

PhD program guidelines

This fact sheet serves as guideline for students that enroll in the PhD program of the Biozentrum of the University of Basel or for outside PhD students with a faculty representative from the Biozentrum. For further questions, please contact the program secretary or the head of the PhD program.

- 1) PhD students at the Biozentrum are expected to finish their projects within 3-4 years.
- 2) Salaries are according to the standards of the Swiss National Science Foundation.
- 3) Contracts between the Biozentrum and the PhD students will be renewed on a yearly basis.
- 4) Each student selects a PhD advisory Committee (PaC) at the beginning of the PhD. The PaC consists of the PhD supervisor and a minimum of two additional internal or external experts. At least one of the PaC members has to be affiliated with a different Focal Area/Core Program of the Biozentrum or with an outside Institute. One of the experts (not the advisor) acts as the committee Chair. PaC members need to be approved by the thesis advisor. The student reports name and affiliation of all PaC members to the administrative office/program secretary before the first committee meeting takes place.
- 5) PhD students meet with the PaC at least once per year to report on their activities. The first meeting must take place no later than one year after the beginning of the PhD. No later than one week before the scheduled meeting the student sends a scientific progress report (approx. 3-5 pages) to all members of the committee. The meeting includes an oral progress report in form of a scientific seminar and a project discussion with the committee. Following the presentation, the committee meeting proceeds in three parts: i) student with the committee in the absence of his/her supervisor; ii) supervisor with the committee in the absence of the student; iii) student, supervisor and committee.
- 6) The PaC discusses and validates the progress of the PhD-work and helps to confirm or modify the proposed research plan for the next year. In cases of no or very little progress the PaC can decide to change the PhD project or can recommend discontinuation of the PhD. The PaC can advise the students on scientific and career issues.

It is expected that at the time of the PhD exam at least one first author manuscript of the PhD work be accepted for publication.

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- 7) During the committee meeting the Chair leads the discussion and writes a short summary protocol. Students need to download the official form for the protocol from the PhD program webpage and bring it to the meeting. All members of the committee sign the protocol and receive a copy for their records. The original of the signed protocol is forwarded by the student to the program secretary. Protocols will be archived at the PhD administrative office.
 - 8) Selection of the PaC members, scheduling of the yearly meetings, and transfer of the signed meeting protocols to the administrative office lies within the responsibility of the students.
 - 9) PhD students are obliged to collect a total of 12 credit points (CP) from lectures, courses and meetings before they can graduate. A minimum of 6 credit points have to be covered with lectures and courses from the Biozentrum Graduate Teaching Program. A maximum of 6 credit points can be obtained from the following activities:
 - Tutoring undergraduate students (2 CP per semester)
 - PhD retreat (1 CP per year)
 - Summer classes (1-2 CP assigned by class)
 - Conferences (1-2 CP per meeting) # students must present their own data in either a poster or a oral format.The head of the PhD program assigns the credit points for these activities.
 - 10) At the end of the PhD, students submit a written thesis, which has to be accepted by the Natural Science Faculty of the University of Basel. Upon acceptance of the Thesis, the candidate presents his/her work in a public seminar, which is followed by an oral exam according to the rules of the Natural Science Faculty of the University of Basel.

See: <http://philnat.unibas.ch/dokumente/>

Members of the PaC are also members of the PhD Defense committee. One member of the PhD Defense committee represents the Natural Science Faculty. A member of the Natural Science Faculty who is not a member of the PaC, chairs the PhD Defense committee.
 - 11) PhD students in Bioinformatics are encouraged to join the PhD training network of the Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics (SIB).
 - 12) Ethical behavior is expected during the course of the PhD. This includes originality and reproducibility of the results generated and confidential treatment of privileged communications.