INSTITUTE OF GLOBAL HEALTH

Doctoral Program (PhD) in Biomedical Sciences

GLOBAL HEALTH Track

HANDBOOK, September 2015

Academic Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

2015-2016 Academic Year
July 14th, 2015
These Guidelines and Procedures describe rules, regulations, policies, and procedures for the Doctoral Program in Biomedical Sciences, mention “Global Health” (PhD), as established by the Medical Faculty of Geneva and in accordance with the regulations of the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+).

Each student should become familiar with the material pertaining to this program, and together with a faculty advisor, make certain that the selected plan of study complies with the pertinent requirements.
# GENERAL INFORMATION

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Program Goal
The Institute of Global Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva in collaboration with the Swiss School of Public Health presents the first PhD track in global health created as a partly online distance program.

Formally known as the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, the Institute of Global Health was founded by Prof. Antoine Flahault in January 2014. Under his leadership, this innovative doctoral program was founded as a response to the urgent need of developing implementation research in the field of public and global health, utilizing a trans-disciplinary approach. The primary goal of the PhD in global health program is to train students to be able to bridge existing gaps between practical knowledge and academic and research skills in the field of global health. The PhD program combines both onsite and distance learning approaches allowing candidates to work in their respective countries.

Applicant profile
The PhD program is aimed at working professionals residing in Switzerland or abroad with the potential of becoming global health leaders, academics and researchers. The program does not exclude the potential of being a Geneva-based full-time PhD candidate, providing that (s)he is able to locate full scholarship covering living and working expenses. PhD candidates come from various health professional levels such as directors, mid-career managers and leaders in governmental/non-governmental health agencies, program officers, and other mid-level or senior managers working for foundations. The program also aims to include other public health professional such as entrepreneurs and individuals working in nontraditional settings.

The focus of the PhD program is to enable candidates who are working nationally and internationally as health professionals to develop implementation research by further strengthening their academic and research skills. Therefore, the PhD curriculum is not only relevant to all health professionals at all career levels in the global context, it is ideal for those who wish to broaden and deepen their understanding of health applying the global health approach.

Program Governance
All responsibility for the academic conduct, standards, and requirements of the doctoral program rests with the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva, through its duly appointed and elected officers and representatives, in accordance with internal directives and university policies.

All PhD candidates must register and become members of the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+) and are required to adhere to the rules and regulations of SSPH+

The Director of the PhD program
The Director who chairs the Steering Committee of the PhD program, is responsible for all academic and administrative affairs of the program, including administration of academic conduct, standards, and requirements. In addition, the Director is responsible for recommending admissions, financial support, matching advisors with students, approving PhD dissertation committee chairs and members, advising these committees on interpretation of policies and requirements, ruling on all petitions in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the Medical Faculty of the University of Geneva and those of the SSPH+, and fulfilling any other administrative duties or responsibilities delegated by the Dean of the Medical Faculty.
**Steering Committee: Permanent members**

The Steering committee of the PhD program in Global Health is chaired by the Director of the program, and is an advisory board recommending and advising the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine with regard to all issues related to the PhD Program (e.g., selection of applicants to the program, validation of doctoral committees, validation of theses jury for defenses). The permanent members are:

Prof Antoine Flahault (chair)  
Director of the Institute of Global Health  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof Antoine Geissbühler  
Departement of radiology and medical informatics  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof François Chappuis  
Departement of community health  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof Alain Gervaix  
Departement of Pediatrics  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof Didier Pittet  
Departement of Medical specialities  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

**Steering Committee: Invited Members**

The Steering committee of the PhD program in Global Health is completed by 10 invited members. They participate to all debate and discussions of the Steering Committee, with the same level of interaction and power as for permanent members. The invited members are:

Prof Nicolas Levrat  
Global Studies Institute  
University of Geneva

Prof Ilona Kickbusch  
Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies  
Geneva

Prof Doris Schopper  
CERAH (Geneva Centre for education and research in humanitarian action)  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva and Graduate Institute Geneva

Prof Clara James  
IR-HEdS (Institut de Recherche de la Haute Ecole de Santé)  
Geneva

Prof Fred Paccaud  
Institute of Social and preventive Medicine, University of Lausanne  
Dean of the Ecole romande de santé publique

Prof Dominique Sprumont  
Director of the « l’Institut de Droit de la Santé »  
University of Neuchâtel
General information

Prof. Matthias Egger
Director of ISPM
University of Bern

Prof. Gérard Escher
President Advisor
Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne
Prof. Suzanne Babich
Université of Indiana, USA

Prof. Rajae El Aouad
Vice President for Research, Université Mohammed VI
Casablanca, Maroc

Coordinating Committee
The Coordinating committee of the PhD program in Global Health is in charge of the practical application of the decisions made by the Steering Committee and ensures direct contact with all applicants and registered students. The coordinating committee is chaired by the coordinator of the program. Coordinating committee members includes:

Dr Nadia Elia, coordinator
Institute of Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Dr Nathalie Bot, assistant coordinator
Institute of Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Ms Florence Walker, administrative assistant
Institute of Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Ms Lemlem Girmatsion, administrative assistant
Institute of Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof Emiliano Albanese
Institute of Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Dr Silvia Stringhini
IUMSP
Faculty of Medicine, University of Lausanne

Dr Yves Jackson
University Hospitals of Geneva
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Dr Idris Guessous
University Hospitals of Geneva
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva

Prof Benedetta Allegranzi
WHO
Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva
Application to the doctoral program

Deadline for online application to the program is on April 15th of each year.

Each application will be evaluated in detail by 2 members of the steering committee and 2 members of the coordinating committee. A selection meeting will be held during the month of June and after validation of the selection by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, selected applicants will be contacted no later than June 30th. In the meantime, applicants can be contacted by email, or through online discussions with a member of the steering committee and/or the coordinating committee for further details on their profile or their research project.

Admission Requirements

The application to the PhD in Global Health have to:

• hold a master’s degree from a Swiss University or abroad, or a Swiss High School (Haute école suisse), or any other degrees accepted by the Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Geneva, Switzerland.
• have several years of post-graduate work experience in the field of global health. Although all applicants are expected to hold one of the academic criteria stated above, Professional work experience is highly regarded.
• be employed and a written letter of support must be provided from the employer.
• submit a project proposal, or at least an advanced idea of the project for the PhD thesis.
• produce a support letter from an identified thesis supervisor (professor or “maître d'enseignement et de recherche (MER)” grade) from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva
• be fluent in english

Also note: Students without a master in global health, or a master in public health, may be required to complete additional courses prior to or during the early phase of the program. This has to be defined together with the director of the program (example of courses that may be required or strongly encouraged are courses in Biostatistics, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Health Administration, Economics, Law, and Social and Behavioral Science). These additional courses take form of either:

• Pre-request. These courses should not be credited more than 30 ECTS and must be completed before the beginning of the PhD program in order to be admitted to the program.
• Co-request. These courses should not be credited more than 6 ECTS and should be followed and successfully assessed in the time delay decided at the admission to the program.

Failure to achieve both the pre-request and /or the co-request courses will lead to non-admission into the PhD program.

Registration to the University of Geneva and Swiss Schools of Public Health (SSPH+)

Once applicants have been accepted to the PhD program, they are required to start the process of enrollment to the University of Geneva and the registration to SSPH+.

PhD Supervision

Upon admission into the PhD program, before enrollment, students need to identify and have an agreement with a thesis supervisor who must be a faculty member (with Professor or MER grade) from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva. See below, the following link to a list of potential faculty supervisors.

Although a co-supervisor is optional, it is strongly recommended in case where research work is to be conducted abroad, particularly in Low and middle income countries (LMICs) or if the co-supervisor field of expertise is being necessary for the thesis work progression.

The thesis supervisor(s) will serve to guide the student in courses selections and meeting other requirements, that are program specific, such as assembling a doctoral committee by identifying two additional doctoral committee members. The final composition of the doctoral committee is required prior to registering to SSPH+, therefore the committee must be composed as soon as possible.

Faculty thesis supervisor(s) also provide guidance on the dissertation proposal, implementation and defense. In addition, the director of the PhD program and the coordinating committee can be contacted for any general academic or administrative issues.
Program Design

The PhD program lasts a minimum of three years and up to five years and consists of two parts:

1. courses requirements
   - 6 residential weeks
   - Online courses (MOOCs), and regular online meetings
   - 4 residential exams for the validation of online courses
   - 1 residential comprehensive exam

2. research requirements
   - A pre-doctorate thesis presentation
   - A doctoral thesis dissertation (including two scientific papers written as first author in peer-review journal, and an oral defense)

The first two years of the doctoral academic program should highly focus on the completion of all the mandatory requirements (residential weeks, online meetings, MOOCs, residential exams and comprehensive final exams). Although there is timing flexibility, the research project should be well defined by the end of the two years.

The third, fourth and fifth year will focus on research work and preparation of the PhD thesis. However, and within the first three years of matriculation, PhD candidates are expected to be ready to defend their dissertation.

Residential weeks

Each year, three different residential weeks are organized in collaboration with SSPH+. Each of these 3 one-week schools covers specific topics related to global health management (Methodology and Epidemiology during the Winter School, Global health during the Spring School, and Management in Healthcare and Health Economics during the Summer school).

PhD candidates should aim to complete this requirement within the first two years. In summary, each of the two years, the PhD candidates attend:
- The Winter school of Epidemiology; one week in Wengen, generally in January
- The Spring school of Global Health; one week in Geneva, generally in June
- The Summer school of Health Management and Health Economics; one week in Lugano, generally in late August

Each week follows similar format:

A total of two 3-day courses (2 ECTS credits) are to be chosen out of several proposed. Usually, the courses are given during the mornings (8 AM to 1 PM) leaving free afternoons either to work on the courses or for social, sport or cultural events. In the evenings, twice a week, a keynote lecture is proposed to the students.

During each residential week, a meeting with the coordination team and the course director will be held to give students opportunity to ask questions and clarify requirements.

Online courses and meetings

Throughout the year, student engage in learning activities through distant learning sessions and personal work. Upon invitation, the student connects regularly to peers by a dedicated web-platform (Adobe Connect). Typical connection times are 1-3 PM Geneva time.

Online courses are delivered according to the same 3 majors, namely:
- Methods for research (30 hours of workload (online and personal work))
- Global health (30 hours)
- Health leadership (30 hours)
In total, a commitment of 90 working hours is required for online courses.

Online courses take the form of 4 mandatory MOOCs: 2 chosen by the course director during the first year and 2 MOOCs chosen by the students themselves, after approval by the course director during the second year.

Typically, a MOOC (mandatory or chosen) should represent an average of 10 hours of online courses (about 2h per week) and 20 hours of personal work including article reading and online meeting preparation. A single MOOC represents a case study in which all aspects (methodology, global health and health leadership) are applied.

Each of the 2 mandatory MOOCs during the first year will be followed by a 3 hours online debriefing session which will summarize and situate the MOOC in terms of methodology, global health and health leadership perspectives, with dedicated guest lecturers.

Additionally, before each residential week, an online meeting of 2 hours will be dedicated to the preparation of the week. After each residential week, an online meeting of 2 hours will be dedicated to summarize and answer any question raised during the week.

Finally, 12 hours online-preparation to the final comprehensive exam will take place during the second year, in order to prepare students for the exam which will be held during the summer school in Lugano, as soon as all required ECTS credits are acquired.

Course attendance: Note that attendance at six residential weeks during years 1 and 2 of the program is mandatory. Should it be necessary, any of the courses can be postponed until the following year. Though, professional and personal obligations may conflict with the scheduled residential weeks, attending these important sessions should be made priority.

Similarly, attendance and punctuality at all online meetings and courses is required throughout year 1 and 2 of the PhD program. Students are expected to arrange vacation and work-related travel plans around the scheduled times.

Validation of the online (MOOCs) courses

Successful completion of each MOOC must be validated by:

- the existing validation procedure of the MOOC
- a written essay (continuous exam) during one of the residential week (1 hour written exam).

Following the first mandatory MOOC, to be taken between September and December, a one-hour written exam will be held during one of the afternoons during the Winter School in Wengen.

The second mandatory MOOC is to be taken between January and May and similarly, a one hour written exam will be held during one of the afternoons during the Spiring School in Geneva.

Pre-doctoral thesis presentation

During the Spring School, in the second year of the program, all students will be required to give an oral presentation of their pre-doctoral thesis in front of the Steering Committee of the PhD program. This step should be given all due consideration since it represents a crucial point before the finalization of the doctoral thesis. Candidates will be asked to send in a 5-10 pages summary of the pre-doctoral thesis one month prior to the Spring School. The submission will be reviewed and evaluated by the steering committee. After the doctoral presentation, the Steering Committee will send its recommendations to the doctoral committee and the student.

Comprehensive written exam

A final comprehensive written exam will be administered at the end of the second year, during the summer school in Lugano. The examination integrates key concepts from the overall program curriculum and takes the form of 3 hours written essay. The minimum requirement for a successful completion for this exam is 4/6 points. This examination is organised and evaluated by the Steering Committee.
Doctoral thesis dissertation

The PhD written dissertation is to be completed under the supervision of the thesis supervisor, together with the co-supervisor (if any) and the doctoral committee. The dissertation should demonstrate the candidate’s mastery of the skills and knowledge required to manage an important global health-related program. The dissertation should be the basis of at least two published papers (or fully accepted papers) as first author in the scientific peer-reviewed journal in one of the various fields of global health.

The thesis should be structured according to the following rules:

• An introduction of the research work
• The state-of-the-art in the research field
• A presentation of the published papers, with brief introduction and new additional information or supplementary materials if necessary
• Papers or accepted manuscripts: hard copies inserted as they are published.
• A general discussion
• Final concluding remarks
• References

The thesis can be written in French or in English. If written in English, 2 pages summary in French is required.

The PhD dissertation is evaluated by the thesis supervisor who will submit the manuscript to the Steering Committee together with a written report and a proposition of a Jury committee. The Jury committee should be composed of 4 members including the thesis director, a member of the Steering Committee, a member of the Décanat of the Faculty of Medicine and an external expert (chosen outside of the University of Geneva). The composition of the thesis Jury is to be approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. Once the Jury thesis composition is approved, the PhD thesis is sent to the Jury members. The Jury committee sends in a written report within 30 days after submission of the dissertation. The Jury may request for changes to be made before the oral defense. The dissertation may be rejected, should the jury request for major modifications. In this case, PhD candidate must resubmit the modified dissertation for a second evaluation. A second rejection will result in an automatic elimination from the PhD program.

Public oral thesis defense

The public oral defense is presented in front of the Jury chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. Upon positive evaluation by the Jury, and after validation by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, the doctoral student will be granted the title of Doctor in Biomedical science - Global Health of the University of Geneva.
Course program overview

The whole PhD program requires acquisition of a total of 20 ECTS credits distributed as followed:

Residential weeks (12 ECTS)
(Credit hours in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</th>
<th>Global health</th>
<th>Health Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winter School of Epidemiology (Wengen)</td>
<td>Spring School of Global Health (Geneva)</td>
<td>Summer School in Public health policy, economics and management (Lugano)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 x 3 days courses (2 ECTS)</td>
<td>2 x 3 days courses (2 ECTS)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</th>
<th>Global health</th>
<th>Health Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winter School of Epidemiology (Wengen)</td>
<td>Spring School of Global Health (Geneva)</td>
<td>Summer School in Public health policy, economics and management (Lugano)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 x 3 days courses (2 ECTS)</td>
<td>2 x 3 days courses (2 ECTS)</td>
<td>2 x 3 days courses (2 ECTS)</td>
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Distance-learning courses (8 ECTS)
(Credit hours in parentheses)

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<thead>
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<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Methodology for research</th>
<th>Global health</th>
<th>Health leadership</th>
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<tr>
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<td>(2 ETCS for the 2 years)</td>
<td>(2 ETCS for the 2 years)</td>
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<td>30h e-learning sessions or home-work (MOOC)</td>
<td>30h e-learning sessions or home-work (MOOC)</td>
<td>30h e-learning sessions or home-work (MOOC)</td>
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<table>
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<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Methodology for research</th>
<th>Global health</th>
<th>Health leadership</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30h e-learning sessions or home-work (MOOC)</td>
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<td>30h e-learning sessions or home-work (MOOC)</td>
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</table>

| Year 2 | Preparation to the comprehensive exam | |
|--------|--------------------------------------||
|        | (2 ECTS) | 6 x 2h e-learning session |
|        | 40 hours home-work | |

Four accredited MOOCs must be completed during the PhD program, after validation during residential weeks.
PRACTICAL ISSUES

Program Costs
Tuition fees at the University of Geneva are: 500 CHF the first and last semester, and 65 CHF the rest of the semesters.
Students are responsible for all associated travels, accommodations and meals costs during their stay in Switzerland.
Although there are no additional tuition fees for these mandatory residential courses, non Swiss residents are strongly encouraged to account for the anticipated costs prior to their acceptance into the program.

Technical considerations
We make substantial use of information technologies allowing PhD candidates and faculty to interact productively and share data. Students must do their best to have a DSL or cable Internet connection. Dial-up connections will not work with our technology.

Enrollment at the University of Geneva and at the SSPH+
Enrollment procedures at both the University of Geneva and the SSPH+ can be launched by the PhD applicant upon acceptance into the PhD program.

Enrollment procedures at the University of Geneva
The procedure for enrollement differs depending on whether the student has already been enrolled at the University of Geneva, or not.

If the student is already enrolled for a degree at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva:
The student has to go to the student secretary’s office (“secrétariat des étudiants”) of the Faculty of Medicine and register to the doctoral program in biomedical sciences (code: 24BIOMED).

Secrétariat des étudiants
Centre Médical Universitaire (CMU)
1 rue Michel Servet
1211 Genève 4
Tel. +41 22 379 50 82
Marie-France.Chatelain@unige.ch

If the student has already been enrolled once at the University of Geneva.
The student has to go to the registrar’s office (“service des admissions”) with
• The student card
• The letter of acceptance to the doctoral program, signed and bearing the stamps of the student secretary’s office of the Faculty of Medicine.

Service des admissions
Uni-Dufour
24, rue Général Dufour
2011, Genève 4
http://www.unige.ch/dife/admission.html

If the student has never been enrolled at the University of Geneva:
• The student has to Proceed to online enrollment,
• pay the enrollment fees of 65 CHF
• mail enrollment files by post to the registrar’s office
• Go in person, to the registrar’s office with his/her enrollment file, the letter of acceptance to the doctoral program, signed and bearing the stamps of the student secretary’s office and an ID.

For complete procedure visit the link provided:
http://www.unige.ch/dife/sinscrire/Immatenglish-1.html
Enrolment procedures to the SSPH+

Once enrolled, the students have to register also to the SSPH+. In order to register to the SSPH+, the applicant needs to additionally provide:

- An abstract of 250 words describing his/her research project and outlining the Global Health relevance of the topic.
- The list of planned PhD training activities (specifying ECTS), 6 residential weeks (12 ECTS) and distance learning courses, including 4 MOOCs selected after approval by the PhD Steering Committee (8 ECTS).

- Some students may be required to attend to additional courses. (see above: admission requirements).
- The names of the members of the doctoral committee which should be composed of at least three persons:
  - The supervisor,
  - The co-supervisor, if any
  - and/or one to two expert(s) of the research domain
  - Enrollment number provided by the University of Geneva
**FORMS**

**Required Forms**

A number of forms must be completed and submitted to the Institute of Global Health, University of Geneva, Switzerland during the doctoral program. All required forms are available on the website, with any additional information on request sent to the coordination team (email to: nathalie.bot@unige.ch). Students are responsible for initiating and ensuring the follow-up and sending in all relevant forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms</th>
<th>Filled after</th>
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<td>Thesis Committee Composition (proposal)</td>
<td>Assembling a thesis committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certificates of attendance to the residential weeks (with ECTS credits)</td>
<td>Each of the 6 residential weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of MOOC participation</td>
<td>Each MOOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Doctoral thesis oral presentation</td>
<td>Pre-doctorate thesis approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive exam</td>
<td>Comprehensive exam is passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis oral defense</td>
<td>Defending the final thesis dissertation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thesis Committee Composition**

Should be filed after assembling a thesis committee. The student is responsible for filing this form and sending the proposal to the coordinating committee. The doctoral committee must be approved by the Steering Committee. This should be done as soon as possible.

**Certificates of attendance to the 6 residential weeks.**

After each residential week, a copy of the original certificates of courses attendance should be sent in to the coordinating committee, and the original kept by the student.

**Certificates of MOOCs participation.**

A copy of the original certificate of success of each attended MOOC should be sent to the coordinating committee and the original kept by the student whether the outcome of the examination is a pass or fail.

**Pre-Doctoral thesis oral presentation approval**

Filed by the Steering Committee after defense of the thesis dissertation proposal (pre-doctorate examination), during the spring school of the 2nd year: the Director of the program (or steering committee) signs this form attesting successful achievement of the oral pre-doctorate thesis exam.

**Comprehensive Exam**

Filed after having passed the final comprehensive exam. The Director of the Program is responsible for validation of this exam.

**Thesis oral defense**

Filed by thesis jury after the final thesis has been defended. This form reports the results of the thesis defense, and is filed regardless of whether the outcome of the examination is a pass or fail.