Orientation for Doctoral Students

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Overview

- Overview and short introduction
- Facts & figures
- Curriculum structure
- What is a dissertation?
- FAQs
- Resources
A few facts & figures

- Doctoral programs – about 1000 people 'in the system'
  - Social and Economic Sciences/Economic and Social Sciences
  - Business Law
  - PhD Finance and International Business Taxation
- In the academic year 2021/2022, 106 students started their doctoral studies at WU
- Admissions winter semester 2021/22
  - 24 Doctoral program Social and Economic Sciences
  - 29 Doctoral program Business Law
  - 25 PhD Economic and Social Sciences
- PhD WiSo: only for WU's academic staff
- About 70 persons successfully complete their studies per year
- Admission: only with preliminary confirmation of supervision and synopsis
## Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Proposal</th>
<th>Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissertation</strong></td>
<td>please see curricula for details</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Defensio Dissertationis**
Curriculum

- New curriculum Social and Economic Sciences October 2022
- Research Proposal:
  - Submission within 1 year of admission
  - Graded by the Supervision Team (Main Supervisor and at least 2 more members)
- Dissertation Agreement
- Dissertation and defense are graded by a Doctoral Committee consisting of 3 members (all with habilitation, at least one not from WU)
Dissertation Agreement
[ according to §34 (2) of the WU by-laws ]

- Written agreement between students & their supervisor covering
  - requirements for the dissertation (monography/cumulative, paper requirements, etc.)
  - planned next steps & expectations
  - (courses to be completed)

- Submission
  - within the first year of studies together with the Research Proposal
What is a dissertation?

- **Original** academic work, support by Supervision Team
- (at least temporary) participation in academic discourse
- Playing by the rules of...
  - science
  - the subject/discipline
  - WU
  - the Supervision Team
- More than just an extended diploma/master thesis
Withholding access to the dissertation

- § 86 of the Universities Act 2002 governs the publication for academic dissertations
  - If the student establishes that his/her legal/business interests would be materially endangered by permitting access, it is possible to withhold the access to the dissertation for a **maximum of 5 years**.
  - „I would not have been granted access to the data had I not promised to withhold access“ or „If access is not withheld, some other party might exploit my data for commercial purposes“ are not a good reason to withhold access!

- **Withholding access stands in stark contrast to WU's open access policy!**

- Integral part of academic practice is that research findings are available to the scientific community – no „secret knowledge“

- Should sensitive data be shared with everyone? No – it is reasonable to keep original data private **BUT**

- results of doctoral thesis must become part of public discourse as soon as possible!

- Make sure at an early stage that you have permission to publish data, or that at least the scientific conclusion drawn from data can be made available
FAQs

- Can I study the doctoral program beside my job?
- What are the chances for students from abroad/from other universities/from universities of applied science?
- Can I spend a research stay abroad?
- What are the critical points in a doctoral program?
- I have to „explain the world“ in my dissertation?
- How do I know if it would be better to abandon the dissertation project?
Job and doctoral studies

■ Doing a doctorate: Studying should have priority

■ Time requirements
  o 180 ECTS in total = 4500 working hours in the course of 3 years
    • in 3 years: about 30 hours/week
    • in 4 years: about 20 hours/week
    • dissertation itself: about 15 hours/week
  o Continuity is important – intermissions may have negative consequences
  o Plunging into another (mental) world

■ Checking your resources
  o intellectual, temporal, social
  o financial

■ It is possible to work on the side

■ Good intentions alone are not enough...
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Other universities

- No formal barriers
- Where required: additional courses for degree holders of other disciplines, f.e. psychology
- As a tendency, it is easier for WU students, as they are known to professors
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As a doctoral/PhD student at WU, you are eligible for the doctoral-level exchange programs administered by the International Office (contact person stephanie.weber@wu.ac.at).

**Full exchange semester**

- At WU partner university with Erasmus+, WU mobility grant (Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, North America, Latin America, Israel, UK), Swiss-European Mobility Program

- **Requirements**
  - submitted research proposal
  - letter of recommendation from WU supervisor
  - proposed supervising professor at the host university
  - If you are employed at WU: approval of the personnel office
  - Very high administrative effort -> please schedule at least 6 months between application & planned start of your exchange semester
- **NEURUS** (Network of European and US Regional and Urban Studies)
  - Grant for working at dissertation abroad
  - 1 year program: one semester at WU, one semester at selected US schools (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of California at Irvine).

- **Marshall Plan Scholarship**
  - Academic exchange program between Austria & US
  - The prerequisite is a research project with a *focus on technical sciences*
  - Minimum stay: 3 months
  - Funding: €4000 - €10,000

- **Mobility grants for doctoral/PhD candidates (short term stay)**
  - intended as help to cover travel expenses and encourage mobility
  - amount of up to €2000 per applicant (depending on yearly budget)
  - Managed by Doctoral Office
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Before admission: Finding a supervisor
  o Who is a potential Main Supervisor?
    • Any WU professor with a habilitation
    • External supervisors: only as a further member of the Supervision Team or Doctoral Committee
  o How to go about the search
    • independently
    • Academic Director does NOT allocate supervisors
  o Job vacancies at WU – job advertisements

What do I need when looking for a supervisor?
  o idea
  o synopsis

What are the chances?
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<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>Foreign Language Business Communication</td>
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Critical point: supervision

- Main Supervisor
- Supervision Team
  - On submission of the Research Proposal
  - Confirmed by the Academic Director
  - Proposed by the student, usually after consulting the Main Supervisor
  - Usually from WU, external professors possible
Critical point: Research Proposal

- First phase of dissertation project:
  - What is the project's contribution to academic discourse?
  - How will the dissertation answer the research question?

- Three goals
  - Orientation
  - Mutual commitment
  - Initiation

- Accessible to all WU professors via the Intranet
- Comments from the Supervision Team
- Attendance of Academic Writing-course recommended
- Please submit early (within one year)
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Scientific progress is a collective effort – we are standing 'on the shoulders of giants'

A dissertation is a (usually small) contribution to academic discourse

- In Germany alone, there are about 25,000 dissertations per year (all disciplines)
- WU-Journal ratings (A+, A, B): 521 journals – about 10,000 articles per year
- Journals not ranked: multiplied by 4

That’s a relief...
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Indicators in favour of abandoning the dissertation project

- Realizing that resources are not sufficient
  - resources = time, money, energy, intellect, ...
  - Synopsis as a first test
  - Introductory courses as a second test

- Unsuccessful search for a supervisor
  - ‘make or break’-point

- Framing important: not a dropout (‘failure’), but a decision taken after an exploration phase

- The earlier the better (most of the time...)
Resources

- **Website**
  for persons interested in a doctoral/PhD program:
  [https://www.wu.ac.at/studium/doktorat-phd/](https://www.wu.ac.at/studium/doktorat-phd/)

- **For doctoral/PhD students:**
  [https://www.wu.ac.at/studierende/mein-studium/doktorat-phd/programmuebergreifende-informationen/](https://www.wu.ac.at/studierende/mein-studium/doktorat-phd/programmuebergreifende-informationen/)

- **Doctoral Office:**
  - Barbara Bauer / Daniela Eder / Stephanie Weber: 313 36/4025 or 4696; E-Mail: [doctoraloffice@wu.ac.at](mailto:doctoraloffice@wu.ac.at)

- **ÖH-WU**
  - [https://www.facebook.com/StV.Doktorat.WU](https://www.facebook.com/StV.Doktorat.WU)

- **Consultation hours of the Academic Director**
  - By appointment, registration via the Doctoral Office
All the best for your intellectual journey!