

**THIS IS AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF A GERMAN TEXT. ONLY THE GERMAN  
VERSION IS LEGALLY BINDING.**

**Graduate School of North American Studies  
Academic Rules and Regulations**

**Preamble**

Pursuant to § 14 sec. 1 clause 1 and 2 of the partial basic regulations (Teilgrundordnung) of 27 October 1998 (FU – memoranda no. 24/1998) in connection with § 83 sec. 1 of the Berlin Universities Act (Berliner Hochschulgesetz – BerlHG) in the version of the public announcement of 13 February 2003 (GVBl. p. 81), amended by the Act of 06 July 2006 (GVBl. p.713), the counsel of the John F. Kennedy (central) Institute of North American Studies (counsel) has issued the following Academic Rules and Regulations for the Graduate School of North American Studies on 31 January 2007:

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## **§ 1 Scope of the Regulations**

These regulations specify admission requirements, application and selection procedure as well as content, structure, objectives, organization and study requirements for the Doctoral Program in North American Studies (doctoral studies) of the Graduate School of the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies (central institute) at the Dahlem Research School (DRS) of the Free University Berlin.

## **§ 2 Components and Objective of the Doctoral Program in North American Studies**

(1) The doctoral program consists of mentored academic research, especially for a dissertation, and course work according to § 9 section 1 and §§ 10 to 12.

(2) The Graduate School of North American Studies is designed to promote excellence in research. Both the mentoring program and the course requirements (according to § 9 section 1 and §§ 10 to 12 ) are designed to promote research skills.

In addition to developing research skills, students will be encouraged to develop expertise in the areas of teaching, academic management and in foreign languages relevant to their research.

The doctoral studies program is designed to prepare students for academic positions in universities, research institutes and other private and public institutions.

(3.) 3-year-scholarships are available for students of the Doctoral Program. Further details are set out in § 2 section 1 of the basic regulations for the Graduate School of North American Studies of the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin dated 31 January 2007.

## **§ 3 Admission Requirements, Application and Selection Procedures**

(1) The application deadline and the corresponding starting date for doctoral studies are determined by the executive board of the graduate school in accordance with the permanent commission of the Dahlem Research School (§ 5 of the regulations of the DRS).

(2) Applications must be received by the Graduate School by January 31 of each year. In justified exceptional cases, applications may be considered at another time if commencing studies is possible and reasonable at that time and if two university professors involved in the doctoral studies program give their approval.

(3) The executive board of the graduate school names an admissions committee for each round of application review. Its members are appointed by the executive board of the Graduate School on behalf of the Office of the President of the Free University (Freie Universität) Berlin.

The committee consists of:

- the representative for the doctoral studies as the committee chair
- the Executive Secretary as the vice chair
- a professor representing each department of the JFKI
- a graduate school student representative as adviser

- the gender ombudsperson as adviser

The university professors are nominated for two years, the student is nominated for one year.

#### (4) Formal admission requirements

- a) the written statement by the competent committee that an admission for doctoral studies is possible
- b) all applicants who are neither native English speakers nor have earned the degree required for admission to the Doctoral Program at an educational institution with English as language of instruction are required to submit certification of their English proficiency (minimum TOEFL scores of 600 on the paper based/ 250 on the computer based/ 100 on the internet based test or proof of an equivalent proficiency). The admissions committee decides on equivalency standards on a case-by-case basis. The test must not be more than 2 years old. Language requirements as set out in the academic rules and regulations are not otherwise affected by these test results.
- c) a curriculum vitae in English including activities and experiences relevant to the Doctoral Program
- d) a statement of purpose in English providing the candidate's motivation for applying to the doctoral studies program. This statement should not exceed three pages in length and should provide a clear picture of the applicant's academic and professional background and field of research. Moreover, it should demonstrate how these interests and research projects relate to the aims of the graduate school and, respectively, the research areas of its faculty
- e) an outline of the dissertation project in English. The outline is not to exceed ten pages in length and should include a short summary of the research goals as well as a report on the state of existing research and the gaps in current knowledge addressed by the project. In addition, aims and methods of the project should be described and a short bibliography of recent research within the given field should be included.
- f) two recent letters of reference should either be sent along with the application documents in sealed envelopes or by the referees directly to the Executive Secretary of the program.
- g) a writing sample pertinent to the proposed course of study
- h) a selection interview according to § 4 , if applicable

Notwithstanding section 1 a), the central institute may delegate the entire written determination procedure to the DRS.

5) Applicants also send a written application for the doctoral studies program including the certificates of academic achievement according section 4 clause 1 a) - h) to the Executive Secretary of the Graduate School by the application deadline fixed in compliance with section 2. The application documents must be complete and in the required form at the application deadline.

Adequate forms of evidence consist of official transcripts in German or English when available, or legally attested copies of academic degrees or legally notarized translations for transcripts in languages other than German or English.

The admissions committee may, if it chooses, extend submission deadlines to allow qualified candidates to provide official documents later or, in case of doubt, request additional written or oral information from the applicants. Submissions made by fax, e-mail or other electronic media are not acceptable as official documents and therefore do not constitute complete applications.

(6) The admissions committee pre-selects applicants on the basis of the documents submitted in accordance with section 4 a) and determines the invitation of qualified applicants for a selection interview in compliance with § 4. After the selection interviews, the committee proposes the candidates qualified for admission to the doctoral study program for admission to the chair of the Freie Universität Berlin – section application and admission.

(7) After the final close of the application procedure, a shortlist will be made based on the results of the application process. In the case of equally qualified candidates, a ranking will be established in accordance with § 8 a) of the Berlin University Admission Act (BerlinHZG).

(8) Admitted applicants will receive written notification of admission including set dates for confirmation of acceptance and enrolment. Places that have not been confirmed by the set date will be offered to the next applicant in accordance with the ranking list established by the application and admission section.

(9) Admissions to the graduate program are provisional pending official acceptance. Candidates must accept by the date and in the manner indicated in the admissions letter or the acceptance offer may be forfeit.

#### **§ 4 Selection Interviews**

(1) Based on the pre-selection pursuant § 3 section 6, candidates will be invited for an interview.

(2) Candidates will receive a written notice of the interview, naming its exact time and location. The notice of interview is to be regarded as received in a timely manner if it has been posted at least 10 workdays before the selection interview. For notices of interview sent abroad, this period will be extended appropriately.

(3) Selection interviews are conducted by the admissions committee and take about 30 minutes per candidate. Each candidate will receive his or her own interview. Interviews are not public.

(4) The minutes of each interview, transcribed by a member of the committee, will indicate the committee's appraisal of the candidate.

(5) In exceptional cases, determined at the discretion of the admissions committee, the personal interview may be substituted by equivalent means of selection.

## **§ 5 Structure of the Doctoral Program in North American Studies, Standard Period of Study, Language of Instruction**

- (1) The doctoral program consists of project-related and interdisciplinary academic units (§ 9 section 1). It also includes general courses on professionalization and academic communication (§ 10), exercises in academic management (§ 11) and foreign language requirements (§ 12).
- (2) The standard period of study is six semesters.
- (3) The language of instruction is English.

## **6. Organization and Administration of the Doctoral Program in North American Studies**

- (1) The counsel of the John F. Kennedy Institute of North American Studies confirms the appointment of the Director, who is responsible for the implementation of the doctoral study program, for an incumbency of two years.
- (2) The Director conducts the current affairs of the graduate school. She or he is especially responsible for the research and academic content of the program. The Director reports to the permanent commission of the DRS about the development of doctoral studies over the course of the previous year.
- (3) The Director assures that a mentoring team generally consisting of three university professors is assigned for each student with his or her consent. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis is part of this mentoring team. Up to two additional mentors are to be assigned to each student by the end of the first academic year.
- (4) The mentoring team, under the auspices of the program Director, is responsible for determining the number and content of study units students need for the completion of their degrees (see §§ 7 to 12).
- (5) The further definition of the mentoring relations is set out by the written mentoring agreements between the mentoring team and the student according to Addendum 5.

## **§ 7 Student Work Load**

Student work load is determined by the requirements of the doctoral study program in compliance with § 9 section 1 and §§ 10 to 12 and by the evaluations of the mentoring program as modeled in Addendum 1.

## **§ 8 Academic Research and Participation in International Research Programs**

- (1) The goal of the Doctoral Program in compliance with § 2 section 1 is to promote independent academic research.
- (2) Dissertation projects will, in the rule, situate themselves within research fields determined by their mentors and the faculty of the graduate school. These projects will allow students to take part in the international research programs initiated by their mentors and the faculty.
- (3) Students are encouraged and expected to pursue their dissertation project for three up to six months at an American or Canadian institution. For this purpose, students can apply for travel and subsistence grants.

## **§ 9 Project-Related Doctoral Studies, Seminar and Colloquium Plan**

- (1) The course of studies in the Doctoral Program will be made up of the following seminars, lectures, and colloquia:

### **(a) Interdisciplinary Seminars and Lectures**

Each of the following courses will be taught by members of at least two different departments of the Graduate School:

- I. American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization (Departments Culture/History);
- II. Neo-Liberalism, the Conservative Revolution, and the New Social Movements (Departments Political Science/Economics)
- III. Religion, Art, and American Culture (Departments Sociology/Literature)

The aim of these joint seminars is to provide an interdisciplinary context for the students' individual research projects. The students will learn to look at problems from different disciplinary perspectives and will be able to get a clearer sense of the strengths and weaknesses of particular disciplinary approaches. The courses will be team-taught and thereby emphasize the multiple methodological and disciplinary approaches practiced at the Graduate School. Graduate students will also become acquainted with the latest literature, disputes and research questions in the various disciplines.

### **(b) Methodological Workshops and Research Seminars**

Methodological workshops and research seminars are designed to equip students with the methodological tools for pursuing their own research projects (particularly qualitative/quantitative empirical research methods for social sciences, and the evaluation and application of relevant theories in all academic fields). Guest lecturers may be invited to offer these workshops.

### **(c) Colloquia**

Colloquia, generally held in English, provide opportunities for the presentation and discussion of student work in progress. They can be organized in the form of conferences or one-day workshops.

(2) Regular and active participation is required for all academic courses pursuant to the topics named in clause 1 and §§ 10 to 12 as well as in the mentoring program. Addendum 2 sets out the kind and the extent of the requirements in each case.

(3) Courses offered by research training groups of the German Research Association (DFG) or courses offered within the scope of the Max-Planck-Research Schools or other research federations may be integrated in the doctoral studies program.

### **§ 10 Professionalization and Communication**

Students are expected to regularly present the results of their research at academic conferences. They will also be provided with appropriate opportunities to relate their research to topics raised in lectures and seminars.

### **§ 11 Academic management Skills**

(1) The students are expected to gain experience in planning research projects and fund-raising, and to develop general administrative skills by organizing and coordinating academic activities.

(2) The students are expected to participate in the organization of an annual multidisciplinary conference held at the John F. Kennedy Institute. The organizing committee, consisting of doctoral students, is to be set up at the end of the first year. The theme of the conference, the list of speakers, and the organization are the sole responsibility of this organizing committee. The organizing committee is encouraged to acquire outside funding for the conference. In addition, the students are to be involved in the publication of the conference contributions. The Graduate School must be named as host of the conference on the front page. The Graduate School, its faculty and its director will support the organizing committee in planning and executing conferences and publications.

### **§ 12 Foreign language Competence**

Students who are not native speakers of German are expected to acquire German language skills in the course of the doctoral study program and prove their ability to communicate adequately in speaking and writing.

### **§ 13 Progress Reports and the Completion of Doctoral Studies**

(1) The students should regularly report on the current status of their dissertation projects to their supervisors and to their mentoring teams. Further details on form, deadlines and scope of the reports are specified in Addendum 5.

(2) Written reports on student progress, which will serve as the basis of academic evaluation, will be provided annually on 15 August.

(3) Mentoring teams will evaluate student performance in terms of course work and dissertation progress according to § 9 and §§ 12. They will also evaluate student participation in the mentoring program. Negative evaluations will be communicated in writing to the program Director.

(4) On the basis of the evaluation of the mentoring team, the Director decides on the student's continued participation in the Doctoral Program and removes him or her from the register of students, if necessary.

(5) Graduating certificates and academic records will be issued to students who successfully complete the doctoral studies program, pursuant to the fulfillment of all rules and regulations stipulated by this document.

#### **§ 14 Implementation**

These rules and regulations come into force one day after being published in the official register of the Free University Berlin (Amtsblatt der Freien Universität Berlin).

## Addendum 1: Course Schedule

	Curricular Segments		
	Module Interdisciplinary Seminars (15 Credit Points)	Module Research Methods (15 Credit Points)	Module Methods and Skills for Academic Profession (15 Credit Points)
<b>First Year/ Introductory Stage</b> 30 CP for Course Work + 30 CP for Independent Work on Dissertation	<b>I. History/Culture: “American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization”</b> (5 CP)  <b>II. Political Science/ Economics: “Neo-Liberalism, Conservative Revolution and New Social Movements”</b> (5 CP)	<b>I. “Introduction to the Theory and Ethics of Research”</b> (5 CP)  <b>II. “Advanced Disciplinary Research Methods”</b> (5 CP)	<b>I. “Advanced Writing Skills”</b> (5 CP)  <b>II. “Management Skills Relevant to Academic Professions”</b> (5 CP)
<b>Second Year/ Intermediate Stage</b> 15 CP for Course Work + 45 CP for Independent Work on Dissertation  <i>Includes stay abroad for research/field work (3 months minimum)</i>	<b>III. Literature/ Sociology: “Religion, Art and American Culture”</b> (5 CP)	<b>III. Seminar/ Colloquium: “Research in Progress”</b> (5 CP)	<b>III. “Didactic Skills”</b> (5 CP)
<b>Third Year/ Final Stage</b> 15 CP for teaching + 45 CP for Independent Work on Dissertation	<b>Co-Teaching one class in the B.A. program of the John F. Kennedy Institute (§ 10 section 2)</b>		

## Addendum 2: Synopsis about the Requirements in each Module

<b>Admission requirements:</b> admission to the Graduate School according to the selection procedure		
Forms of theaching and studying	requirements	Obligation of regular attendance
Interdisciplinary seminar	<p><b>American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization</b></p> <p>Oral presentation and preparation of a written presentation concerning a seminar topic (preferably in the context of the dissertation project); active participation in the seminar discussion</p>	yes
Interdisciplinary seminar	<p><b>Neo-Liberalism, Conservative Revolution and New Social Movements</b></p> <p>Oral presentation and preparation of a written presentation concerning a seminar topic (preferably in the context of the dissertation project); active participation in the seminar discussion</p>	yes
Interdisciplinary seminar	<p><b>Religion, Art, and American Culture</b></p> <p>Oral presentation and preparation of a written presentation concerning a seminar topic (preferably in the context of the dissertation project); active participation in the seminar discussion</p>	yes
Research Methods	<p><b>Introduction to Disciplinary Theories</b></p> <p>Oral presentation and preparation of a written presentation concerning a seminar topic (preferably in the context of the dissertation project); active participation in the seminar discussion</p>	yes
Research Methods	<p><b>Advanced Disciplinary Research Methods</b></p> <p>Oral presentation and preparation of a written presentation concerning a seminar topic (preferably in the context of the dissertation project); active participation in the seminar discussion</p>	yes

Research Methods	<p><b>Colloquium: Research in Progress</b></p> <p>preparation of a written draft concerning a seminar topic (preferably chapter of the dissertation); and oral discussion</p>	yes
Professional Skills	<p><b>Advanced Academic Writing</b></p> <p>Composing of shorter texts, training of relevant reading techniques, improvement of oral presentation</p>	yes (except for native speakers of English)
Professional Skills	<p><b>Management Skills Relevant to Academic Professions</b></p> <p>Organization of a conference or editorial support of the conference publication</p>	yes
Professional Skills	<p><b>Didactic Skills</b></p> <p>Supervised co-teaching in a class of the BA-Program</p>	yes







The achievements in each module are graded as follows:

Module	Credit Points	Grade
<b>Module</b>		
<b>Interdisciplinary Seminars</b>	<b>15</b>	
I. History/Culture: “American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization”	5	
II. Political Science/ Economics: “Neo-Liberalism, Conservative Revolution and New Social Movements”	5	
III. Literature/ Sociology: “Religion, Art and American Culture”		
<b>Module</b>		
<b>Research Methods</b>	<b>15</b>	
I. “Introduction to the Theory and Ethics of Research”	5	
II. “Advanced Disciplinary Research Methods”	5	
III. Seminar/ Colloquium: “Research in Progress”	5	
<b>Module</b>		
<b>Methods and Skills for Academic Profession</b>	<b>15</b>	
I. “Advanced Writing Skills”	5	
II. “Management Skills Relevant to Academic Professions”	5	
III. “Didactic Skills”	5	
<b>Co-Teaching</b>	<b>15</b>	
one class in the B.A. program of the Kennedy Institute (§ 10 s 2)		

Berlin,

(L.S.)

The chairman/ chairwoman of the institute counsel  
der Graduiertenschule

The Director of the Graduate

Scale of Grades: : 1,0 – 1,5 very good; 1,6 – 2,5 good; 2,6– 3,5 satisfactory; 3,6 – 4,0 sufficient

**Addendum 5: Model for a Mentoring Agreement according to § 6 section 5**

**Mentoring Agreement**

between

\_\_\_\_\_ (the student),  
\_\_\_\_\_ (the supervisor pursuant to the rules and regulations of the doctoral studies;-  
\_\_\_\_\_ as well as the other member(s) of the mentoring team - mentor(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (The representative of the doctoral study program)

1. [Ms. or Mr] has been a student of the doctoral studies in North American studies since the winter semester 200[ ] and is in this context composing a dissertation titled:

“[title]”

At the Graduate School of North American Studies (Graduate School) at the Freie Universität Berlin.

The dissertation project has been presented by the student in the framework of the admission procedure to the doctoral studies program and has been approved by the supervisor as well as by the representative of the doctoral studies program.

2. The dissertation project is supervised by a mentoring team in compliance with § 6 section 3. The mentoring team consists of the following university teachers:
  1. .... (as supervisor)
  2. .... (as mentor)
  3. .... (as mentor)

The Graduate School is responsible for providing appropriate mentoring including monitoring in cases of personnel changes in the mentoring team.

3. Before the student starts his/her studies, his/her mentoring team sets out the kind and the extent of the study modules to be completed by him/her in accordance with § 6 section 4 considering the requirements of §§ 7 to 12 on the basis of the project-related doctoral program and with the student’s and the representative’s consent. Moreover, the mentoring team will assure that working conditions are provided for the student.

4. The supervisor approves the theoretical and methodological framework of the dissertation project and advises the student on working within an appropriate time schedule. At regular intervals, the supervisor will comment on the student's work and evaluate it orally and in writing. The student should also report on his/her work progress to the supervisor.

Mentoring and consultation appointments are fixed regularly, primarily on the basis of the kind and extent of the study modules to be completed by the student but allowing for special requirements of the specific disciplines. These appointments should take place on a monthly basis during the academic semester. Special appointments can also be made if necessary. By January 31 of the year following the enrolment, the representative is to be informed if the need arises to change the composition of the mentoring team for an important reason. The representative will then take appropriate steps.

5. The finishing time for the dissertation is defined as the standard finishing time in the applicable doctoral regulations. It is to be pursued that the dissertation is handed in within the standard period of study according to § 5 section 2. The schedule provided in addendum 1 is effective and can be supplemented by subsequently agreed upon attached schedules. The student commits himself or herself to immediately inform the mentoring team in case of any schedule changes.

6. The student and the members of the mentoring team commit themselves to following the rules of good academic practice in compliance with the code of honor of the Freie Universität Berlin dated April 17, 2002 (FU memoranda no. 29/2002). This code stipulates that the students consult their mentoring team or other confidants in cases of doubt. It is also stipulated that members of the mentoring team will respect copy right regulations with regard to the student's text and ideas.

7. The mentoring agreement with its addenda is annually verified and modified if necessary. When dissertation projects exceed the standard study period, a new mentoring agreement must be presented to the representative for his/her approval. All involved parties consent to sharing general data about their projects with the graduate school in order to evaluate the mentoring program and for statistic purposes. Mentors and students will notify the representative in writing when a dissertation project is abandoned before completion.

Date and signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_

(the student),

\_\_\_\_\_

(the supervisor or the adviser in accordance with the applicable doctoral regulations  
– supervisor – as well as the further members of the mentoring team  
– mentors –)

\_\_\_\_\_

(the representative of the doctoral study program)