Navigating your PhD at the University of Vienna

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Research Services and Career Development |

Center for Doctoral Studies
Agenda:

- The University of Vienna
- The Doctorate – General Frame
- Entry Phase of the Doctorate
- Achievements & Responsibilities
Early stage researchers are expected to …

➢ make an original contribution to the field
➢ present research findings at conferences, etc.
➢ engage in scientific activities
➢ increase their research and transferable skills
Increase your PhD awareness

- Learn how the system works
- Get familiar with the common practices at your faculty
- Make sure you know what a PhD actually is.
PhD life includes more than “only” writing a thesis
One of the oldest and largest universities in Central Europe

Subdivided into 15 faculties and 4 research centers (spread over more than 60 locations)

Offers PhD studies in a wide range of fields (Humanities, Social- and Natural Sciences, Law, Economics)

Eight Curricula for 81 Dissertation fields
The Doctorate

- **Topic**
- **Institution / Supervisor**
- **Funding**
The Doctorate

- Duration: 3-years
- The focus is on research
- Additional achievements (seminars, workshops, etc.) → Curriculum
- Completion: Public defence of your PhD thesis
Structure of the Doctorate at the University of Vienna

Entry Phase

- Concept development

Research Phase

- Realisation of doctoral thesis Project

- Research, Research, Research
  - Submission of Exposé & Public Presentation
  - Doctoral Thesis Agreement
  - Feedback meetings
  - Seminars, workshops, lectures
  - Conferences, etc.

- Submission Public defense

The Doctorate
Entry Phase

- Specification of the research topic and finding a supervisor
- Planning the research project
- Writing your research proposal
- Submitting and presenting the research proposal in front of the faculty within the first year

Recommendation: Attend Public Presentations to get an idea how it is organized at your faculty.
The Research Proposal

…. a project plan of your dissertation project

- WHAT?
- WHY?
- HOW?
The Research Proposal

Format:

➢ Approx. 10 pages long

Content:

➢ Description of the topic including clear research questions

➢ Outline of the state of the art

➢ Illustration of the chosen methods

➢ Relevant literature

➢ Time and work plan
Guidelines in ....

- Social Sciences
- Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies
- Philosophy

Recommendation: Join a thesis writing group! They are useful instruments to escape isolation and to foster the exchange of ideas with peers.
Public Presentation

- Mandatory
- Quality assurance / feedback through Doctoral Advisory Board
- Exchange with peers

"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

You find all dates and how to apply on the website
http://doktorat.univie.ac.at
Avoid having a meltdown when you’re criticized

- Criticism in academia is abstract, not personal!
- Expose yourself to criticism and build up your resources and experiences to develop the self-confidence needed
- Develop strategies how to respond in these situations
- Develop self-confidence in your work
Continuously reflect upon your research, and adopt your project to your research progress!
Recommendation

Make the most of opportunities which arise

- Attend workshops, conferences, seminars
- Take part in training seminars
- Get involved in the activities at your department
- If possible, include a research stay abroad
- Build up your future network, ….
Planning is essential

- A good time management is important!
- Define milestones and divide your project into manageable phases
- Use the annual progress reports as planning tool
- Think about your life after the PhD in due time – what is needed for your future career? Many things need planning far in advance (e.g. publications)
Responsibilities

Doctoral Candidate – Early Stage Researcher

- Your dissertation must be your contribution to the scientific community
- Research project is under your management
Responsibilities

Fellow Doctoral Candidates
Responsibilities

Supervisor(s) – Experienced Researchers

- Experts in your field
- Guidance, continuous support, feedback, …

Important: Clarify Expectations!

Directors of the Doctoral Study Programmes

- Responsible for quality assurance
- Acceptance of achievements, …
Responsibilities

Admission Office

- Formal admission
- Leave of absence (maternity leave, ...)

StudyServiceCenter

- All other administrative issues
- Organize public presentation
- Collect your documents and forms (doctoral thesis agreement, annual report, etc.)
- .....
Responsibilities

Center for Doctoral Studies

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Consultation

- in person
- per email
- Info sessions
Contact:

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