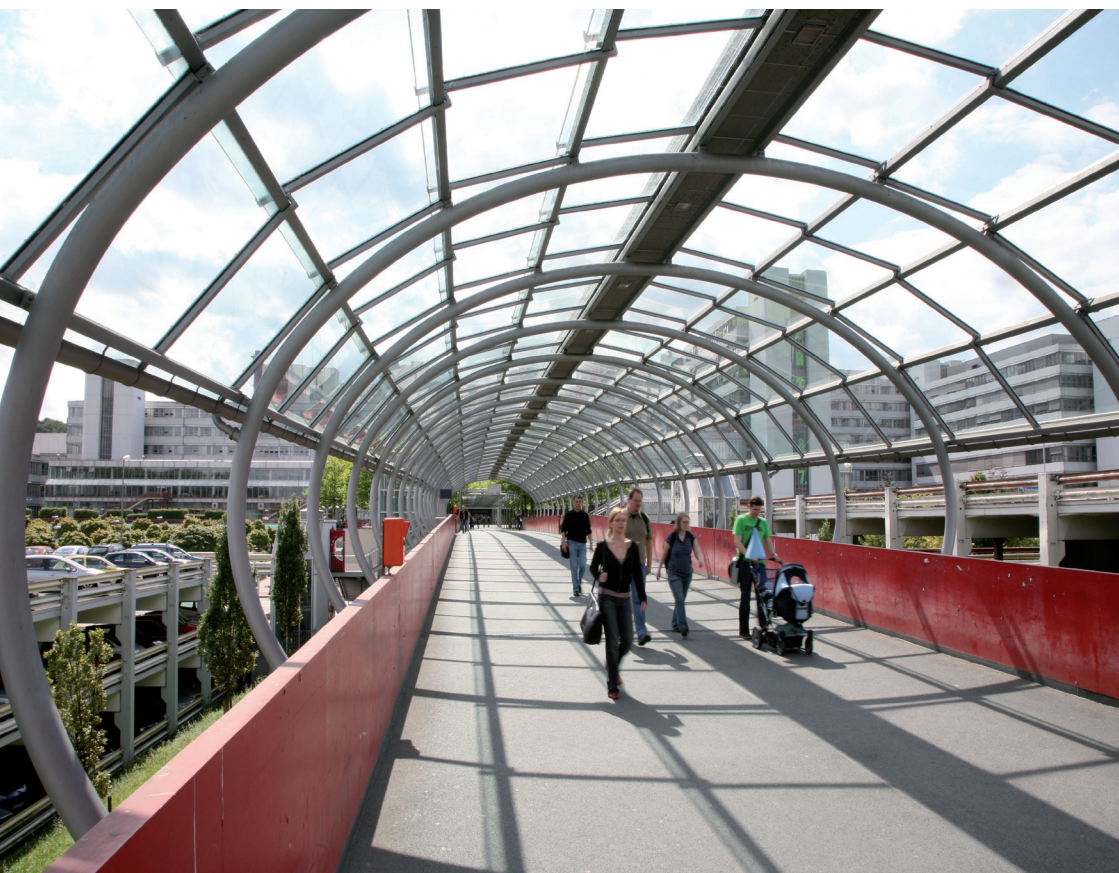


Guidelines for the Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations



Imprint: Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology, Bielefeld University,
Universitätsstraße 25, D-33615 Bielefeld, www.uni-bielefeld.de/bghs
Text by Dr. Alexandra Hessling, Julia Siekmann, Dr. Andrea Adams and the Working Group for Good
Supervision; layout by Katharina Lang, Carla Merschhaus, Julia Siekmann, Patrick Kamps; pictures
by Thomas Abel
print: ZVV Bielefeld University.

CONTENT

	Preamble	2
I.	Guidelines for good supervision	5
	1. Initiation of supervision	5
	2. Supervisors: Primary and secondary supervision	8
	3. The supervisors' responsibilities	10
	4. Personal supervision meetings	12
	5. Setting a timeframe and schedule for the dissertation	14
	6. The supervision agreement	15
	7. The role of the Graduate School	18
II.	Related Information	21
	1. Responsibilities: Supervisors – Faculty – BGHS	21
	2. The doctoral degree procedure	22
	3. Length of dissertations	23
	4. Rules of good scientific practice	24
	5. Contact information: Faculties – BGHS	25
III.	Scope of the Guidelines	25

PREAMBLE

By providing these *Guidelines for the Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations*, the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) and participating departments aim to improve the quality of supervision during doctoral training and provide helpful suggestions to both supervisors and doctoral candidates. The guidelines were developed by the *Working Group for Good Supervision*, which was formed on the initiative of doctoral candidates and BGHS management. The working group is composed of faculty members, associated postdoctoral researchers and other academic staff, and doctoral candidates.

In addition to the supervision agreement that all doctoral students in the BGHS conclude with their principal supervisor and the Graduate School, the *Guidelines for the Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations* are another component of the efforts to improve conditions for doctoral candidates at the Graduate School. They form the basis for the arrangement of binding student-supervisor relations and define the role of the Graduate School with respect to supervision.

These guidelines help in the supervision process by offering suggestions on how to establish commitments and responsibilities and how to prevent conflicts and problems in the supervision process through timely clarification of each party's expectations. The guidelines support newly appointed faculty members by helping them to build constructive and positive working relationships with doctoral candidates, which in turn plays an important role in advancing students' academic and career development. Though faculty members who have already served many years as supervisors at the university are familiar with the supervision process, they may find new helpful suggestions in these guidelines.

For doctoral candidates, the guidelines serve as an orientation as they actively shape the student-supervisor relationship and supervision process. They are intended to encourage doctoral candidates to learn how to realistically assess and communicate their own expectations

of and needs from the supervision. At the same time, the guidelines provide information on the rights and obligations of both the doctoral candidates and the supervisors.

The guidelines can be downloaded from the website of the Graduate School and also are available in the dean's office of each participating faculty. All new doctoral students receive a copy together with the supervision agreement.

The *Guidelines for the Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations* supplement the General Guidelines on Supervision, which were adopted on 4 May 2010 by the president's office of Bielefeld University, and are deemed voluntary guidelines for initiating, arranging and developing the supervisory relationship.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Welskopp and Prof. Dr. Alfons Bora

[Directors of the BGHS]

Prof. Dr. Thomas Faist

[Dean of the Faculty of Sociology]

Prof. Dr. Angelika Epple

[Dean of the Faculty of History,
Philosophy and Theology]

Bielefeld, 18 June 2014

I. GUIDELINES FOR GOOD SUPERVISION

1. Initiation of supervision

Good supervision begins even before the official supervision relationship commences. A potential doctoral candidate should first clarify with the intended supervisor whether it is advisable for him or her to pursue a doctorate, and whether the proposed topic can be managed in a reasonable period. The supervisor's selection of doctoral candidates should be made with great care. Likewise, doctoral candidates should proceed thoughtfully and with due care when initiating a supervision. It is particularly important to consider whether there is a close relationship between one's own research topic and the research fields of the potential supervisor.



Recommendations for potential doctoral candidates:

Before initiating contact, a potential candidate should carefully consider which faculty member would be a suitable supervisor. It is particularly important to give careful thought to whether she or he can give topic-specific feedback on the work and whether the topic falls within the faculty member's research interests. One good starting point for finding such information is to visit the BGHS website, which provides an overview of supervisors from the fields of sociology and history.

Individuals interested in writing a doctoral dissertation should contact the intended supervisor directly and request a preliminary interview. When sending this preliminary request, it is a good idea to include a current curriculum vitae and a project description of five to ten pages. In addition to clarifying the content of the dissertation research during this preliminary meeting, the potential candidate should also discuss mutual expectations about the scope and frequency of the supervision meetings. At this point, it is advisable to ask the supervisor about his or her usual approach to supervision.



Recommendations for supervisors: Before taking up a supervision, the supervisor should consider whether there is a close enough relationship between the chosen topic and his or her own research areas, and whether there is sufficient time available to assume additional supervisory responsibilities. It is often difficult to definitively answer the latter question, as even very good supervision does not guarantee a good dissertation. Intensive supervision usually promotes a successful and expeditious dissertation, but a large investment of time in supervising does not always translate into high-quality supervision. Supervisors and doctoral candidates have their own individual expectations with respect to the frequency of meetings, the supervision arrangement and the ideal balance between guidance and independence in academic research. The faculty member should discuss these issues before agreeing to become a candidate's supervisor.

When deciding whether to accept a supervisory role, it may be helpful to clarify in advance the potential candidate's academic and research ambitions, as not all doctoral students wish to pursue a career in academia. Consequently, the structure, needs and expectations of the supervisory relationship vary considerably from case to case. Doctoral candidates with career goals directed at professions outside academia will not necessarily expect or require assistance in establishing themselves in the scientific community. On the other hand, doctoral candidates who hope to follow a career path in academia do not usually need contacts in business and political life. In each case, the individual's specific expectations should be clarified at the outset when possible. One helpful approach in this regard is to ask the potential doctoral candidate for a self-assessment of his or her needs with respect to supervision. The following checklist can provide some orientation in the initiation of a student-supervisor relationship:

Checklist for the initiation of a supervision

- What are the wishes and expectations with respect to the supervisory relationship
 - wishes/expectations of the supervisor
 - wishes/expectations of the doctoral candidate

- Is there a sufficient and/or appropriate fit with regard to ...
 - the research fields of the supervisor and the proposed dissertation research topic
 - the supervisor's available time and the time needed for this particular supervision
 - expectations of the time needed to complete the dissertation
 - ideas about the necessary length of the dissertation

- What career goals is the student pursuing with the dissertation?
 - a career within academia
 - a career outside the academic setting

- In what form and by what means should the student-supervisor relationship be arranged?
 - meetings in person
 - regular phone conversations, E-Mail exchange, etc.

- How should the doctoral candidate prepare for the supervisory talks, and how should these exchanges be evaluated afterwards?
 - deliver texts, working papers
 - keep a record of outcomes

- How often should meetings or phone conversations take place?

The supervisory relationship and admission to a doctoral programme: After a faculty member agrees to supervise a dissertation and the supervisory relationship is established, the doctoral candidate is required to apply for admission to the doctoral programme in sociology or history. The doctoral degree committee of the relevant department decides on admissions to its doctoral programme. Applications for admission to a doctoral programme must be submitted via the Online Application Portal of the BGHS website by 15 June for the Winter Term or 15 January for the Summer Term. The applications are directly forwarded to the respective doctoral degree committee, which makes the final admission decisions. All newly admitted graduate students have the opportunity to become a member of the Graduate School. The prerequisite for membership is a supervision agreement signed by the supervisor, the doctoral candidate and the Graduate School.

2. Supervisors: primary and secondary supervision

The doctoral degree regulations of the history and the sociology departments clearly define the supervision framework: the supervision of doctoral candidates is to be carried out by two supervisors.



Principal supervisor: As a general rule, the principal supervisor is a faculty member of the Faculty of Sociology or of the Department of History at the Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology. As the primary supervisor is mainly responsible for the supervision, he or she must have sufficient time available to carry out the supervision and also work in research areas with enough relevance to the dissertation topic.



Secondary supervisor: The position of secondary supervisor can be assumed by another professor or a post-doctoral research associate in the department concerned or in another department. It is entirely possible to have a secondary supervisor from a different disciplinary field, particularly when the doctoral work is interdisciplinary. Moreover, the position of secondary supervisor can be assumed by a faculty member either within or outside Bielefeld University. An external secondary supervisor often is requested when the research project is set squarely in the context of international scientific communities. In such cases the regulations of both the history and the sociology doctoral programme allow for doctoral degrees earned in collaboration with a partner university or a partnering faculty.

The principal and secondary supervisors may have very different roles in the supervision; the boundaries are not always well defined, and occasionally the two supervisors may give a doctoral candidate contradictory advice. Should this occur, it is advisable to have both supervisors come to joint supervision meetings, in order to avoid incongruous signals when obtaining guidance. Doctoral students and supervisors can contact the office of the Graduate School for assistance in resolving any potential conflicts.

3. The supervisors' responsibilities

The core purpose of supervision is to provide professional and topic-specific support during a student's doctoral studies and research, which requires at minimum a willingness to discuss his or her academic and research work and to provide encouragement and advice. This process begins with the formulation of the dissertation topic and continues with the review of project outlines and discussion of methodological and theoretical issues, and comes to an end with the formal doctoral procedures. Supervisors should build a constructive and positive working relationship with their doctoral students. The intensity of the supervision depends on the given circumstances and cannot be generalised.

While good supervision includes discussion of a student's doctoral work, it also involves a willingness to advise on development of the academic career path, support the candidate in gathering teaching experience, discuss the composition of the candidate's doctoral programme studies and cultivate his or her integration into the academic work environment. Supervisor support is particularly helpful in integrating and involving the doctoral researcher within the department and/or field of work.

Supervising progress on the career path: Supervisors should counsel doctoral candidates seeking a career in academia on the development of their career perspectives and, together with the student, help cultivate their career perspectives during their conversations. The candidate and supervisor might, for example, discuss publication strategies or other efforts to position the student in a particular academic context. At the same time, doctoral candidates should be encouraged to take part in networks outside the academic context. The services of the BGHS Career Service may also prove helpful in planning one's career path.

Support in organising and teaching courses: It is vital that doctoral candidates pursuing an academic career gain early teaching experience during their qualification phase. For doctoral candidates with a position as research associate, teaching classes is already part of their job assignment. Doctoral candidates with other funding arrangements may apply for a BGHS-financed teaching assistantship. Regardless of the form of financing, a doctoral candidate should receive support from his or her supervisor on questions of how to organise and give classes. Ideally, a doctoral student will teach her or his first course together with a supervisor ('team teaching').

Advising on the content of the doctoral course of studies: A doctoral education at the BGHS obliges the student to participate in certain courses, which are described in the doctoral degree regulations of each faculty. Because the course of studies can be individually designed, the supervisor should be available to give advice to the student when he or she is determining the obligations to be fulfilled.

Integration into academic work contexts: Supervisors should promote the integration and involvement of doctoral candidates in academic work settings. This aspect of advising includes suggestions to present the dissertation project not only in his or her own colloquia series, but also in other relevant contexts. The supervisor also should point out relevant conferences, while at the same time taking into account the need for a suitable relationship between conference activities and continued progress of the dissertation. Supervisors should encourage doctoral candidates to make contacts within relevant scientific communities, to identify appropriate places and forums for discussing one's research work and to make some initial, limited forays into publishing work even during the qualification phase. Moreover, supervisors should inform doctoral students of measures and services that promote equal opportunities and equality of treatment in academic life.

4. Personal supervision meetings

Before signing the supervision agreement, both parties – the supervisor and the doctoral candidate – need to make entirely clear their mutual expectations with regard to the individual supervision and the supervisor’s role in accompanying the dissertation process.

■■■■■ **Topics for discussion:** Good supervision entails first and foremost discussion of work in progress and the outcomes achieved, as well as a reciprocal understanding of the next stages of work to be completed. Unambiguous and realistic goals addressing what steps can be accomplished by the next meeting help to create clarity about the supervisor’s expectations and also facilitate structured and incremental progress in completing the dissertation.

■■■■■ **Frequency of meetings:** By signing the supervision agreement, the supervisor and the doctoral candidate agree to meet at least twice per semester. The frequency of these discussions can, however, be adapted to suit the individual needs of the supervisory relationship.

■■■■■ **Follow-up to discussions:** It is recommended that both the supervisor and the doctoral candidate keep a brief protocol of the meetings’ outcomes and the agreements reached therein. Should an unclear situation arise, these notes may contribute to clarification of the different perspectives.

The following checklist offers doctoral candidates and supervisors some suggestions for questions to consider in supervision meetings. This list can be shortened or extended according to the requirements of the situation; it is meant to stimulate preparation for the supervisory meetings and to identify questions that could or should be addressed in the following meeting:

Checklist for supervision meetings

- In what stage* is the research and dissertation work currently? Have the agreed interim goals been reached? (Reflection and, if necessary, revision of the work plan and schedule.)
- What has gone well *since the last meeting*? Where have things gone less well? What conclusions can be drawn from this for future work?
- Which *text passages, working papers, lecture manuscripts* need to be discussed?
- How should the *course of study* (e.g. seminars, colloquia and/or workshops) be arranged next semester?
- Which *conferences* would be suitable for presenting and discussing the dissertation project and/or parts of the work?
- What actions can be taken now to *further the professional career*? What are the impending steps to further develop career perspectives?
- When will the *next supervision meeting* take place? What stages of work need to be completed by then?
- Are there *other important points* to cover?

5. Setting a timeframe and schedule for the dissertation

One important responsibility of a supervisor is to help the doctoral candidate design the qualification phase in such a way that the time-to-degree remains manageable and reasonable. A highly advisable strategy in this regard is to structure the entire course of the dissertation project when the doctoral programme commences by agreeing on interim goals. These specified interim goals should be defined in a detailed work plan and schedule.

Full-time or part-time: The structure and duration of the doctoral programme should accommodate the individual's personal circumstances. If the doctoral candidate is working in a profession, is taking care of children or family members, or is affected by other circumstances which prevent full-time doctoral work, then it is advisable to apply for part-time status with the BGHS. The Graduate School advises doctoral students with full-time status to design their doctoral studies and research so that the dissertation is submitted, reviewed and assessed, and defended within three to three and a half years. This timeframe enables doctoral candidates to quickly move on to the next step in their professional career, whether it be within or outside the academic setting. If the student has part-time status, the duration of the doctoral studies programme can be extended to five to five and a half years.

The work plan and schedule: All doctoral candidates are required to present a detailed work plan and schedule within six months (at the latest) of admission to the doctoral degree programme in history or sociology. This plan covers the work stages of the entire doctorate programme up to submission of the dissertation. The Graduate School strongly recommends that doctoral candidates draw up the work plan and schedule as early as possible and check with their supervisors on whether the proposed work stages and timeframes have been realistically planned. It is important to schedule in some 'buffer time', and to regularly update the plan over the course of the doctoral work. The work plan and schedule help the doctoral candidate identify at what point he or she is in the dissertation process.

6. The supervision agreement

The supervisory relationship is laid out in a supervision agreement concluded between the doctoral candidate, the supervisor and the Graduate School. The agreement is designed to ensure the best-possible counsel, supervision and support to graduate students in the doctoral degree programmes in sociology and history. By signing the agreement, the student and supervisor promise, among other things, to observe the rules of good scientific practice, to regularly hold supervision meetings and to submit an annual report to the Graduate School. In particular, the following rights and obligations for doctoral students, supervisors and the Graduate School are laid out as follows:

The supervision agreement

The supervisory relationship is arranged in accordance with an agreement concluded between the doctoral candidate, the principal supervisor and the director of the Graduate School. The agreement is designed to ensure the best-possible counsel, supervision and support to graduate students in the doctoral degree programmes in sociology and history. In the agreement, the doctoral candidate and supervisor commit to observing the rules of good scientific practice. The agreement also encompasses the following rights and obligations for doctoral candidates, supervisors and the Graduate School:

The doctoral candidate agrees

- to conceive, plan and carry out the dissertation project in such a way that it can be completed within six semesters or, in the case of doctoral students with part-time status, ten semesters;

- to submit a progress report to the directors of the BGHS within six months of admission to the doctoral degree programme; this report shall include an updated work plan and schedule, a bibliography and a statement from the supervisor confirming that the proposed dissertation goals can be accomplished in the agreed timeframe;
- after submitting the first report, to provide a written report once a year (unsolicited) to the directors of the BGHS on the current status of the dissertation, each time including a descriptive statement from one of the two dissertation supervisors;
- to participate on a regular basis in the relevant mandatory and optional events of the BGHS, as detailed in the applicable doctoral degree regulations;
- to keep the secondary supervisor current on the dissertation project at all times;
- to immediately inform the BGHS office of any change of address or other contact information;
- to inform the supervisors and the BGHS in writing should he or she decide to discontinue the dissertation programme, and to state the reason for this decision; in addition, a final report on the completed research work must be presented to the BGHS within six months of termination.

The supervisor agrees

- to render all necessary support toward the dissertation goals in the agreed timeframe;
- to discuss the doctoral candidate's ongoing work in detail twice per semester, and to be available at critical moments for discussions related to the field of study and research;

- to monitor progress made on the dissertation as set out in the work plan and schedule and to provide comments on the work plan and schedule and the dissertation reports.

The Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology agrees

- to provide financial assistance to the doctoral candidate by defraying the costs of travel and research, language courses and the organisation of workshops that promote progress on the dissertation;
- to provide the doctoral candidate, to the extent possible, with a work space and technical equipment;
- to give the doctoral student the opportunity to create a personal profile on the BGHS website (displaying his or her CV, dissertation title and topic, etc.);
- to serve as a mediator in the event of a conflict;
- to support the doctoral student, to the extent possible, in creating a balance between family life and his or her research work;
- to help the doctoral candidate prepare for academic and non-academic labour markets both within Germany and internationally;
- to ensure that the period between submission of the work and disputation does not exceed six months.

The supervision agreement obliges all parties involved to observe minimal standards. In the actual elaboration of the supervision arrangement, however, both doctoral students and supervisors should actively shape the supervision process, and not simply observe the stated rights and obligations. Good academic supervision comes only when the doctoral candidate and the supervisors seize the opportunity to actively create a supervision arrangement best suited to the particular situation.

7. The role of the graduate school

A central function of the Graduate School is to provide a doctoral degree programme that has the highest professional standards and exceptional academic supervision. In addition to the professional and topic-specific support provided by the supervisors in the relevant departments, the Graduate School assists its doctoral students by offering a number of services that help them assume responsibility for their own scholarly work and career. One focus in this respect and a central concern of the Graduate School is the advancement of equal opportunities and equality of treatment.



Career Service: The BGHS supports its doctoral candidates by means of various services pertaining to career planning, whether for careers within or outside academia.



Coaching group: The BGHS coaching group facilitates exchange and contacts between doctoral students, helps them clarify their personal needs and goals, offers encouragement in meeting new or difficult challenges and can provide coaching and suggestions on issues of self-reflection, self-management and how to learn from the experiences of others.

Support and mediation for resolving conflicts between doctoral researchers and supervisors:

The BGHS is committed to helping both doctoral researchers and supervisors resolve any conflicts. Upon request of both parties, we offer conflict management support in the form of neutral mediation. Conflict management at the BGHS aims at helping the parties involved to reach consensus without direct interference in the doctoral researcher-supervisor relationship. Upon request of the parties, the academic liaison or an external mediator can facilitate this process. All concerns brought to the BGHS office are of course treated with utmost discretion. The contact person at the BGHS office is available for consultation by doctoral researchers and supervisors. The office only takes steps towards conflict resolution in agreement with the person who has sought counsel.

Contact: Andrea Adams, email: andrea.adams@uni-bielefeld.de.



The BGHS Academic Liaison: An academic liaison is available to support all BGHS members in cases of conflict in the supervisory relationship. He or she can be contacted by both doctoral researchers and supervisors. All concerns brought to the academic liaison will be treated confidentially. Confidentiality is ensured to protect all parties involved. **Contact:** academicliaison@uni-bielefeld.de.



Workshop Creating a constructive supervisory relationship: The BGHS regularly offers a workshop on creating constructive supervisory relationships. Here doctoral researchers can learn how to form and maintain a positive working relationship aimed at completing their dissertation. The workshop also focuses on identifying and naming expectations for the supervisory relationship. Bielefeld University's personnel development programme for researchers and teachers (PEP) offers workshops for supervisors of dissertations.



Conflict mediation: Upon request, the BGHS will provide an external mediator for the constructive resolution of a supervisory conflict. Mediation is possible when both parties wish for a third, neutral person to facilitate a consensual agreement. It is also possible to have someone from the BGHS office or a person of the parties' choosing facilitate conflict resolution.

II. RELATED INFORMATION

1. Responsibilities: Supervisors – Faculty – BGHS

The responsibilities pertaining to supervision extend over three levels: the supervisor, the faculty and the BGHS. At the level of the supervisor, it should be noted that a *supervisory relationship* is established when a faculty member accepts a supervisory role. After a supervisor accepts the supervision of a candidate's doctoral work, the faculties' doctoral degree committees decide on *admission to the doctoral degree programme*. Applications must be submitted via the Online Application Portal of the BGHS website. Upon admission to the doctoral degree programme and the signing of a supervision agreement, doctoral candidates may obtain *BGHS membership*.

Supervisory relationship: The student-supervisor relationship is established upon the faculty member's acceptance of the supervision.

Admission to the doctoral programme: The BGHS receives the applications; the faculties make decisions about admission to a doctoral programme.

BGHS membership: By signing the supervision agreement, the student is granted BGHS membership.

Legal information on the acceptance of doctoral candidate supervision: A faculty member is not required to accept the supervision of a doctoral student and may refuse a request on material grounds. This decision may be made, for example, when the applicant does not command the requisite knowledge to undertake a promising treatment of his or her topic, or when the supervisor's time constraints do not permit him or her to adequately supervise additional doctoral candidates.

Legal information on the termination of the supervisory relationship: Regular completion of the supervisory relationship takes effect upon successful completion of the dissertation. Early termination of the

supervisory relationship is not problematic as long as the relationship is ended consensually by the doctoral researcher and the supervisor. Doctoral researchers who wish to terminate the supervisory relationship early are not required to state their reasons. It is however preferable that all parties know why the supervisory relationship is being terminated. Should the supervisor wish to end the supervisory relationship, there must be compelling academic reasons or reasons involving a breach of trust. These reasons must be substantiated by the supervisor.¹ A termination of the supervisory relationship is not automatically a termination of the doctoral project. Whenever possible, the BGHS or the respective Faculty shall aid the doctoral researcher in finding a new supervisor.

2. The doctoral degree procedure

The submission of the dissertation marks the start of the doctoral degree procedure that includes the assessment and the defense of the thesis. The doctoral degree procedure for history and sociology does not correspond on all points, but the process is similar. For both fields, it includes the following steps:

- Initiation of the doctoral degree procedure upon application of the doctoral candidate by a decision of the doctoral degree committee of the respective faculty.
- The application to initiate the doctoral degree procedure must include the documents specified in the doctoral degree regulations.
- The decision about the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure is made by the doctoral degree committee, which also designates the members of the examination committee.
- Notification of the members of the examination committee and of the doctoral candidate; the assessments should be received within two months.

¹ Leuze, Dieter, Epping Volker: Gesetz über die Hochschulen des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (Hochschulgesetz – HG NRW), Bielefeld 2001, Kommentierung von §97 (35-40).

- The assessments are made available to the doctoral candidate for 14 days; the candidate can express his or her view on the assessment within 14 days.
- The candidate is immediately informed of acceptance of the dissertation, together with the examination date from the examination office.
- The oral exam is in the form of a disputation on the dissertation; the disputation is conducted as a peer examination/colloquium by the examination committee.

Doctoral students are urged to familiarise themselves with the procedure, in part by consulting the doctoral degree regulations. The doctoral degree regulations of the Faculty of Sociology and of the Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology as well as the General Doctoral Degree Regulations of Bielefeld University can be downloaded from the BGHS website.

3. Length of dissertations

Faculty of Sociology: Because the practice of handing in dissertations of up to 600 pages inherently contradicts the stated aim of shortening the time-to-degree period to three years if possible, the doctoral degree committee of the Faculty of Sociology recommends a limit on the length of dissertations. The upper limit for text length, including the bibliography, should be about 750,000 characters (including spaces), which is equivalent to about 250 to 300 pages.

Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology: The doctoral degree committee of the Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology does not give a recommended limit on the length of dissertations. For this reason, the student should consult her or his principal supervisor about dissertation length early in the student-supervisor relationship.

4. Rules of good scientific practice

To ensure good scientific practice, Bielefeld University has adopted a framework of corresponding principles and procedural rules, which were published in the *Amtliche Bekanntmachungen der Universität Bielefeld* (Bulletin of Bielefeld University), volume 29 (2000), number 2.

Supervisors and doctoral candidates are obliged to respect and follow these principles. Concrete indications of transgressions of these principles of good scientific practice should be reported to the university, which pursues every suspicion of scientific misconduct within the university. Should a member of Bielefeld University have charges of scientific misconduct to bring forward, he or she can turn to BGHS management, which will establish contact with the ombudsman of Bielefeld University.

Violations of the rules of good scientific practice also can be reported to the German Research Foundation (DFG). The DFG ‘Research Ombudsman’ is an independent supervisory and mediation service that provides direct counsel and assistance to all researchers, irrelevant of any connection to the DFG, in questions of good scientific practice and possible violations of such practice through scientific misconduct. Further information can be found at the following website: www.ombudsman-fuer-die-wissenschaft.de.

5. Contact information: Faculties – BGHS

Information on admission, the doctoral degree programme and the BGHS

BGHS office

bghs@uni-bielefeld.de
Rooms: X-B2-243 and X-B2-246
Tel.: +49 521 / 106-6526 and -6523

Questions on doctoral degree regulations and doctoral degree committees:

for sociology

Sabine Beiderwieden
promotion.soz@uni-bielefeld.de
Room: X-C2-103
Tel.: +49 521 / 106-3814

for history

Dr. Bettina Brandt
buero-shf@uni-bielefeld.de
Room: X-A2-242
Tel.: +49 521 / 106-3238

III. SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES

The *Guidelines for the Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations* are intended to inform and provide support to supervisors and doctoral candidates in all supervisory relationships established in the fields of sociology and history, regardless of whether the dissertation project is completed in the framework of a doctoral programme or as an open dissertation produced outside a doctoral programme. With respect to the latter, the passages that refer to the Graduate School and/or to the doctoral programme can be disregarded.



Universität Bielefeld

 Bielefeld Graduate School
in History and Sociology

➔ www.uni-bielefeld.de/bghs