

Departmental Policy on Dissertation Seminars and the Annual Doctoral Conference

A. Annual Doctoral Conference

1. Participation at the April Annual Doctoral Conference (ADC) is mandatory for all Ph.D. students and probationary Ph.D. candidates in the department – regardless of whether they are residing in Budapest or not.

2. Failure to attend the ADC will lead to a suspension of the stipend for half a year, and an evaluation of 'unsatisfactory progress' is issued at the end of the academic year. If Doctoral Students cannot attend the ADC for legitimate reasons, they have to present their work to the audience via a telephone conference or some other means of communication. Under no circumstances is it possible for a doctoral student not to present her/his work to a broader CEU audience at least once a year.¹

Exception: Within the five years of writing their dissertations, students have the right to skip one ACD under the condition that they have already presented their thesis work at least three times in the Departmental Seminar.

3. The ADC is not a public event, but Doctoral Candidates from other universities, preferably from the EE-ECE-SEE region, might be invited to make presentation.

4. For each conference, a keynote speaker of international standing will be invited. The keynote address can be delivered either at the closing session or at the opening session.

¹ Note that section 5.2. of the CEU Doctoral Programs Academic Regulations writes the following about this:

“The Doctoral Committee may terminate doctoral candidacy or probationary doctoral candidacy on the ground of:

- unsatisfactory coursework grades;
- unsatisfactory research progress;
- failure to comply with the University and Doctoral Program regulations.

Probationary Doctoral Candidate shall be warned in writing by the Doctoral Committee at least one month before such action may be taken.

Doctoral Candidate shall be warned in writing by the Doctoral Committee at least two months before such action may be taken.

Doctoral Student shall have a right to present his/her case to the Doctoral Committee before such termination takes effect. He/she can lodge the appeal against the decision to the University Doctoral Committee.”

Our above rules implement these general regulations the following way. In about six months after the first unsatisfactory progress report was issued, the Doctoral Candidate shall present his/her case to the Departmental Doctoral Committee when, the progress made is evaluated once again. If the progress is still deemed unsatisfactory, another warning is issued that student status shall be automatically terminated if no substantial progress is observed by the Departmental Doctoral Committee by the end of the given academic year. The termination takes effect automatically when the Departmental Doctoral Committee issues a third unsatisfactory progress warning.

Note that non-attendance at the Annual Doctoral Conference is, of course, not the only ground on which an 'unsatisfactory progress' evaluation can be issued.

5. Apart from providing students with feedback, giving faculty an overview of students' progress, and improving students' skills of presenting themselves and their work to a broader public, the ADC is aimed at contributing to a spirit of cooperation and corporate identity across student cohorts. In order to enhance this, each ADC is closed with a dinner attended by all participants.

B. Departmental Seminar

1. From the 2005/2006 academic year on, the Faculty Seminar and the Dissertation Seminar will merge into a single Departmental Seminar series. The Departmental Seminar will consist of Ph.D. students (first-year candidates and seniors) and of Political Science faculty. It will be organized in the form of weekly brown-bag sessions on Tuesdays between 13-14.40.

2. All faculty, and all Ph.D. students who are in residence in Budapest should attend seminars. At the beginning of each academic year, the Doctoral Committee will compile a list of those students who are present in Budapest, and those who are not.

3. Some of the sessions will be dedicated to the faculty's work in progress and to presentations by non-CEU scholars. Each faculty member is expected to present at least once every second year.

4. The rest of the sessions will discuss contributions by Ph.D. Candidates associated with the department who already passed their comprehensive exam. The work presented does not have to, but can be related to the dissertation topic.

5. The possibility to present at the Departmental Seminar is merit-based. It is the supervisor's responsibility to decide whether the text is good enough in quality before submitting a student nominating to the organizer(s) of the Departmental Seminar.

6. All Doctoral Students are expected to present at the Departmental Seminar at least twice before submitting their dissertation for defense.

7. Texts to be presented – whether by Doctoral Candidates, Faculty, or Guest Lecturers – need to be submitted and circulated at least two weeks in advance.

8. Each presentation should last 15-20 minutes and is followed by comments by a discussant. Presentations by Probationary Doctoral Student will be followed by comments by the supervisor. The aim of the supervisor's intervention consists in guiding the open floor discussion in a direction she/he considers appropriate for the Probationary Doctoral Student. Texts of the presentations and of the comments will be distributed in advance.

All Probationary Ph.D. candidates shall submit short (1-2 pages) written comments on the text of the presentation. The comments should identify the main points of the text, and indicate question that could be raised in the seminar discussion. The comments shall be sent to the presenter and the organizer(s) at least 3 days in advance.

9. Within two weeks following the seminar, the Doctoral Candidate shall send to the Doctoral Committee his/her written summary of responses to questions, suggestions, and criticisms raised in the seminar.

10. Each academic year, two occasions will be reserved for special meetings where dissertation proposals by first-year Ph.D. students will be discussed. The first of these meetings will be held in mid-November and the second in mid-February.

11. Credits and grading: The Departmental Seminar is a four-credit mandatory course for Probationary Doctoral Candidates. The grades shall range from F to A, and depend on attendance and the positive evaluation of at least twelve written comments and questions. The comments and questions are graded by the organizer(s) of the seminar and have to be distributed to the organizer(s) and the paper presenters 24 hours prior to the meeting.

12. Faculty do not earn extra credit for participation, except for the organizer(s). The organizers(s) of the seminar and the conference should be the same person(s). Her/His/Their job could earn four credits altogether.