

Annual Report 2011

Activities 2011 (November 2010 -- November 2011)

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At last count, 73 PhD students were registered in the doctoral program. This year 10 PhD students received their doctoral degree. The average duration of their doctoral thesis was 4 years.

Fifteen courses or workshops were offered (see Table), which were attended by a total of 245 participants (83% PhD students, 14% post-docs or researchers, 2% master students). Of the participants 38% were from the University of Neuchâtel, 23% from Geneva and Lausanne, 20% from Bern and Fribourg, and 18% from the other partner institutions (University of Zürich, ETH Zürich, Agroscope, etc.) and foreign institutions. Each course was evaluated by the students. The results from the evaluations were sent to the course instructors and the information will be used for the selection and improvement of future courses.

Activities	Dates (2011)	Duration [days]	Speakers	Participants [nr]	Credit points	Appreciation [min 1, max 4]
Communication activities						
How to make scientific presentations and posters interesting	11-12.04	2	J. McNeil (Univ. Western Ontario, Canada)	10	1.5	2.7
Effective public speaking	10.10	1	M.L. Goldschmid (consultant)	8	1.0	3.6
Planning a career strategy - Part 1 - <i>Joint course with CUSO</i>	29-30.11	2	P. Kraus (aht' intermediation)	17	1.0	3.6
Research tools						
Introduction to chromatography and mass spectrometry for biologists	18-19.01	2	Gaëtan Glauser (SPSW, Univ. Neuchâtel) Armelle Vallat (Univ. Neuchâtel)	12	1.0	3.5
Methods for the statistical analysis of siring success and relatedness in plants and animals	14-15.02	2	Frederic Austerlitz (CNRS/MNHN, Paris, F)	17	1.0	3.0
Scanning electronic microscopy (SEM)	9-11.05	3	M. Vlimant and Alexandre Gurba (Univ. Neuchâtel)	5	1.0	3.6
Applied statistical regression modelling for biologists using R	29.09, 6,20.10, 3,17.11	5	Diego Kuonen (Statoo consulting; Bern)	19	3.0	3.5
Identification of free-living protozoa - <i>Joint course with CUSO</i>	25-26.10	2	Anat.Bobrov (Moscow State Univ, RU) Bettina Eugster (Univ. Zurich) Alexander Kudryavstev (Univ. Geneva) Enrique Lara (Univ. Neuchâtel) Y. Mazei (Penza State Pedagog. Univ, RU) Edward Mitchell (Univ. Neuchâtel)	10	1.0	-

Scientific topics						
Immunoxidative ecology: progress and prospects	10-11.03	2	D. Costantini (Univ. Glasgow, UK) M. Hau (Max Planck Inst, Radolfzell, D) F. Helfenstein (Univ. Bern) G.Lozano (Freelance researcher, Estonia) Ø. Øverli (Norwegian Univ. Norway) M. Rantala (Univ. Turku, Finland) A. Ros (Univ. Neuchâtel) A. Roulin, Univ. Lausanne)	17	1.0	3.6
Minisymposium in metagenomics - <i>Joint course with CUSO</i>	22-24.06	3	Patrick S. Chain (Los Alamos Nat. Lab, USA) C. Dorador Ortis (Univ. Antofagasta, Chile) Laurent Farinelli (Fasteris SA) Georg Gradl (Eurofins MWG Operon, D) Sebastian Jaenicke (CeBiTec, D) David Russell Johnson (Eawag Dübendorf) Vladimir Lazarevic (Univ. Geneva) Veronica Molina (Univ. Andres Bello, Chile) Vladimir Sentchilo (Univ. Lausanne) Frank-Joerg Vorhoelter (CeBiTec, D) Christof Wunderlin (Microsynth Laboratory)	24	1.5 / 2.0	3.5
Plant light responses - <i>Joint workshop with CUSO</i>	25-26.08	2	Carlos Ballaré (Univ. Buenos Aires, Argentin) Roberto Bassi (Univ. Verona, I) John Christie (Univ. Glasgow, UK) Keara Franklin (Univ. Bristol, UK) Ute Hoecker (Univ. Koeln, D) Gareth Jenkins (Univ. Glasgow, UK)	33	1.0 / 1.5	3.6
Microbial diversity (bacteria, fungi, protists) - <i>Joint course with CUSO</i>	5.09	1	Jan Pawlowski (Univ. Geneva) Télesphore Sime-Ngando (Univ. Blaise Pascal Clermont-Ferrand, F) Frederick W. Spiegel (Univ. Arkansas, USA) Micah Dunthorn (Univ. Kaiserslautern, D) Pilar Junier (Univ. Neuchâtel) Enrique Lara (Univ. Neuchâtel)	13	0.5 / 1.0	3.7
Aboveground and below-ground community ecology - <i>Joint course with CUSO</i>	7.09	1	Richard Bardgett (Univ. Lancaster, UK) Michal Hájek (Masaryk Univ, CZ) Frederick W. Spiegel (Univ. Arkansas, USA) Enrique Lara (Univ. Neuchâtel) Edward Mitchell (Univ. Neuchâtel)	25	0.5 / 1.0	3.0
Plant interactions with other eukaryotes - <i>a joint workshop with CUSO</i>	15-16.09	2	Pierre Abad (INRA, F) Nina Fatouros (Univ. Wageningen, NL) S. Kamoun (Sainsbury Lab. Norwich, UK) Martin Parniske (LM Univ. Munich, D) Julie Scholes (Univ. Sheffield, UK) Paul Schulze-Lefert (Max-Planck Köln, D) Ted Turlings (Univ. Neuchâtel) Alga Zuccaro (Max-Planck Marburg, D)	23	1.0	-
Elements of evolutionary genetics	Fall term 2011	12 x 2 hr	Y. Willi & Ch. Parisod (Univ. Neuchâtel)	12	2.0	-

Table: Activities of the doctoral program 2011

External activities

The doctoral program actively participated in the *International conference PR-proteins and induced resistance against pathogens and insects - Molecular biology meets application - PR-IR 2011*, 4-8.09.2011 (Univ. Neuchâtel) with 175 participants.

Annual PhD students meeting 2011

The annual meeting of the doctoral program is organised by the PhD students themselves. This year the organizers were Ashok Munusamy (Univ. Neuchâtel) and Yan Sun (Univ. Fribourg). The meeting took place on 17 May in

Neuchâtel. Raphaël Arlettaz (Univ. Bern), Ueli Grossniklaus (Univ. Zurich), Andrew Hector (Univ. Zurich), Gottfried Hohmann (Max-Planck-Institute Leipzig, D), Patrik Kehrli (Agroscope ACW) were invited to give a talk. A total of 49 PhD students attended the meeting. They presented the results of their research to their peers (6 oral presentations and 21 posters). The poster prizes were attributed to Elvira de Lange (1st) and Dirk Balmer (2nd), both from the University of Neuchâtel.

Mobility grants

Ten congress travel grants (total CHF 7'500) were awarded, which gave the awardees an opportunity to present their results (poster or oral presentation) to an international audience. In addition, 5 requests for mobility grants were received and all were partially granted (total CHF 3'600), allowing the students to visit other laboratories to conduct experiments, learn techniques and/or discuss research results with experts in the field.

Global evaluation of the year 2011

The graph in the annexe provides a summary of the global evaluation made by the participants. The global questionnaire was sent to all registered Ph.D. students and those who ended their Ph.D. this year. It was completed by 46% of the students.

Overall the evaluation by the students was good (first line) and shows consistency with the evaluations of previous years. The additional comments made by the students reflect their personal preferences. As always they would like to have more courses offered in their specific domain. The remarks will be used for the planning of the next curriculum.

Graph: Results of the global evaluation of the courses 2011

First line shows the overall impression.

The lines below detail the answers to the specific questions.

Global evaluation / 2011

