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

- Research
- Seminars/Workshops
- Conferences
- Summer Schools
- Publications
- Teaching
- Grant proposal writing
- Study period abroad
- Networking
- 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

Submission of Exposé &
Public Presentation
Doctoral Thesis Agreement

Research, Research, Research
- Feedback meetings
- Seminars, workshops, lectures
- Conferences, etc.

Submission
Public defense
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
The Research Proposal

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.
Pubic 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
Recommendation

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
Curriculum

Thesis Agreement

Annual Report

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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