Information for doctoral students

If you have any questions, please contact

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Homepage: Doctoral degree in the field of Biology [Link]

1. Supervision of dissertations

Before you sign up for participation in the doctoral studies program, you must clarify the question of your supervisor. If you perform your thesis work in a research department of Biology, the question is easily dealt with: All Professors as well as the Private Docents of the faculty are authorized and entitled to supervise thesis work and the writing of the final dissertation. Problems can arise if you seek a doctoral degree from the faculty of Biology but wish to perform the thesis work externally, e.g. in the medical faculty of Freiburg University or at the Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology. Some of the scientists working at these institutions have the right from the faculty of Biology to supervise doctoral thesis work, i.e. they may independently oversee the work of biologists. If this is not the case for your chosen supervisor, you must definitely find an authorized person who will take on the official supervision, i.e. assume responsibility for your work vis-a-vis the faculty of Biology. Here only docents who are members of the faculty at the University of Freiburg may be considered. For a list of supervisors, please see our website Doctoral degree in the field of Biology → Members of the Faculty of Biology with the right to supervise doctoral candidates [Link] or Members of other faculties and research institutions with the right to supervise doctoral candidates [Link].

Thesis committee: The doctoral thesis can be supervised by a single person or by a thesis committee. Collective supervision by a thesis committee is mandatory if the supervisor is a junior researcher who has not yet habilitated (§ 3 paragraphs 3 und 5 of the examination regulations). The thesis committee consists of the supervisor and two scientists coming from the same research area but from departments different from that of the supervisor. At least one of the additional two members must be a professor at the Faculty of Biology. An overview of the faculty members entitled to serve on a thesis committee can be found on the website here → Members of the Faculty of Biology, “thesis committee” [Link].
Supervisors who are not entitled to supervise a doctoral student on their own (§ 3, paragraph 6 of the examination regulations) can join the thesis committee as third member. The supervisor of the doctoral work is responsible for assembling the thesis committee.

2. Registration for the doctoral studies program

Important: International applicants from Non-EU countries need a document confirming that their University degree is equivalent to a German diploma or master’s degree. Please send a copy of the Bachelor diploma including transcripts of records and the Master diploma including transcripts of records to the doctoral studies office of the faculty for examination before starting the doctoral work.

You must apply in writing for acceptance as a doctoral student, and this must be done within six months after beginning to work on your thesis (or dissertation). If you should fail to meet this deadline, the application can only be approved in exceptional cases in which this delay can be justified.

Please note: From now on the application for admission as a doctoral candidate can be submitted only online. The instructions for application are given here [Link]. The supervision agreement is not available yet. Thus, please submit your application without the supervision agreement.

Please send one signed printout together with the supporting documents to the following address:

An den Promotionsausschuss der Fakultät für Biologie
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
z. Hd. Frau Kendlinger
Schänzlestraße 1
79104 Freiburg

or hand them over personally. Necessary copies will be made for free.

3. Immatriculation

Upon acceptance as a doctoral student you may register at the University. Generally doctoral students are exempt from any tuition fees.

4. Requirements during the doctoral studies program

During the doctoral studies program you must successfully participate in two upper-division literature seminars in the field of Biology. Further, you are obligated to assist in the teaching of two laboratory practicals, whereby at least one must be a declared course of the faculty of Biology. Here it is explicitly noted that these obligations pertain just as well for doctoral students who perform their work externally, i.e. outside the faculty of Biology.
5. **Address given on publications**

Should you publish the results of your doctoral thesis work (dissertation) in a professional journal, the source of the work must be clearly indicated through a complete address with the name of the department of the faculty of Biology. Doctoral students who complete their work externally must supplement the address of their laboratory with a second address which must contain the identifier „Faculty of Biology“ (e.g. Name\textsuperscript{1,2} — \textsuperscript{2}University of Freiburg, Faculty of Biology, Schanzlestrasse 1, D–79104 Freiburg, Germany).

6. **Form of the dissertation**

The dissertation may be written in German or in English. It may be presented as a complete piece of work or consist of an overview accompanied by bound together publications, manuscripts and supplementary chapters. The overview of 15-30 pages should be written in the style of a review article, with an Introduction to the approach involved and a Discussion of the results surveyed. The publications should be published or accepted for publication in peer reviewed journals. Please note: You should be a first author in at least one publication. For publications with several authors, you should summarize your contributions in a brief text passage added in front of the paper. Important methods which are not considered standard methods can be described in the review in an Appendix. You should discuss further details with your supervisor.

7. **Submission of the dissertation**

After finishing your doctoral thesis please hand in following documents at the doctoral studies office:

- the completed form “Submission of the thesis” (the document downloads automatically [Link \(\Rightarrow\)].
  
  Please fill out the form on the computer and send one copy, together with one curriculum vitae by e-mail to renate.kendlinger@biologie.uni-freiburg.de.
  
  Please also bring 1 signed printout with the supporting documents listed below to the doctoral studies program office,

- three original copies of the dissertation (1 copy for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} referee, 1 copy for the 3\textsuperscript{rd} examiner, and 1 copy for the library of the faculty),

- the certificates for both the completed seminars and both assisted laboratory practicals,

- a recent good conduct certificate not older than six months, available at the Freiburg city council, Amt fuer oeffentliche Ordnung, Fehrenbachallee 12, 79106 Freiburg [Link \(\Rightarrow\)].

- In any case you should hand over one copy of your thesis to your supervisor(s) personally.

If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Kendlinger.

To fulfill the publication requirements at the University Library some extra copies of your dissertation are required:
• six additional copies of your dissertation when you submit your thesis in the classical, non-cumulative form. Furthermore, a list of all your publications to date (including those in press) signed by your supervisor and indicating that essential parts have been published
• six additional copies of your dissertation when you submit your thesis in a cumulative form
• or two additional copies of your dissertation when you wish to publish your thesis electronically (as pdf). In this case we strongly recommend you to obtain the approval of your supervisor.

You must fulfil the publication requirements at the University Library within 1 ½ years after the oral exam.

Please note that the thesis defence procedure, once initiated, can take up to 8 weeks.

8. The doctoral degree examination procedure

The doctoral degree examination procedure consists of the evaluation of the dissertation, the public dissertation colloquium, and the oral examination (rigorosum).

The dissertation is evaluated by two referees, one of these being your thesis advisor/supervisor.

The dissertation colloquium includes a lecture of maximally 30 min. duration and a following discussion.

The oral examination follows immediately after the colloquium and lasts 1 hour. It covers areas of knowledge both closely and distantly related to the topic of the thesis. The examining committee consists of the chairman of the doctoral studies program and three examiners, whereby the two dissertation referees are always assigned as examiners.

The doctoral studies program secretary will contact you as soon as the two evaluations have been received and simultaneously inform you about possible dates for the colloquium and the oral exam so that you can fix the examination date with the three examiners.

Please also note that the office will close from approx. Mid-August until approx. Mid-September and that during this time no exams will take place.

9. The result of the doctoral studies

The final grade consists of the arithmetic average of the exact (not rounded) grade for the dissertation as well as the exact (not rounded) grade for the oral exam.

The highest recognition "summa cum laude" for the overall result is awarded, when the dissertation and the oral examination both were rated with the best grade of 1.0 "with honors".