

Advanced Qualification Courses and Student Supervision – use them!

A warm welcome to the Faculty of Biology from your doctoral representatives.

When signing the Thesis Agreement, we encourage you to clarify your expectations for the next years and discuss them with your supervisors. Ask yourself: How would I like to develop my project and career? What will be expected from me as a member of the lab team? Think of:

conference visits -- lab routines and duties -- seminar participation -- student supervision

As a reference, you might also want to get input from other, more advanced members of your lab. The university's graduation requirements do not include teaching students, yet it is common practice in most labs for doctoral researchers to assist in the organisation and supervision of courses and theses – and we believe there are good reasons to do so:

- **Teaching teaches:** Supervising students teaches you to organise courses, practise leadership and self-critically handle feedback. These experiences will be beneficial beyond your PhD work – and are a big plus in every application!
- **Great help:** Well-trained students who join for internships or their theses can provide excellent lab support for your project.
- **Show responsibility:** You have certainly profited from motivated supervisors during your studies. Now, you are given the chance to pass on your enthusiasm for science to the next generation!
- **Teaching is fun:** Talk to your colleagues and you will realise that most PhD students found their teaching activities to be a rewarding diversion from their everyday project work.

The Faculty of Biology will acknowledge your commitment with an official certificate when you graduate. The form "Record of voluntary teaching achievements" helps you to keep track of your supervised courses.

Our survey in February 2018 demonstrated that doctoral students of our faculty supervise, on average, **2 to 3 lab courses (5 days each)** and **2 Bachelor or Master theses** during the course of their doctoral work (n=97). The majority (69%) considered this amount to be appropriate. However, we wish to emphasize that, unless student supervision is covered by your regular work contract, your engagement is voluntary and entitled to an add-on contract of employment. This is usually the case for third-party funded positions and scholarship holders.

In addition to your lab-based work, we invite you to make use of different advanced qualification opportunities and broaden your horizon. In particular, the university hosts courses and seminars you can attend for free.

- **Seminars and Talks**¹ in the Faculty of Biology, and in other faculties as well, offer a scientific education that exceeds your own project.
- The International Graduate Academy (IGA)² offers courses on a variety of topics (e.g. project management, application training, languages).

There are many more options, like mentoring, in and outside the university. Such trainings will not only benefit your doctoral project but your professional career as well.

Should you wish for help with these or other topics during your doctoral work, please do not hesitate to contact us at PhD-Bio@biologie.uni-freiburg.de. Beyond that, we advocate doctoral interests in several university committees. For further information about your representatives and our work, please visit our website www.phd-bio.uni-freiburg.de or join one of our regular meetings.

Best of luck for your start!



¹ for example: www.uniclimax.yolasite.com
www.campus.uni-freiburg.de

² www.frs.uni-freiburg.de/en/iga-en