



Holy Spirit University of Kaslik Doctoral College

Charter of the Jury of a PhD Thesis Defense Role of the Jury Members

The Jury of Defense is composed of five members at least, among whom are the thesis director, the head of the jury, a first rapporteur, a second rapporteur (including at least one external rapporteur), an assessor (if necessary) or a third rapporteur.

Before the Defense:

- The director (and the co-director - in the case of joint direction) of the thesis will transmit to the head of the doctoral committee of the related academic unit a reasoned opinion justifying his/her approval of the particular thesis to be submitted for defense;
- The two or three rapporteurs, among whom two are from another institution, should each submit to the head of the doctoral committee a written opinion of the thesis, covering all its contents, while giving special attention to the part related to the field of expertise of each rapporteur.
 - If the thesis has been accepted for defense but subject to minor modifications, the head of the doctoral committee and thesis director will jointly prepare a summary of the requested modifications. The doctoral student will proceed with these modifications within a maximum of ten days. Afterwards, the head of the doctoral committee and the thesis director shall make sure that the modifications have been applied;
 - If the requested modifications were major modifications, the head of the doctoral committee and the thesis director will ensure the unanimity of all jury members. If a unanimous verdict cannot be reached, a second jury of rapporteurs should be established. The assessment modalities of the modifications should be the same as those adopted by the first jury of rapporteurs. If the request for major modifications has been maintained, an extension of one or two consecutive semesters will be given to the doctoral student. Finally, only the rapporteurs, who have accepted the thesis for defense, participate in the defense jury;
- The assessor, if applicable, is not requested to submit a written opinion of the thesis;
- The head of the jury is not requested to submit a written opinion of the thesis.

During the Defense:

- The head of the jury inaugurates the defense session, explains the modalities, gives the floor for different speakers, facilitates the discussions and arbitrates, if needed, between comments given by the members of the jury;
- After the 25 minutes (minimum) to 40 minutes (maximum) which have been allocated to the presentation by the doctoral student, the head of the jury successively gives the floor to the director of thesis, to the co-director, if applicable, to the first rapporteur, to the second rapporteur, to the assessor, if applicable, or to the third rapporteur. Each member of the jury has his/her allocated time of 30 minutes maximum to intervene. The intervention should tackle core issues rather than format issues;
- The head of the jury closes the defense with a summary of 15 minutes maximum. Then, he/she shall ask the doctoral student and the attendees to wait outside the defense hall, wherein the deliberations will take place behind closed doors.

After the Defense:

- The head of the jury should make sure that no one but the members of the jury have remained in the defense hall;
- The head of the jury should allow the first rapporteur to speak, then the second rapporteur, followed by the assessor, if applicable, or to the third rapporteur, then the co-director, if applicable, followed by the thesis director, asking each one of them to give a grade for the thesis and for the defense, whilst also justifying their given grade. The head of the jury should finally take the floor and arbitrate any possible conflicts related to the grade, by referring to voting, if necessary;
- The head of the jury will, duly, draft the minutes of proceedings and let the members of the jury ratify them;
- The head of the jury should call the doctoral student and the attendees back into the defense hall;
- The head of the jury will read the minutes of proceedings, whilst all participants should stand.

Remark: In order to reach the defense, a thesis, at USEK, should have already been subject to appraisal, evaluation, to similarities detection software, amended, if necessary, and made valid, if necessary. At the end of the defense, rejecting, conditionally accepting or accepting with a modifications request is out of the question.