

## Interpretation Guide for the Senate Habilitation Directive (pursuant to Annex 6 of the WU By-Laws)

Department of Strategy and Innovation, last updated Nov. 2011

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This regulation is intended to further specify the general Senate Habilitation Directive with regard to cumulative habilitation theses. For the sake of clarity, the Senate Habilitation Directive is quoted below, and the relevant elements are then operationalized in detail in the following paragraphs.

### *0. Senate Habilitation Directive*

*For applications for a *venia docendi* in the field of business administration or in one of the subjects represented at the business administration-related departments, a thesis can be, aside from standard academic papers, an independent habilitation thesis in monograph format or a collection of academic papers related in subject to the subject of the *venia docendi* (cumulative habilitation).*

*A cumulative thesis is considered worthy of a *venia docendi* when a series of excellent academic contributions by the applicant has been published or has been accepted for publication. The quality of the contributions is assessed based on the quality standards of the respective scientific community (as international in scope as possible). Excellent quality of an article can be assumed if the article has been accepted by a periodical regarded as very good by the scientific community. The evaluation should be based as far as possible on widely-accepted journal rankings. The definite focus of a *venia docendi* in business administration should be publications in periodicals dedicated to business administration in a broad sense.*

*Department-specific procedures are developed after hearing the opinions of the Convention of Business Administration-Related Departments. The goal is to develop norms and standards that demand performance that is competitive and compatible with the work of the (international) scientific community.*

#### *1. “A series”*

For a cumulative habilitation, candidates are expected to publish a total of at least five excellent academic papers, as specified in the following paragraphs. The number of papers may be reduced under certain circumstances (see for example items “Groundbreaking scholarly articles” and “Authorship” below).

#### *2. “Excellent academic contributions”*

Only those publications can be considered excellent that have been subjected to the usual journal review process, are of an appropriate scientific standard, and are considered by the scientific community to significantly advance scientific progress in the respective field. They can be interdisciplinary in nature and should be expected to be of medium- or long-term benefit to society and the economy, directly or indirectly.

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### *3. "Periodicals regarded as very good"*

There is no complete and regularly updated list of periodicals considered to be very good and held in high regard by the scientific community.

Among the factors that can be regarded as indicative of a very good periodical are the periodical's position in international journal rankings. Journals can be assumed to be of very good quality if they are rated A+, A, or B in the current version of the VHB ranking, if they are listed in equivalent categories in other internationally recognized journal rankings (e.g. Financial Times 40, Handelsblatt ranking), or if they have an equivalent impact factor.

There are also other high-quality journals. Habilitation candidates are expected to provide adequate documentation and arguments to confirm the quality standards of the journals in which they have published. In particular, other valid journal rankings that confirm the quality of the journal in question may serve as an adequate basis for such arguments. Habilitation candidates who refer to other journal rankings must provide documentation to confirm the validity of the ranking in question (especially with regard to its methodological quality and transparency) and its relevance as an indicator of the views of the respective scientific community.

These rankings are not binding factors. They serve as points of reference for the habilitation candidate and the Habilitation Committee. As a rule, the Habilitation Committee decides which periodicals are considered very good, based on the articles in question.

### *4. Groundbreaking scholarly articles*

Articles of extraordinary quality or special importance for the scientific community can be counted as two publications. An article can be assumed to meet these criteria if it is published in one of the journals universally recognized as one of the best worldwide by the scientific community in the field of business administration (e.g. journals with an A+ rating in the VHB ranking), or if an extraordinary impact on the respective scientific community can be documented.

### *5. Internationality*

At least one of the periodicals must be an English-language journal. Any exceptions from these requirements that are due to discipline-specific characteristics or subject area (e.g. lack of an international scientific community) must be documented in detail by the habilitation candidate.

### *6. Authorship*

The articles should demonstrate the habilitation candidate's ability to conduct independent research, and his or her contribution to the articles in question should be significant.

At least one of the five articles mentioned above must be a single-author publication by the candidate. The other articles should not have more than the usual number of authors for publications in the respective discipline (approx. two to three authors). In the case of publications with more authors, the candidate must state detailed grounds to illustrate his or her contribution. For co-authored papers, detailed information should be provided on the nature of the candidate's contribution and, if necessary, the Habilitation Committee can request confirmation by the co-authors that the information provided is accurate.

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Any additional single-author publications by the applicant shall be given special weight: Two single-author publications shall be considered equivalent to three co-authored publications.

### *7. Time frame*

The five academic papers required should have been accepted for publication no more than ten years ago. Older papers are weighted lower, based on a ratio of one to three.

### *8. Transitional provisions*

The legitimate expectations of habilitation candidates who can prove that they have relied on previous regulations shall be protected.

### *9. Regulations for non-cumulative habilitation theses (monographs)*

Candidates who have agreed with their supervisor to produce a monograph thesis should also have a record of academic papers published in high-quality periodicals.

In contrast to a cumulative habilitation, authors of a monograph habilitation thesis only need a lower number of papers in business administration periodicals regarded as very good by the international scientific community, e.g. in the form of pre-publication articles. The specifications given above apply analogously.