

Guidelines for Ph.D. Projects

Prof. Dr. Rafael Biermann

1. Application:

- We expect students to apply with excellent M.A. exams and a proven record of academic achievement.
- An international background is very welcome. Theses can be written in English.
- The field of research needs to correspond to the academic profile of Prof. Biermann.
- Applicants should have a strong background in the discipline of International Relations, including theory and methods. If they come from other disciplinary backgrounds, the Faculty will require additional course work.
- All applications should be sent as hard copies to our secretariat (address: <http://www.powi.uni-jena.de/kontakt-ib.html>); please no email requests.
- Applications should contain:
 - Letter of interest
 - Research proposal (puzzle, guiding question, main argument, theoretical and methodological approach, timeline, financing options, 5-10 pp.)
 - Curriculum vitae (including all academic degrees with marks so far)
 - M.A. Thesis (electronic version sufficient)
 - Copies of university degrees
 - For non-natives: proof of capacity to draft a book-length academic publication in English (such as TOEFL)

2. Goals

- A focused, well-structured and intense Ph.D. of around three years, subdivided into meaningful phases to increase accountability and monitor progress
- Substantial mentoring of individual projects
- Embeddedness in the international as well as the local research community
- Page length between 200 and 350 pp. (longer manuscripts not accepted in view of later publication)

3. Start-up phase

- Intense cooperation on the research design
- Assistance in financing the project, be it via scholarship application (letter of recommendation), employment at the Department of Political Science, or otherwise
- Final decision on the project only after joint agreement on a substantial research proposal

- Start-up phase ends with Ph.D. candidate and professor agreeing on the research design (Exposé) and signing the official mentoring agreement of Jena University (<http://www.iga.uni-jena.de/Betreuungsvereinbarung.290.0.html>). The mentoring agreement is obligatory for all Ph.Ds.
- Please familiarize yourself early with the guiding documents of Jena University, especially with the “Promotionsordnung”. All relevant documents can be retrieved from the Webpage of Prof. Biermann.

4. Research Proposal (Exposé)

- Including a puzzle, relevance of the topic, literature review, theoretical approach, methods used, structure of the Thesis (including envisaged pages per chapter), timeline
- Discussed and improved individually with the professor step by step

5. Research process

- Research progress will be closely monitored by
 - presentation and in-depth discussion of the research progress two times a year within two Early Career Workshops we hold for all of our Ph.D. candidates in March (Volkenroda in Eastern Thuringia) and in October (Jena) each year – these workshops are obligatory and are open to others considering a Ph.D.
 - submission of a short progress report before each presentation, including achievements, but also (personal) shortfalls and hurdles and specific goals with deadlines for the next phase
 - individual feedback and one-on-one meetings with the professor discussing progress and the way ahead
- A second reader should be chosen as early as possible to profit from his or her expertise during the Ph.D. project. The reader should be a professor. He or she can come from Jena or from other national or international universities. If the project is interdisciplinary in nature, a professor from another discipline might be integrated. This needs to be closely coordinated with Prof. Biermann.
- You do not have to attend classes during your PhD, except if you have to catch up on some topics.
- In case of insufficient progress not related to *force majeure* the professor reserves the right to end the project after close consultation.

6. Handing in your dissertation

- Please coordinate well ahead with Prof. Biermann when to hand in your dissertation.
- The Faculty decides whether to accept a dissertation. Applications cannot be handled during the semester break, except for advance applications being forwarded to the Faculty during the preceding semester.

- Expect several months to pass before you get your final grade.
- The disputation usually focuses on your PhD topic. First and second reader plus a chair from another institute of the faculty attend. You can also invite family and colleagues.
- Jena University does not pay for second readers to come to Jena for the final Ph.D. disputation.

5. Further Expectations and Offers

- Presentation of your Ph.D. project outline at an international conference in order to get feedback from peers and network with those working in your field. Subsequently, if possible once a year presentation of the research at a conference on the Ph.D. candidate's initiative
- Stimulation to start publishing before turning in the dissertation
- Expectation to teach a class at our Department's B.A. or M.A. program in International Relations, primarily on the Ph.D. topic; first time coaching by or co-teaching with an experienced faculty member
- Involvement in the Institute's projects according to one's own availability and interest, including *inter alia* participation in or initiation of externally funded research projects, joint publications, conferences, lectures in our double diploma in Kiev etc.
- Support to do some of the Ph.D. research abroad, both short-term or longer-term
- Invitation of guest lecturers upon your initiative, in particular on <our Ph.D. topic
- Options to recommend books of general interest for the Institute's library, which might also be utilized for the Ph.D.
- Support on organizing field trips