

## **A Guide for the Doctoral Study Program of the Department for Infectious Diseases**

As of April 2005, participation in the Doctoral Study Program (DSP) is obligatory for every student in the Department for Infectious Diseases who wants to receive the doctoral degree from the faculty of Biosciences (Dr. rer. nat. which is equivalent to PhD).

The program is composed of three parts and based on the 'Promotionsordnung der Universität Heidelberg für die Naturwissenschaftlich-Mathematische Gesamtfakultät', which is binding. The DSP aims at improving the student's knowledge and experience beyond the scope of her/his individual scientific project and to ascertain an organized training and education during the time of the doctoral study project. To each doctoral student a supervisor is assigned, who is the direct contact person. Within the first six weeks after the start of the doctoral study work, the student has to select two advisors (first and second advisor) of the thesis. Of course, one of them can be the direct supervisor. The advisors will confirm by signature their willingness to support the student and they will be informed about the status of the project by the student (see below). Signatures will be made on the 'Laufbogen', which the student will receive either in the central registration office of the DSP, located in the Neuenheimer Feld 345, 1<sup>st</sup> floor or in the secretariat of the hosting group. In the latter case, the student must send the registration form to the DSP office. With this signed Laufbogen, the student must register within the first six weeks after the start of the doctoral study work at the Dean's Office of the faculty of Biosciences. In addition, each student participating in this study program must register in the central registration office of the doctoral study program located in the Neuenheimer Feld 345, 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

### **Supervision within the Doctoral Study Program of the Department for Infectious Diseases**

To each doctoral student a supervisor is assigned, who is the direct contact person and who will advice and support the student in all daily questions arising during the project. Furthermore, the first and second advisor will support the work of the student during the whole duration of the project and participate in regular meetings (usually the PhD committee meetings or *ad hoc* meetings, depending on demand).

### **Duration of the PhD study project**

On the average, the PhD project should last about three years. In case that an extension of the time for the PhD project is necessary, each student has to provide the first advisor and the central DSP office an additional report (PDF-document; 2 to 5 pages, English; font size 12, double-spaced, no power point figures). At the same time, the student has to inform the Dean's Office of the faculty of Biosciences to secure the permission for the extension.

### **Study program**

The DSP consists of compulsory elements and two types of elective program elements as described in detail below. IT IS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH DOCTORAL STUDENT TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS DSP. THIS RELATES TO ALL ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PHD COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND SUBMISSION OF APPROVED PROJECT REPORTS.

#### **A. Compulsory elements**

1. **The Project Proposal and the Project Report.** Within six months after the start of the doctoral study project, each student must write a project proposal (2 to 5 pages, in English or German; font size 12, double-spaced, no power point figures), which is approved by the first and second advisor. Upon approval, the student must send an electronic version of the report as a PDF file to the secretariat of the DSP (Im Neuenheimer Feld 345, 1<sup>st</sup> floor). Receipt of the report is confirmed by the DSP office by signature on the 'Laufbogen'. By using the same procedure, the student has to write a 'Project report' **at latest** at the end of the second year. In this report the student describes the current status of the projects, necessary solutions in case unexpected problems emerged and the future plans to finalize the PhD project.
2. **PhD committee meetings:** Each student selects four scientists with expertise in the area of the project. They constitute the PhD committee. Two committee members are the first and second advisor, the third member is the supervisor in those cases where the supervisor does not act as an advisor. Additional

reviewers/advisors may participate in the PhD committee, depending on demand. It is encouraged that scientists from outside the institute are involved. Members of the PhD committee will receive the project proposal (first meeting) or the written project report (second meeting) prior to the committee meeting. During the meeting the student presents the current state of his/her project in an about 30 minutes oral presentation. Members of the committee will critically discuss the project, its future perspectives and advise the student on particular questions. Participation in the PhD committee must be confirmed by signature by the supervisor on the 'Laufbogen'.

3. **Regular participation in internal progress reports** of the department/research team with regular presentation of the work by the student. Participation will be confirmed by signature by the supervisor every half year on the 'Laufbogen'.
4. Regular participation in the **Journal Club** of the department/research team and presentation of scientific papers. Participation will be confirmed by signature by the organizer of the journal club every semester on the 'Laufbogen'.

B. Elective Program Elements (2 per year)

1. Regular participation in a seminar series with invited external guests. Participation will be confirmed by the organizer of the seminar series (e.g. by circulation of a participation list). The seminar series does not have to be organized by the department where the student is working. For instance, participation in SFB-seminar series such as those organized by SFB 638 and SFB 544 applies accordingly.
2. Participation in a methods course such as courses that are offered by other laboratories outside of the institute (e.g. EMBL, partner laboratory within a research network) or courses that will be established within the Department for Infectious Diseases. Participation will be confirmed by signature of the organizer on the 'Laufbogen'. All courses (e.g. method practicals, soft skills etc.), which are offered by the Hartmut Hoffmann-Berling International Graduate School of Molecular and Cellular Biology (HBIGS) are accepted by the DSP of the Department for Infectious Diseases.

3. Participation in a retreat with presentation of the work of the doctoral study by the student.

The student is free to select two times the same element, e.g. participate in two seminar series within one year or two retreats. It is not mandatory that two different elective program elements are fulfilled.

C. Elective Program Elements (2 in the course of the doctoral work)

1. Participation as a presenting author in a national or international meeting as poster or oral presentation. Confirmation by a copy of the abstract book or others.
2. One publication as a first author.
3. Two publications as co-author.

As for part B, the student is free to select two times the same element such as participation in two meetings. It is not necessary to fulfil two different elective program elements.

At the end of the doctoral program, the Laufbogen will be checked by the DSP office (Im Neuenheimer Feld 345, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, room 168) and, if all criteria are fulfilled, signed by the program director (Prof. Ralf Bartenschlager). Only then, the student can apply for her/his thesis defence at the Dean's office of the faculty of Biosciences.

Questions referring to this DSP may be addressed to the central registration office:

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