

English Summary of the Statute

for the

„Münster Graduate School of Evolution (MGSE)“

of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (WWU)

This summary is meant to make the original MGSE Statute comprehensible for members of the MGSE who do not speak German. It is not legally binding.

In consultation with the rectorate of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (hereinafter referred to as WWU), the „Münster Graduate School of Evolution“ adopts the following Statute:

§ 1

Status within the WWU

The „Münster Graduate School of Evolution“ (hereinafter MGSE) is an institutionalized, interdisciplinary association of researchers of the WWU, which provides a study program for doctoral students of different faculties within the WWU.

§ 2

Goals and tasks

- (1) The MGSE dedicates itself to interdisciplinary research of evolutionary processes on different levels. It organizes a structured doctoral program in the general field of evolution, based on a broad understanding of evolution. The program, as well as a specific mentoring system ensure interdisciplinary networking, while the work in the projects will be performed at the highest interdisciplinary level.
- (2) The MGSE aims to establish permanent structures for evolutionary research at the interface between natural sciences and humanities, which are meant to be one of the supporting pillars in the academic profile of the WWU.
- (3) An essential task of the MGSE is to fully implement the gender equality policy of the WWU on the level of doctoral training and to develop it using innovative measures. One of the goals is to support women in their career, so that they develop their potential and their accomplishments are reflected by their academic careers.
- (4) Evolution in the broadest sense is a common topic in sociopolitical discussions and the media. The MGSE is committed to communicate current results of evolutionary research to the public and to also enable the doctoral candidates to present scientific contents in a manner appropriate for the media.

§ 3 Organization

- (1) As an organizational subunit the MGSE contains:
 - > The Evolution Think Tank (ETT), which consists of the junior research group leader of the MGSE and up to six changing Fellows.
Goals of the ETT are the further development of evolutionary theories, as well as the usage of evolutionary concepts to solve problems in various fields.
- (2) The MGSE can establish further organizational subunits within the scope of its tasks.

§ 4 Organs

Organs of the MGSE are:

- > the General Assembly of all members
- > the Steering Committee
- > the Speaker of the MGSE (MGSE Speaker)

§ 5 Membership

- (1) The following persons are *ex officio* members:
 1. The founding members of the MGSE.
 2. The leader of the ETT (Junior Research Group Leader).
 3. The Scientific Project Manager.
- (2) The following persons can become members:
 1. Professors and junior group leaders of the WWU as well as Research Group Leaders of the Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine who work in the research areas of the MGSE (MGSE Principal Investigators).
 2. Students who do a doctorate on a topic within the research area of the MGSE and who are supervised and actively participate in the MGSE (MGSE graduate students).
 3. Further members can be associated upon decision of the Steering Committee (§ 6).
- (3) Upon request of a member, professors, junior group leaders, and students can be accepted as new members if they fulfill the conditions described in § 5 (2). The Steering Committee will decide whether the conditions are fulfilled.
- (4) Membership within the MGSE is terminated by
 - > submitting a written statement of resignation to the MGSE Speaker;
 - > termination of the employment relationship within the MGSE or the ETT;
 - > termination of membership within the WWU;

- > for doctoral students by the completion of the doctorate; although the membership may be prolonged upon request. If the supervising professor or committees decide during review that the continuance of the doctorate is not reasonable, the membership of the doctoral student can be terminated prematurely upon decision of the Steering Committee.
- > when a member does not fulfill the duties and tasks which are noted in § 7 (1); the Steering Committee decides on termination.

§ 6

Associated membership

- (1) The following persons can become associated members of the MGSE:
 1. The Fellows of the ETT. Fellows become associated members with the beginning of their stay as Fellows and can retain this status after their stay upon decision of the Steering Committee.
 2. Scientists working in the research area of the MGSE. Scientists can become associated members upon request of a member and upon decision of the Steering Committee.
 3. Upon decision of the Steering Committee further members can become associated.
- (2) Associated members have no voting rights in the General Assembly of all members.
- (3) The associated membership can be terminated upon decision of the Steering Committee.

§ 7

Rights and duties of members

- (1) Members are obliged to participate in the fulfillment of the goals and tasks described in § 2 in accordance with the provisions of the Statute and to actively support the MGSE.
- (2) The rights and duties of graduate students and their supervisors will be regulated in detail by means of a Supervision Agreement. In addition, all members are asked to enable a reasonably timed and speedy graduation process, in line with the tasks and goals of the MGSE (§ 2).
- (3) Concerning activities which should be conducted within and supported by the MGSE, members may submit recommendations to the Steering Committee at any time.
- (4) Members may use the infrastructure and resources of the MGSE within the program's frame of possibilities.
- (5) All members have full (single) voting rights in the General Assembly of all members.

§ 8

General Assembly of all members

- (1) The General Assembly will take place at least once a year. It will be convened at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting date by the Speaker in text form (by writing or email, and when applicable mediated by the Scientific Project Management). The agenda will be sent to all members at least three days before the meeting in text form.
- (2) On request of at least 20 % of the members, an extraordinary Assembly shall be convened within four weeks. The application has to include a proposed agenda.
- (3) The Speaker shall preside and chair the meeting.
- (4) The General Assembly is responsible for the
 - > resolutions to change the Statute upon proposal of the Steering Committee;
 - > election and deselection of the Steering Committee;
 - > receipt of the Speaker's report;
 - > suggestion to dissolve the MGSE and the respective resolution;
 - > resolutions concerning grant of central MGSE funds;
 - > appointments, staffing of committees of the supervisory or other boards.
- (5) The election of the Steering Committee will be performed by the General Assembly with an absolute majority of the members which are present. Resolutions concerning suggestions for changes of the Statute or the dissolution of the MGSE will be taken with a two-thirds majority. It is possible to vote in all elections, of which prior notification was given, beforehand in text form (written or by email).

§ 9 Steering Committee

- (1) The MGSE Steering Committee consists of:
 1. Five Principal Investigators. The Steering Committee elects the Speaker from within this group; all members of the Steering Committee who are entitled to vote have equal voting rights. Ideally, several of the faculties involved in the MGSE should be represented in the steering committee.
 2. Two graduate students.
 3. *Ex officio* members of the Steering Committee without voting rights are the leader of the ETT, the Spokesperson of the DFG Research Training Group "Evolutionary Processes in Adaptation and Disease" (GRK 2220), the Vice-Rector for Strategic Personnel Development, and the Scientific Project Manager.
- (2) The representatives of the Principal Investigators and the Graduate students in the Steering Committee are elected by the members of the respective group from among their number. Deputies for the respective groups are determined according to the number of votes.

The General Assembly can deselect members of the Steering Committee by electing a successor with the absolute majority of votes of all members of the respective group which have voting rights. When a member of the Steering Committee resigns from office or loses eligibility for election, the respective deputy will be coopted by the Steering Committee.

- (3) The term of office for members of the Steering Committee amounts to three years. Re-election is possible.
- (4) The Steering Committee manages the MGSE and is responsible for all tasks of the MGSE (§ 2), as long as they are not assigned to another organ by means of this Statute. In particular, the Steering Committee is responsible for the following tasks:
 - > development, coordination, and quality control of the scientific program and the qualification concept, as well as consultation with the university management,
 - > coordination of the integration of partners from outside academia,
 - > deciding on the admission or exclusion of members,
 - > responsibility for the accurate allocation of MGSE funds,
 - > counseling of the Speaker concerning budgetary matters,
 - > resolution on the initiation and termination of MGSE research projects,
 - > design and quality control of gender equality policies, cooperation with the persons in charge of gender equality, and public relations,
 - > reporting to university management concerning the development of the MGSE.
- (5) The Steering Committee may determine rules of procedure for itself.
- (6) The Steering Committee designates responsible personnel for the above mentioned tasks from among its numbers.
- (7) The Steering Committee designates a representative from among the Principal Investigators as the Equal Opportunity Commissioner.
- (8) The Steering Committee usually meets on a quarterly basis.

§ 10 Speaker

- (1) The Speaker is responsible for managing the MGSE and represents its interests within and outside of the university. He / she is chairman / chairwoman of the Steering Committee and the General Assembly.
- (2) The Speaker and his / her deputy are elected for a period of three years by the Steering Committee from among the number of the eligible full-time Professors on unlimited contracts which are members of the Steering Committee. Re-election shall be possible.
- (3) Tasks of the Speaker are, in particular:
 - > convening and chairing Steering Committee meetings and the General Assembly (if applicable via the Scientific Project Manager),
 - > reporting his / her decisions to the Steering Committee,
 - > informing MGSE members and personnel,
 - > internal allocation of MGSE funds concerning amounts of up to 2000 €.
- (4) The Speaker is supported by the Scientific Project Manager, as well as the Scientific Project Management of the MGSE.

- (5) In urgent cases where convening a Steering Committee meeting is not possible, the Speaker may decide in the name of the Steering Committee. The Speaker has to immediately inform the Steering Committee about the decision.
- (6) When the Speaker resigns his / her position prematurely or can no longer hold his / her office, the Steering Committee immediately convenes a meeting to elect a new Speaker. The deputy Speaker holds the Speaker's position until the election takes place.
- (7) The Steering Committee can deselect the Speaker by electing a successor with the absolute majority of votes of all Steering Committee members which have voting rights.

§ 11

Scientific Project Management

- (1) Scientific Project Management of the MGSE is led by the Scientific Project Manager, which is appointed by the Steering Committee. The Scientific Project Manager may be supported by student or scientific employees.
- (2) The Scientific Project Management supports the Speaker. This includes for example:
 - > organizing the execution of MGSE tasks,
 - > preparing the General Assembly, meetings of the Steering Committee and if applicable other committees; organizing and coordinating elements of the qualification program, symposia, workshops, as well as the selection meetings for doctoral candidates, etc.;
 - > human resources and financial management,
 - > correspondence.

§ 12

Resolution, elections, protocol

- (1) The General Assembly has a quorum if following proper invitation the majority of all members is present or has at least voted for all announced elections and decisions beforehand in text form (by writing or email). All members in accordance with § 5 (1 – 3) have voting rights. Transfer of voting rights shall not be possible. If it is established that there is no quorum, the next scheduled meeting automatically has quorum regardless of the number of persons present, as long as this is explicitly pointed out in the respective invitation.
- (2) The Steering Committee has quorum if following proper invitation the majority of all members of the Steering Committee is present. Every member of the Steering Committee can be represented by a deputy in accordance with § 9 (2).
- (3) Resolutions in the organs of the MGSE will be taken with the majority of all given votes for and against the decision (simple majority), if not indicated otherwise within this Statute. Abstentions from voting shall not be considered as cast votes. In the event of parity, the Speaker shall have the deciding vote. Upon request, voting has to be by secret ballot.

- (4) In the rules of procedure, the members of the Steering Committee may agree to make decisions by circular resolutions.
- (5) For each meeting of the MGSE organs a protocol will be prepared and distributed to all members of the respective organs with the invitation for the next meeting at the latest. The protocol is considered accepted if there are no objections within two weeks after distribution of the protocol.

§ 13

Qualification concept / Doctoral procedure

- (1) The MGSE offers a qualification program which is aimed at its goals (§ 2). In cooperation with the Steering Committee and the Scientific Project Manager, the Speaker is responsible for the design, coordination, and quality control of the qualification program.
- (2) The doctorate procedure is carried out according to the exam regulations (“Promotionsordnung”) of the respective faculty. The Graduate students receive the title *Dr. rer. nat.* or *Dr. phil.* from the respective faculty.
- (3) In accordance with the respective exam regulations, the doctoral candidates will be supported by the Speaker in cooperation with the Steering Committee and the Scientific Project Manager in choosing their supervision committee. The supervision committee should preferentially be interdisciplinary.

§ 14

Young Scientists

- (1) According to § 13 of this statute, “Young Scientists” are the graduate students and also postdocs working within the framework of the MGSE without being a group leader.
- (2) Young Scientists will get the opportunity to take part in the qualification program. The integration of Young Scientists into the international scientific community as well as participation in conferences will be supported. Young Scientists will be encouraged to publish the results of their research. One of the structural goals of the MGSE is to promote research projects in which Young Scientists are involved independently.

§ 15

Internal allocation of funds

- (1) The Steering Committee makes decisions regarding the appropriate allocation of funds; in accordance with § 10 (3) the Speaker may decide alone when amounts of up to 2000 € are concerned.
- (2) It is possible to file an application for funding, which will be evaluated according to the availability of central MGSE funds. Applications may be submitted in general by Principal Investigators, by postdocs concerning their own projects, and by graduate students for specific material resources.

(3) When deciding such applications the following criteria will be taken into account:

- > scientific quality of the proposal,
- > professional expertise of the proposing scientists,
- > support of the scientific tasks and the networking within the MGSE,
- > career enhancing effects,
- > level of resources requested and possible subsequent costs.

§ 16

Ombudsperson

- (1) To deal with complaints or conflicts an Ombudsperson will be appointed for a period of three years by the General Assembly. The Ombudsperson can be contacted informally and confidentially by all MGSE members and may mediate between the parties. The Ombudsperson acts independently and can also, if necessary, turn to committees outside the MGSE.
- (2) The Ombudsperson reports to the Steering Committee at least once a year whilst maintaining confidentiality.

§ 17

Final provisions and entry into force

- (1) Additions or amendments of this Statute will be presented to the rectorate of the WWU for its approval.
- (2) The Statute enters into force with its adoption by the general Assembly.