

## Guidelines for 50- and 90-percent Seminars

These guidelines have been adopted by the Research Committee at MF Norwegian school of Theology, Religion and Society based on the Regulations for the degree philosophiae doctor (Ph.D.) at the MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society § 9, second paragraph.

### § 9-2. Mid-term evaluation

*A mid-term evaluation of the doctoral work should normally take place in the third or fourth semester. The candidate must present his/her work and be evaluated by a group of at least two people appointed by the institution. The evaluation group must decide on the academic status and progress of the doctoral work, and must give feedback to both the candidate, the supervisor and the institution.*

*If the evaluation group reports of significant weaknesses in the research work, measures must be taken to correct the situation.*

*For candidates who have been admitted to a PhD program at the institution before this provision comes into force, the mid-term evaluation is voluntary.*

### Part A – 50 Percent Seminar/Midterm Evaluation

#### *1. About the mid-term evaluation in general*

The mid-term evaluation is for all PhD candidates admitted to MF. The evaluation is normally led by the prorektor. This evaluation is also referred to as a "50 percent seminar".

#### *2. Date of the mid-term evaluation*

The mid-term evaluation of the doctoral work should normally take place in the third or fourth semester. For candidates with a 3-year contract, the mid-term evaluation will be when they have three semesters left of their PhD period. If the work period is altered, the timing of the evaluation is also altered accordingly.

### *3. The evaluation group*

The main supervisor is normally included in the evaluation group. The group consists of the supervisor(s) and one reader who is not connected to the project. As a rule, the reader will hold a PhD or equivalent. Readers cannot later be appointed to the final assessment committee.

### *4. Implementation of the mid-term evaluation*

The mid-term evaluation is carried out on the basis of the following material:

- Draft of the thesis structure
- Started monograph, chapter of analysis or article draft

This material should be available for the evaluation group no later than three weeks before the seminar.

The participants in the seminar discuss the project while there is still opportunity to correct and develop all the elements in the research design and its internal consistency. Suggestions for how the work can be developed and strengthened should be addressed.

The candidate begins the seminar by giving a brief summary and situational description of the dissertation project.

The reader discusses the project's strengths and any ambiguities and weaker aspects, and gives critical and constructive input on how the quality of the project can be strengthened. Particular emphasis is placed on:

- the PhD project's location in the relevant research field and its contribution to this field, as well as the project's practical value/consequences
- any research ethical challenges, trade-offs and choices
- progress in the project

### *5. Responsibilities:*

*The candidate's tasks are to*

- send the material to the PhD coordinator, vice-rector, supervisor(s) and reader no later than three weeks before the seminar
- give a presentation of their work and progress lasting no longer than 10 minutes

*The PhD coordinator's tasks are to*

- initiate the seminar
- make arrangements with the reader and main supervisor for the seminar

The *prorector's* task is to:

- lead the seminar

*The main supervisor's tasks are to:*

- ensure that the reader's input is followed up in the further supervision
- send confirmation to the PhD coordinator that the seminar has been completed

The *Reader's tasks are to*

- read the work, reflect on and evaluate it, and give constructive feedback that supports further work
- use the main part of the seminar for this conversation, but also give others present an opportunity to ask questions and make comments

## *6. Key questions and follow-up*

Relevant questions to be addressed at the mid-term evaluation include:

- Are you satisfied with the progress?
- What positive aspects do you see in the work that has been done so far?
- What possible problems do you see for progress and quality?
- How do you think these can be resolved?
- What does it take to submit the PhD thesis within the given time frame?

The discussions in the mid-term evaluation are treated confidentially. No minutes are kept of what is said. However, the prorector and MF will follow up any issues raised in the mid-term evaluations when deemed relevant or necessary.

## Part B - 90 Percent Seminar

### *1. General information about the 90-percent seminar*

The purpose of the 90-percent seminar is to assess the project in a final phase and evaluate an almost finished manuscript. The seminar gives the candidate the opportunity to present and discuss the project's results and findings. The 90-percent seminar should normally take place for all PhD candidates admitted to MF's PhD programme.

### *2. Date of the 90-percent seminar*

The seminar should be conducted during the final stages of the PhD work, preferably on the basis of a full draft of the dissertation.

### *3. Reader*

Prior to the seminar, the manuscript – the introduction and articles or a monograph - is assessed by a reader who has expertise in the area. The text should be available at the latest three weeks before the seminar. The seminar begins with the candidate giving a presentation of their work before the reader discusses the presented script with the candidate.

The reader must have a PhD degree, but does not need to be employed at an academic institution.

The reader will normally not be a member of the final evaluation committee.

### *4. Responsibilities:*

*The candidate's tasks are to*

- submit a complete thesis manuscript for the 90 percent seminar to the reader no later than three weeks before the seminar
- submit the text that forms the basis of the seminar to the supervisor(s).
- begin the seminar with a summary of the thesis work lasting no longer than 10 minutes

*The main supervisor's tasks are to*

- initiate the seminar and organize it
- make arrangements with a reader for the seminar
- lead the seminar
- ensure that the reader's input is followed up in the further supervision
- send confirmation to the PhD coordinator that the seminar has been completed

*The Reader's tasks are to*

- assess and give critical and constructive views, with the aim of giving the candidate opportunities to improve the work in the final phase and to prepare for the defense
- use the main part of the seminar for this conversation, but also give others present an opportunity to ask questions and make comments

*5. Key questions and follow-up*

Relevant questions to be addressed at the 90-percent seminar include:

- What positive aspects do you see in the work that has been done?
- What possible problems do you see in the work that has been done?
- How do you think these problems can be resolved and the thesis improved?
- What does it take to submit the PhD thesis within the given time frame?