



PhD in Nursing Sciences

# Milestones of your thesis

For PhDs who enrolled at the UNIL-FBM  
from Autumn 2021

## **Doctoral School FBM - Thesis Office**

E-mail: [iufrs@unil.ch](mailto:iufrs@unil.ch)

Telephone: 021 314 85 31

Website: <https://www.unil.ch/eoledoctoralefbm/nursingsciences>

## **Postal Address:**

IUFRS (Institut universitaire de formation et  
de recherche en soins)

Ecole doctorale FBM

Bâtiment Proline

Bureau 174

Route de la Corniche 10

1010 Lausanne

## **1. This booklet is intended for PhD students who enrolled officially at the UNIL-FBM from Autumn 2021**

Welcome! The present document summarizes the necessary steps to complete a PhD in Nursing Sciences at the University of Lausanne **in accordance with the Rules updated in 2021**. We recommend that you download this document from our website, so that you are able to use the clickable links: <https://www.unil.ch/ecoledoctoralefbm/home/menuinst/doctorate/phd-in-nursing-sciences/rules--forms.html>

## **2. Following registration**

Each PhD student has a thesis committee that follows her/his progress during the thesis period. The committee's composition must be communicated to the Doctoral School at the latest one semester following your registration, and selected by common consent between the thesis director and yourself.

### **The committee includes:**

1. The thesis director (and co-directors, if applicable).
2. Two experts, with at least one employed outside of the Department of your thesis director. The experts should not have a collaboration on the thesis project. *Note that for the final thesis defence, at least one expert of the Jury will have to be from outside the University of Lausanne; this can either be a member of the thesis committee or you can have an additional expert fulfilling this requirement.*
3. The president (nominated by the Doctoral School).

## **3. At the end of the 1st semester**

A short **report** summarizing the thesis subject. The report must be send to the **Program Coordinator**.

## **4. At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year**

- Compile and complete the ECTS documents related to your doctoral program. A minimum of 2 ECTS have to be obtained by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of your thesis
- Write an **annual report** which summarises the activities carried out during the year, dissemination activities, learning activities, planned activities, etc
- Forward all the documents by mail, in PDF with all the relevant documents merged in the appropriate order to iufrs@unil.ch or to the [\*\*Program Coordinator\*\*](#).

## **5. Mid-thesis exam**

The mid-thesis evaluation must be held at the latest two years following the start of the PhD Assistant contract or 3 semesters after the official enrolment date. During this exam, the student presents the progress of her/his research project in front of the thesis committee.

The PhD student, together with the thesis director(s) and committee members (including the president), choose an examination date.

At least one month prior to the mid-thesis exam, you should forward the following information to the **Doctoral School** and to all the members of the thesis committee:

- The mid-term report presenting the results and research progress (max. 20 pages, double-spaced, 30 references max.).

You will find more details (exam duration, format of the report...), in Form D472 Structure of the thesis protocol submitted

## **6. End of the program**

You need to fulfil the following program requirements: minimum 12 ECTS. Please forward the documents for validation of courses at any time during your thesis, but **at the latest** 4 weeks before depositing the thesis manuscript to the IUFERS Secretary's Office (=manuscript for the oral private exam) by e-mail, in PDF with all the relevant documents merged in the appropriate order.

## **7. Are you ready to defend your thesis?**

In brief, you will have to write your thesis and then defend it at the “Examination session” session in front of your selected jury (see below). If you pass, you will then be allowed to present you research in a format accessible to non-scientists in front of a public audience. At this point, the jury will give a formal final evaluation considering these four points:

1. Scientific Value
2. Quality of Presentation
3. General comments
4. Change requests

The thesis defence usually takes place in the **3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year** of enrolment in the program, providing that the minimum 12 ECTS of coursework have been obtained and the mid-thesis exam has been successfully passed. It is the responsibility of the PhD student together with the thesis director to determine if a sufficient amount of work, of publication quality, has been completed in order to start the end of thesis process.

### **A. Thesis format**

Consult the Thesis Formatting Section (below) to duly organize and format the thesis document.

## **B. Select your jury**

A thesis jury needs to have minimum of 4 members and maximum of 6 and should include:

- The thesis director (and co-directors, if applicable)
- Two (or three, see page 2, chapter 2.2) experts, with at least one coming from outside the University of Lausanne. *Note that none of the experts can have collaborated in the thesis project or published with you.*
- The jury president (nominated by the Doctoral School at the beginning of the thesis to chair the thesis committee).

Email all jury members to coordinate a date for the Examination session. Once the date is fixed, reserve a room to hold the Examination session. The composition of the jury, as well as the date and location of the exam should be announced to the thesis office ([phdthesis@unil.ch](mailto:phdthesis@unil.ch)) at least **5 weeks prior to the private thesis defence.**

## **C. Before the private defense (Art. 6 of the 2021 Directives pour l'obtention du grade de doctorat ès sciences infirmières**

You will need to send the following documents to the thesis office **at least 8 weeks before the Examination session:**

- A paper copy of the thesis to send to the president OR the confirmation that the president of the thesis jury only requires the electronic version. In any case, please send a PDF version of your thesis to the IUFRS ([iufrs@unil.ch](mailto:iufrs@unil.ch))
- An updated version of your CV, including the list of publications, communications and conferences related to the thesis project
- Two one-page summaries of the thesis, one in English and one in French. Each summary must be written on a separate page and include the title of the thesis, the name of the PhD student and the name of the host department of the thesis project.
- A one-page summary of the thesis written for the public, in French (please do not forget to translate the title of the thesis into French).
- The Report with the credits obtained during the PhD (has to be requested at the latest 4 weeks before the deposit of the thesis manuscript for the private defence to [program.ls@unil.ch](mailto:program.ls@unil.ch))
- Along with the items in this checklist: **click here.**

At the same time, send a copy of the thesis to all jury members.

The IUFRS will send an e-mail to the jury, with the PhD candidate in copy (Cc) asking them to send their report to the president at least one week before the Examination session. On this report, they will evaluate the format and contents of the thesis and indicate whether they consider the thesis eligible for attributing a PhD degree. The president of the jury will send these reports to the IUFRS after the Examination session.

After receiving the thesis, the Doctoral School will send a request of payment for the **exam's registration** (500 CHF) to the student's private postal address.

## **8. Examination session**

During the Examination session, your knowledge in the thesis field will be evaluated.

The defence (1-2 hours) will be conducted in the following order:

- 30 minutes oral presentation by the PhD student
- 2 rounds of questions from the experts
- Deliberation by the jury

The language of the thesis defence should be either English or French;

During the deliberation, the jury evaluate three aspects of the thesis:

- The research work (skills and autonomy of the PhD candidate; originality of the PhD project)
- The format and writing style of the thesis
- The private examination, including presentation skills and responses to questions posed by the jury members

Given that you have successfully passed the Examination session, you need to fix a date for the public thesis defence, together with the jury members (at least the jury president and thesis director require to be present). The public defence should take place a **minimum 3 weeks following the private exam**. Once the date is agreed upon, to the IUFRS will reserve an auditorium to hold the public defence and announce the location, date and time to the thesis office ([phdthesis@unil.ch](mailto:phdthesis@unil.ch)).

If the jury requires corrections to your thesis, the document completed during the Examination session (the “procès verbal”) should specify it. The thesis director is the person who is responsible for checking your corrections. Your thesis director has to receive the corrections, and announce to the IUFRS that the new version of the thesis is acceptable in its revised form, **at least one week before the public defence**.

The **electronic final version of the thesis** should be handed to the president of the jury, **prior to the public defence**.

## **9. Public Defence**

As indicated beforehand, the public thesis defence takes place at least **3 weeks following the Examination session and at the latest 3 months after the Examination session**. At the end of the public defence, the members of the jury decide whether the thesis is judged as acceptable (“réussi”) or not (“pas réussi”). If the judgement is positive, you will receive the “imprimatur” page (official approval that the thesis can be printed) from the jury president, a copy of this page needs to be included in all final copies of the thesis.

## 10. After the public defence

### A. Bound copies of the thesis document

After the public defence, you have a *maximum of six months* to prepare official bound copies (see Thesis Formatting Section below) of the thesis document and distribute them as follows:

- 1 copy for the Doctoral School to be sent to the thesis office
- 1 copy for the department where the research was done
- 1 copy for the thesis director
- 1 copy for each member of the jury. You do not need to send a copy to the president, unless she/he requests it
- 3 copies for the BCUL (Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire Lausanne), one of them with a summary of the thesis in English. These 3 copies for the BCUL should be accompanied by a form available on our website [here](#).

Please note that **PhD students have to remain enrolled at the University of Lausanne** until the thesis has been deposited to the BCUL and to the Doctoral School.

### B. On-line publication of the thesis

The thesis can be published on-line at the University of Lausanne, through the [SERVAL website](#).

### C. Order your diploma

Fill in the on-line form “Application de commande électronique de grade” available [here](#). An intermediate official certificate, indicating that a PhD has been awarded, will be sent out by the IUFRS.

## How to format your thesis

### A. General formatting requirements for the final thesis version

Some general advice from the “Directive de la Direction 3.10. Impression, dépôt et publication des thèses de doctorat”:

- A4 format, 29.7 x 21 cm
- Double-sided printing
- Paper 80 gr/m<sup>2</sup>
- 40 lines/page maximum
- 15 mm external margin minimum

- Clean presentation of text, pictures and tables, without corrections
- Front cover of the thesis in white cardstock (130 - 180 gr/m<sup>2</sup>); the official title cover is available [here](#)
- The official title page, identical to the front cover of the thesis, but printed on paper (80 gr/m<sup>2</sup>), with the possibility to include supplementary logos
- An exact reproduction of the “imprimatur” is printed at the back of the second title page (attributed by the thesis jury)
- Please note that the binding of the document cannot be done with rings or plastic

The doctoral student deposits copies of his/her thesis at his/her own expense as follows

The Doctoral School of the Faculty of Biology and Medicine (1 copy)

The archives of the department where the work was done (1 copy),

The thesis director and/or co-director (1 copy),

Members of the Jury (1 copy each),

Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire - Lausanne (BCU Lausanne) (3 copies of which 1 copy with the English abstract is for the Bibliothèque, 2 copies are intended for the department, if necessary, for the making of copies).

It is not compulsory to deposit a copy of the thesis with the President of the Jury, unless the latter expressly wishes to do so.

### **B. How to organize a thesis with published articles**

An article-based thesis must include a minimum of three articles that have been submitted to international journals with editorial policy, of which at least one has been one of which has been accepted for publication. Only if your contribution is significant, the article will be considered as part of your thesis. The advantage of a thesis written with articles is that articles can replace the chapters of the results section.

**Important note on self-plagiarism:** The sections indicated hereafter with “→” must reflect the individual PhD student's original work, and not be a replication of text available in other articles/manuscripts even if authored or co-authored by the PhD student. Indeed, articles are very often a multi-author work, therefore using blocks of text of other articles in these sections of your thesis, which is a single author work, is considered as (self-) plagiarism. Briefly referring to other articles, with proper citation, is evidently permitted if it contributes to the overall understanding (also refer to the UNIL Directives 0.3 and 0.3bis)

A thesis with articles should be structured as follows (Annexe II des Directives 2021 pour l’obtention du grade de doctorat ès sciences infirmières):

- All manuscripts of articles accepted or published in the course of study and relating specifically to the subject of the thesis must be included in the body of the thesis in order to be taken into account in the final examination of the thesis. Articles that are not part of the thesis will not be evaluated. It is therefore necessary to think of the thesis in terms of these insertions and to organize the structure of the thesis accordingly.

- In the case of a thesis by articles, the doctoral student must respect the following indications:
- The thesis must form a coherent and non-repetitive whole and cannot be a simple collection or juxtaposition of articles. The text and presentation of each article must be adapted accordingly. This means that the articles should be presented as manuscripts and not as reprints or photocopies of publications.
- Articles must have been prepared or published during the course of the thesis work, as part of the research undertaken specifically for the doctoral degree.
- The doctoral student must be the first author of each article.
- If the article is written by several authors, the doctoral student must have contributed at least half of the work presented in the article.
- If the article is written by more than one author, an authorisation signed by authors authorising the insertion of the article in the thesis and stipulating the type of contribution of each author is necessary
- The form <Authorisation for publication by co-authors> is available at the secretariat of the Commission for the Doctorate in Nursing.

The body of the thesis and the published articles are in principle in the same language. The body of the thesis and the articles may be in a different language provided that there is a summary of the articles in the other language.

When articles are inserted, certain parts of the thesis should be given special attention:

- The introduction and conclusion must be written in such a way as to highlight the coherence of the approach of the thesis with articles.
- Each article must be preceded by its title and a summary in French. This rule also applies to publication in English.
- As an indication, the articles usually reinforce the theoretical sections, or the results.

theoretical sections, or the results. This remains a decision under the responsibility of the doctoral student, his/her supervisor and possible co-supervisor.

- In all theses with articles, a complete problematic and a discussion of the results must be present.

### **C. How to organize a thesis without published articles**

**(“Annexe II des Directives 2021 pour l’obtention du grade de doctorat ès sciences infirmières (PhD)”):**

This type of thesis should be structured as follows:

- Front cover of the thesis in cardstock (130 - 180 gr/m<sup>2</sup>); the official title cover is available [here](#)
- The official title page, identical to the front cover of the thesis, but printed on paper (80 gr/m<sup>2</sup>)
- An exact reproduction of the Imprimatur page is printed at the back of the second title page (attributed by the thesis jury)
- Acknowledgements (max 1 page)
- Abstract (in English & French, max 1 page)
- Table of Contents



- List of Figures in order of appearance in the text
- List of Tables in order of appearance in the text
- List of illustrations in order of appearance in the text
- List of acronyms in order of appearance in the text
- Introduction
- Chapter I: Issues
- Chapter II: Critical analysis of the literature
- Chapter III: Theoretical framework and disciplinary anchoring. Chapters II and III can be part of the same chapter.
- Chapter IV: Method
- Chapter V: Results
- Chapter VI: Discussion
- References Annexes (including data collection instruments and ethics commission the ethics commission).

Please **keep in mind the following points** when writing a thesis with or without articles:

- Make sure to acquaint yourself with the applicable regulations **on Copyright, Open Access & good writing practices**
- Please download the **thesis official title page** from **our website**.
- The imprimatur page has to immediately follow the title page in the final thesis version. This can be done by scanning the original imprimatur page and inserting it into the thesis document (please do not use a jpg-photo, the quality is not sufficient).
- A good introduction should show that you have acquired a broad knowledge of the previous and on-going research in your field, do not forget appropriate referencing.
- A good discussion should express critical thinking concerning what you have learned:
  - Discussing your results in light of other's results, making an overall analysis of the publications reviewed
  - Analysing the quality and limitations of the results
  - Formulating conclusions
  - Future perspectives

If you have questions regarding the format of your thesis, or the procedure, do not hesitate to contact the **Thesis Office** :

**[iufrs@unil.ch](mailto:iufrs@unil.ch)**

021 314 85 31

**<http://www.unil.ch/ecoledoctoralefbm/nursingsciences>**

**Postal Address:**

Institut universitaire de formation et de recherche en soins

Bâtiment Proline

Corniche 10

Bureau 174

1010 Lausanne

Ecole Doctorale

Faculté de biologie et de médecine

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Version December 2021. Only regulatory texts are authentic. All titles and functions may apply to both women and men.