

Guidelines for Doctoral Dissertations

October 13, 2010

The Graduate School of Science of the University of Tokyo has established the following guidelines for the content and format of doctoral dissertations. Dissertations prepared and submitted in accordance with these guidelines will be defended in accordance with the regulations and procedures of the candidate's Department. Ph.D. candidates who successfully pass the review and defense process and who fulfill all of the other requirements will be awarded a degree.

- (1) A doctoral dissertation must make a sufficient scientific contribution. As used here, scientific contribution refers to work that makes a significant contribution to the advancement of a field, such as the discovery of previously unknown phenomena or objects, the recognition of hitherto unknown connections or relevancies, the development of new theories, the invention of new scientific methods or instruments, or a paradigm shift in our view of some particular natural phenomena. Successful candidates must also demonstrate a sufficient and comprehensive understanding of the field related to their dissertation as well as the ability to conduct research independently. The dissertation must be written in clear and succinct language. The thesis defense must include a presentation and discussion that demonstrate the candidate's academic achievements. The contents of the dissertation must not have been previously submitted as a doctoral dissertation to any institution by either the candidate or any other person.

(2) The dissertation is to be written in either Japanese or English, in accordance with departmental regulations. The title of the dissertation must be written in the same language as the body of the dissertation. A translation of the title into the other language should also be provided. The dissertation must consist of a title page, abstract (in English, if the dissertation is in English, or in Japanese with English translation if the dissertation is in Japanese), table of contents, body, and a list of references. The body must include an introduction and conclusion, or equivalent chapters. In addition, the body must include the following, divided into appropriate chapters: a review of developments in the field of research considered by the dissertation, a statement of the significance of the dissertation research within that field, a review of relevant studies including those conducted by other scholars, an explanation of methodologies and/or research methods, and the results of the research together with a discussion and/or interpretation of the results. In cases where joint research is included in the dissertation, the doctoral candidate must clearly state his/her own contribution to the research. The dissertation must also satisfy any additional requirements imposed by the candidate's department. Although a portion of the dissertation may consist of material from previously published papers, the dissertation is required to be a single, cohesive paper written in the above format.

(3) The content of dissertations of successful Ph.D. candidates must be published internationally.