Dottorato di ricerca internazionale in:

Agricultural, Food and Environmental Science

notes for students

XXXIV cycle (October 2018- October 2021)
Dear PhD student,

first of all welcome to the Dipartimento di Agricoltura, Alimentazione e Ambiente (Di3A) of the University of Catania. As you may know, one of the most important missions of the Di3A is to produce high-quality scientific research in the fields of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences with a specific focus on the Mediterranean area. As a PhD student you are expected to be fully involved in this mission. The quality of the research that you will be able to produce will contribute to the quality of research in the whole Di3A. We perfectly understand that starting a research career is not just exciting, but also a challenging experience. Therefore, these notes have been prepared to assist you in planning and organising your 3-years work. You will find here the answers to a number of questions that may arise from now on.

The Supervisor

The Supervisor is an academic, from the Di3A expert in the field of your PhD project, who will serve as a guidance and will help you to plan your research and to settle at the University; your supervisor will give you suggestions and will encourage you. However, please keep in mind that you are responsible for your research. The supervisor can also choose a co-supervisor (it can be a post doc) at the University of Catania or elsewhere, who will work closely to you and will also be available for your needs.

The supervision committee

The supervision committee is formed by two experts on the field of your doctorate (external to the University of Catania) together with your supervisor. The members are proposed by your supervisor and have to be accepted by the Board of Teachers (Collegio dei docent). You will present all your progress to the supervision committee in a physical or web meeting, every year. The committee will provide suggestions and comments to your research activities and will positively or negatively advise, producing a written report, the Collegio dei docenti on your advancement to the following year of doctorate.

Your schedule for the next three years

First year – from 31st October 2018 to 30th October 2019: Together with your supervisor you have to decide the focus of your Doctorate. You will start studying all the literature on the field. You will write a bibliographic review on the topic of your doctorate (that could eventually serve as the introductory part of your PhD thesis). You will plan your experiments and prepare a precise schedule. In June 2019, a workshop will be organised together with other doctorates (namely from the University of Foggia and the University of Udine) and you will publically present the focus of your Doctorate and your advancements. The workshop will probably have a duration of three days (tentative dates are 18-20 June 2019). By the 20th September 2019 you are required to submit a report comprising your bibliographic review, the aims and a detailed workplan to the supervision committee and to the coordinator (alessandro.priolo@unict.it). The supervision committee can decide if you will present it also on a video-conference. The supervision committee report will be sent to the Collegio dei docenti who will decide on your admission to the second year.

Second year – from 31st October 2019 to 30 October 2020: During the second year you will develop most of your research. Probably part of your research will be carried out abroad (see details below). In June 2020
you will know exactly what your PhD thesis will contain. You will therefore publically present the whole thesis project during a workshop organised together with PhD students from the Universities of Foggia and Udine. By the 20th September 2020 you will present your advancement to the supervision committee and to the coordinator (alessandro.priolo@unict.it) The supervision committee can decide if you will present it also on a video-conference. A first scientific manuscript from your work will be typically submitted to an international peer reviewed journal (ISI and/or Scopus databases) during the second year.

Third year – from 31st October 2020 to 30 October 2021: You will devote most of this year to the writing up of your thesis. Probably at the beginning of the year you will need some time to finish your experiments and to gather the last results. You are required to submit your thesis (pdf) to the coordinator by September 10th 2021. Your thesis will be forwarded to two referees for evaluation.

Training abroad

An experience in an Institution outside Italy is required during your Doctorate. You will experience different ways of approaching research and will learn how to work and solve problems in different environments. Your grant will be increased when you will be abroad. A minimum of 4 months abroad (not necessarily in one trip) is compulsory. Only exception are students that do not have a regular scholarship. In this case a minimum of one month abroad is required.

Language

The PhD in Agricultural, Food and Environmental Science is an international Doctorate. English is the official language and your thesis as well as your scientific papers will be written in English. Therefore, a B2 equivalent English level at the end of your PhD is the minimum expected achievement.

Thesis

The thesis will be written in English. Specific guidelines for your thesis will be available online by April 2019.

Minimum requirements to be admitted to the final exam

By October 10th 2021 at least one of your research papers has to be accepted in an international peer reviewed journal and a second paper needs to be submitted (in both cases ISI and/or Scopus databases). You are required to be the first and/or the corresponding author in at least one of these papers. If you fail on these requirements but you have a justification you may ask to postpone your thesis defence according to the general rules of the University of Catania.
### Deadlines for your thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 15(^{th}) 2020</td>
<td>The Collegio dei docenti</td>
<td>will admit the students to the third year and will choose two referees to evaluate each Thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 10(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>Are required to send your thesis (pdf) to the coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>The Referees</td>
<td>will report to the coordinator on their evaluation of your thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>will give to the coordinator evidence about your accepted and submitted papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 15(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>The Collegio dei docenti</td>
<td>will decide on your admission to the final thesis defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>are required to submit your online request to participate to the thesis defence (istanza di ammissione all’esame finale)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 30(^{th}) 2021</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>Have to upload your thesis on the online system (unict.it)</td>
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Information on your thesis defence will be given in due time.

**Useful services**

As a student you will have access to a number of electronic resources that will be very important for your work. The most useful links are (you can access only when connected from the University):

- [http://www.webofknowledge.com/](http://www.webofknowledge.com/)
- [https://www.scopus.com/](https://www.scopus.com/)
- [http://www.sida.unict.it/content/periodici-elettronici/](http://www.sida.unict.it/content/periodici-elettronici/)

As a student you can also request an unict email account. Ask your supervisor.

**Note:**

If you have a specific grant (e.g. industrial innovative doctorate) you may be asked to meet other further requirements. Details will be given at the beginning of your programme.