Dnr: U 2016/67

General Syllabus for Degree of Doctor in African Languages

The syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Arts at Gothenburg University on 9 June 2016. It is complemented with the following documents, available via the website of the Faculty of Arts (www.hum.gu.se).

Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts.


Title of qualification and description of subject

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy in African Languages is to be awarded upon successful completion of the third-cycle programme specified herein. The research in African languages covers both linguistic and sociolinguistic description and analysis. The research is mainly based on field studies.

1. Objectives

1.1 General national objectives

According to the Qualifications Ordinance, Appendix 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the objectives for the Degree of Doctor are as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

For the Degree of Doctor, the third-cycle student shall:

– demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and

– demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For the Degree of Doctor, the third-cycle student shall:

– demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically,
– demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work,

– demonstrate through a thesis the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his/her own research,

– demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society at large,

– demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and

– demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

Judgment and approach
For the Degree of Doctor, the third-cycle student shall:

– demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and

– demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

2. Entry requirements
Admission to the programme requires that the applicant fulfil the general and specific entry requirements provided in Chapter 7 of the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance.

2.1 General entry requirements
A person meets the general entry requirements under Chapter 7, Section 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance if he or she:

1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification, or

2. has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 higher education credits of which at least 60 higher education credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or

3. has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

2.2 Specific entry requirements
Admission to the third-cycle programme in African Languages requires

1. 30 higher education credits in a linguistics-oriented subject area in the second cycle, at least 15 of which must be from a degree project, or equivalent knowledge, and

2. the type(s) of English skills needed to be able to benefit from compulsory coursework, actively participate in seminars etc.

3. Admission and selection
Admission to third-cycle studies in African Languages is normally initiated by the
Department announcing a call for doctoral studentships. Admission is conditional upon the studies being properly funded.

In selecting between applicants, their ability to benefit from the study programme shall be taken into account in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. To facilitate the selection process, the applicant must submit:

1. Theses, degree projects and any publications. These are assessed based on the following criteria:
   a) ability to autonomously identify and formulate relevant problems,
   b) ability to conduct an argumentation with consideration of the tenacity of the arguments,
   c) application of scientific concepts in conjunction with the analysis of the processed data,
   d) independence and originality.

2. A project draft (max 5-7 pages) in which the applicant stipulates a research domain that he/she would like to develop, justifies its relevance and discusses which theories, methods and materials would be relevant. The project draft is assessed based on the following criteria:
   a) ability to formulate research questions/scientific problems,
   b) independence and originality,
   c) familiarity with previous and current research in the area,
   d) whether the formulated problems are linked to current research and whether they are relevant in relation to the opportunities presented by the material,
   e) whether the described methods for collection and analysis of data are adequate, and
   f) whether the draft is deemed realistic with respect to feasibility within the framework of the programme.

The project draft must indicate that the applicant has sufficient proficiency in relevant languages to be able to participate actively and successfully in seminars, fieldwork etc. The project draft also forms a basis for assessment of the Department’s supervisory competence within the indicated research area.

Admission and selection are also conditional on the Department’s supervisory resources within the third-cycle student’s research focus. Admission may also include interviews in addition to a review of qualifications submitted. Admission decisions are made by the Head of Department following preparation at the Department.

**4. Programme disposition and content**

The third-cycle programme in African Languages leading to a Degree of Doctor comprises 240 higher education credits. There is the option to obtain a Degree of Licentiate after 120
higher education credits providing the requirements specified in the general syllabus for a Licentiate degree in African Languages are fulfilled.

The programme consists partly of courses, which are examined incrementally, and partly of own research work, which is to lead to the presentation of a scholarly thesis.

The student shall participate in seminar activities within the confines of her or his education. He/she shall also participate in Department-wide activities, unless there are special reasons.

4.1 Courses

Compulsory courses, 52.5 higher education credits

a) African Languages, Theory (or equivalent), 7.5 higher education credits

b) Comparative Linguistics and Language Typology (or equivalent), 7.5 higher education credits

c) African Language Structures, 7.5 higher education credits, or Historical Linguistics, 7.5 higher education credits

d) Methodology and Fieldwork (or equivalent), 15 higher education credits

e) Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Basic Course, 5 higher education credits

f) Academic Writing, 7.5 higher education credits

g) Research Practice, 2.5 higher education credits

Elective courses, 7.5 higher education credits

The courses can be selected from the faculty- and department-wide courses, or courses at other higher education institutions. The basic course in teaching and learning in higher education (5 higher education credits) should be completed during the first year of the programme.

If a third-cycle student requests credit transfer from previous education, this shall be specified in the individual study plan (see 6.1).

4.2 Doctoral thesis

The doctoral thesis comprises 180 higher education credits. It can be designed as a monograph or a compilation thesis. A licentiate thesis can be included as part of a doctoral thesis, in revised or unaltered form.

The doctoral student is expected to provide regular reports on her or his thesis work. This obligation is primarily fulfilled through presentation at Department seminars.

For more information, see Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts.

The doctoral thesis is defended at a public defence seminar. Both the content and defence are considered in the assessment of the thesis. The thesis is graded with one of the grades Pass or Fail.

5. Supervision

At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each third-cycle student: one principal
supervisor and one assistant supervisor. At least one of the supervisors must be employed at the University of Gothenburg, normally at the third-cycle student’s home Department. At least one of the supervisors must be qualified for appointment to a readership (Docent) and at least one of the supervisors must have completed supervisor training.

The third-cycle student is entitled to supervision at least as stipulated by the standard adopted by the Faculty Board (see Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts).

A third-cycle student who so requests is entitled to change supervisors.

6. Individual study plan
In connection with admission, an electronic individual study plan shall be drawn up by the third-cycle student and his/her supervisors in consultation with the doctoral examiner. The document must be finalised no later than two months after commencement of studies.

The individual study plan shall be reviewed at least once a year. The review shall clearly identify the third-cycle student’s progression.

6.1 Credit transfer
When the individual study plan has been established, the third-cycle student may request that credits be transferred from past successfully completed second- or third-cycle education. Credits applied to fulfil the general or specific entry requirements may not also be applied towards the third-cycle degree, but must be replaced with another course. In addition, the following applies:

(i) A third-cycle student who has successfully completed a second-cycle course that is included as a compulsory or elective course at third-cycle level may request that the course be replaced with another course of the same extent in the individual study plan. This does not affect the duration of the programme for the Degree of Doctor.

(ii) A third-cycle student who has completed part of his/her third-cycle education while he/she was enrolled as a third-cycle student at another higher education institution or in another subject may request that the part be applied directly to her or his degree without replacements. This reduces the duration of the study programme for a Degree of Doctor in proportion to the credits transferred.

6.2 Timetable and funding plan
The individual study plan shall include a timetable and associated funding plan for the entire period of study, up to the date planned for the public defence of the thesis.

7. Transitional provisions
Third-cycle students admitted before 1 June 2016 may, following consultation with supervisors and the doctoral examiner, request permission from the Head of Department to transfer this programme syllabus. The individual plan must then be updated.