

Guidelines for Dissertation

Effective Date: 2024-10-01

The Department Finance, Accounting and Statistics has established the following guidelines for dissertations in WU's "Doktoratsstudium der Sozial- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften" and the "PhD Program Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften" in the fields of Accounting, Finance, Statistics and Mathematics.

Guidelines for Dissertations in Accounting

Students have the opportunity to submit their dissertation either in the form of a monograph or in cumulative form.

The minimum requirements for a cumulative dissertation are:

1. At least three papers must be submitted that make a substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field.
2. Each paper must, in the opinion of the reviewers, have the quality necessary for publication in a very good refereed international scientific journal of the field. If there is disagreement among the reviewers about the presence of this quality, a referee active in these journals must be consulted for assessment.
3. This means that the contributions do not need to be published nor accepted for publication yet, but they must have the quality required for acceptance.
4. Co-authorship of the articles is generally permissible (including co-authorship with the supervisor). However, at least one of the three articles must be written by the doctoral candidate in sole authorship.

For dissertations in FWF-funded doctoral programs or comparable programs in which representatives of the Institute of Accounting and Auditing are involved, differing, additional requirements may be applicable. These differing, additional requirements are to be communicated to the affected students at the beginning of their studies.

Guidelines for Dissertations in Finance

The following guidelines clarify the handling of cumulative dissertations, which comprise a number of independent scientific articles or working papers.

The submission of a portfolio of research papers ('cumulative dissertation'), some of which may be written with co-authors, corresponds to the international academic standards in the field of finance. Hence, we encourage doctoral students to write a cumulative dissertation.

As a general guideline three major rules apply:

1. In the standard case, the portfolio of submitted papers is expected to consist of at least three papers.
2. The submitted papers should be publishable. A presentation of a paper at a qualified academic conference (refer to conference list) is a good indicator for a paper to be publishable.
3. In the case of co-authored papers, the overall contribution of the submitting student should be sufficient.

It is not possible to provide a more detailed ex ante regulation. The exact minimum requirements may depend on the specific subfield of research and/or the methodological orientation of the papers.

Prospective students and supervisors may use the provisional supervision commitment ('vorläufige Betreuungszusage' according to the respective curricula) to fix minimum requirements on the number of papers to be submitted and potential co-authorships (in some cases at least one single-authored paper may be required).

The compulsory research proposal should be used in any case for this purpose, i.e. the research proposal should contain detailed information about the number of papers and intended co-authorships. The dissertation committee has the final decision whether the intended dissertation work is sufficient.

Guidelines for Dissertations in Statistics and Mathematics

The following guidelines apply in particular to dissertations carried out within the PhD label "Mathematics in Economics and Business" and supervised by the members of the Institute for Statistics and Mathematics.

Key points regarding dissertations are as follows:

1. **Language:**
Dissertations must be written in English.
2. **Structure:**
A dissertation must be a cumulative thesis that is based on at least three individual articles or working papers that are identified in the thesis. These papers are organized into chapters, prefaced by a comprehensive introduction and concluded with a summary and outlook.
3. **Publication Requirement:**
As per the assessment of the doctoral committee, at least two of the papers must meet the standards for publication in reputable international journals. Reputable international journals include journals listed in the journal list of the Institute for Statistics and Mathematics.
4. **Co-authorship:**
Research collaboration and co-authorship of the papers are permitted, including with the supervisors. If the dissertation contains co-authored articles, a comprehensive list outlining each author's contributions must be included for assessment. It is essential to consult all co-authors when compiling this list. Additionally, the submitting student's overall contribution to the research must be substantial. It is acceptable for the same work to be included in multiple dissertations, provided the above guidelines are adhered to.

These guidelines are designed to ensure consistency and quality across dissertations. The ultimate decision to determine if the proposed dissertation work is sufficient for the acceptance of the thesis lies with the doctoral committee.

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