

Annual Report 2013

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At last count (end of December 2013), 83 PhD students were registered in the doctoral program. This year 21 PhD students received their doctoral degree. The average duration of their doctoral thesis was 4 years and 5 months.

Twenty-two courses or workshops were offered (see Table), which were attended by a total of 437 participants (70% PhD students, 13% post-docs or researchers, 8% master students). Of the participants 49% were from the University of Neuchâtel, 18% from Bern and Fribourg, 14% from Geneva and Lausanne, and 19% from the other partner institutions (University of Zürich, ETH Zürich, Agroscope, etc.) and foreign institutions. Most of the courses were evaluated by the students, as indicated in the last column of the below table (highest possible note is 4.0). 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.

Table: Activities of the doctoral program year 2013

Activities 2013	Dates (2013)	Duration [days]	Speakers	*Participants [nr]	Credit points	Appreciation [min 1, max 4]
Communication activities						
Valorisation of research through the web 2.0	16.04	1	Frédéric Schütz (SIB & Uni Lausanne) Charles Andrès (Uni Neuchâtel)	11	0.5	3.7
How to make scientific presentations and posters interesting	17-18.04	2	Jeremy N. McNeil (Uni Western Ontario, Canada)	12	1.5	3.8
Writing grant proposals	5.9	0.5	Ph. Mayer (science-textflow, Winterthur)	12	0.5	3.1
Effective public speaking	25.9 & 9.10	1	M.L. Goldschmid (consultant)	12	1.0	3.6
Developing your capacity of leadership	25.9 & 9.10	1	M.L. Goldschmid (consultant)	14	1.0	3.4
Planning a career strategy - Part 1 - a joint course with CUSO	2-3.10	2	P. Kraus (AHT' intermediation)	17	1.0	3.4
Write a review, write now!	27.11	0.5	Ph. Mayer, science-textflow, Winterthur	16	0.5	3.4
Planning a career strategy - Part 2 - a joint course with CUSO	2-3.12	2	P. Kraus (AHT' intermediation)	14	1.0	3.6
Research tools						
Introduction to bioinformatics	15,22 29.05 & 4-5.06	5	Th. Junier (SIB Lausanne, Vital-IT group), P.S. Chain (Los Alamos National Laboratory, Genome Science JGI, USA)	25	2.5	3.4
An introduction to R (Lausanne) in coll. with CUSO	10-13.06	4	J. Goudet (Uni Lausanne)	34	2.0	3.7

Scientific topics						
Peatland ecology and management	31.01	1	M. Lamentowicz (Adam Mickiewicz Uni, Poznań, Poland), F. Muller (Fédération des Conservatoires d'espaces naturels, Besançon, F), E. Feldmeyer-Christe (WSL, Birmensdorf), A. Buttler (WSL & EPF Lausanne), Luca Bragazza (WSL & EPF Lausanne), Ph.Grosvernier (LIN'eco, Reconvilier), S. Tschanz (Service Faune Forêt Nature du Canton de Neuchâtel), Ph. Brunner (CHYN, Uni Neuchâtel), D.Hunkeler (CHYN, Uni Neuchâtel)	39	0.5 / 1.0	-

Microbial logistics: exploring the role of dispersion on microbial activities in the soil - <i>in coll. with CUSO Microbial Sciences</i>	4.02	1	Pierre Rossi (EPF Lausanne), Arnaud Deschene (Department of Environmental Engineering, Technical Uni, Denmark)	11	0.5 / 1.0	-
Metagenomic data analyses - <i>in coll. with CUSO StarOmics</i>	4.02	1	J. G. Caporaso (Center for Microbial Genetics and Genomics, Northern Arizona Uni, USA), M. Hartmann (WSL Birmensdorf)	12	0.5 / 1.0	-
Animal cognition	14-15.03	2	K. Janmaat (Max Planck Inst. Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, D), L. McNally (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland), C. van Schaik (Uni of Zurich), A. Seed (Uni St Andrews, UK), A. Thornton (Uni Exeter, UK) S. William Townsend (Uni Zurich)	33	1.0	3.4
The chloroplast: a model system for organellar biogenesis - <i>a joint workshop with CUSO</i>	23-24.05	2	M. Goldschmidt-Clermont (Uni Geneva), P. Jarvis (Uni Leicester, UK), D. J. Schnell (Uni Massachusetts, USA), S. Zeeman (ETH Zürich), Ph. Zimmermann (Nebion AG), G. Glauser (Uni Neuchâtel)	22	1.0	3.3
Ecological benefits and risks of biological control - <i>a joint workshop with CUSO</i>	6-7.06	2	D. Babendreier (CABI), M. Birkett (Rothamsted Res, UK), M. D'Alessandro (BAFU), R.-U. Ehlers ("International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association" and e-nema GmbH, D), H. Hinz (CABI), M. Kenis (CABI), A. Loomans (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, Natl Plant Protection Organ., NL), A. Aebi (Uni Neuchâtel)	34	1.0	3.4
Conservation Biology for the 21st Century - <i>in coll. with CUSO</i>	5-6.09	2	R. Arlettaz (Uni Bern), T. Blackburn (Uni London, UK), A. Hector (Uni Oxford, UK), C. Thomas (Uni York, UK), T. Tschardt (Uni Göttingen, D), T. Whitham (Northern Arizona Uni, USA)	52	1.0 / 1.5	-
NeuZu 2013	28-29.11	2	24 short talks	36	0.5 / 1.0	-
Advances in Swiss research on the chemical ecology of plant defences	10.12	2	S. Bartels (Uni Basel), C. De Moraes (ETH Zürich), M. Erb (Max Planck Inst, Jena, D), T. Farmer (Uni Lausanne), J.-P. Métraux (Uni Fribourg), U. Schaffner (CABI), Ph. Reymond (Uni Lausanne), J.-L. Wolfender (Uni Geneva)	38	0.5 / 1.0	-

* most of the course have a limited number of participants

Supported registration fee at courses / workshops

The evolution of proximate mechanisms for behavioural and life history decisions (Arolla) - <i>a CUSO workshop</i>	11-14.08	2	T. Flatt (Uni Lausanne), J. Goodson, (Indiana Uni, USA), T. Groothuis (Uni Groningen, NL), Ch. Hemelrijk (Uni Groningen, NL), J. McNamara (Uni Bristol, UK), R. Oliveira (Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, P), G.S. van Doorn (Uni Groningen, NL)	3 sur 28	2.0	4
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EuroVol Summer school 2013 - Plant volatiles: from lab bench to application (Neuchâtel)	9-12.09	3	N. Dudareva (Purdue Agriculture, USA), A. Huffaker (USDA, Gainesville, USA), F. Loreto (Uni Helsinki, F), A. Hansel (Uni Innsbruck, A), F. Schiestl (Uni Zürich), M. Dicke (Wageningen UR, NL), M. Birkett (Rothamsted research, UK), Ted Turlings (Uni Neuchâtel)	4 sur 32	2.0	-
Field course on lichen biology in the Swiss alps	12-15.9	2.5		2 sur 28	1.0	-

Annual PhD students meeting 2013

The annual meeting of the doctoral program is organised by the PhD students themselves. This year the organizers were Alexandre Tayalé and Julien Vieux (University of Neuchâtel). The meeting took place on 2 May in Neuchâtel. Prof. Henrik Kaessmann (Center for Integrative Genomics, University of Lausanne), Prof. Peter Linder (Institut für Systematische Botanik, University of Zurich & director of the University Botanical Garden), and Prof. Ole Seehausen, (Eawag, Fish Ecology and Evolution & co-director of the Institute of Zoology of the University of Berne) 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 30 posters). The oral presentation prize was attributed to Tina Wunderlin, University of Neuchâtel and the poster prizes to Lucas Marie-Orleach, University of Basel (1st) and Ines Ben Rejeb, University of Neuchâtel (2nd).

Mobility grants

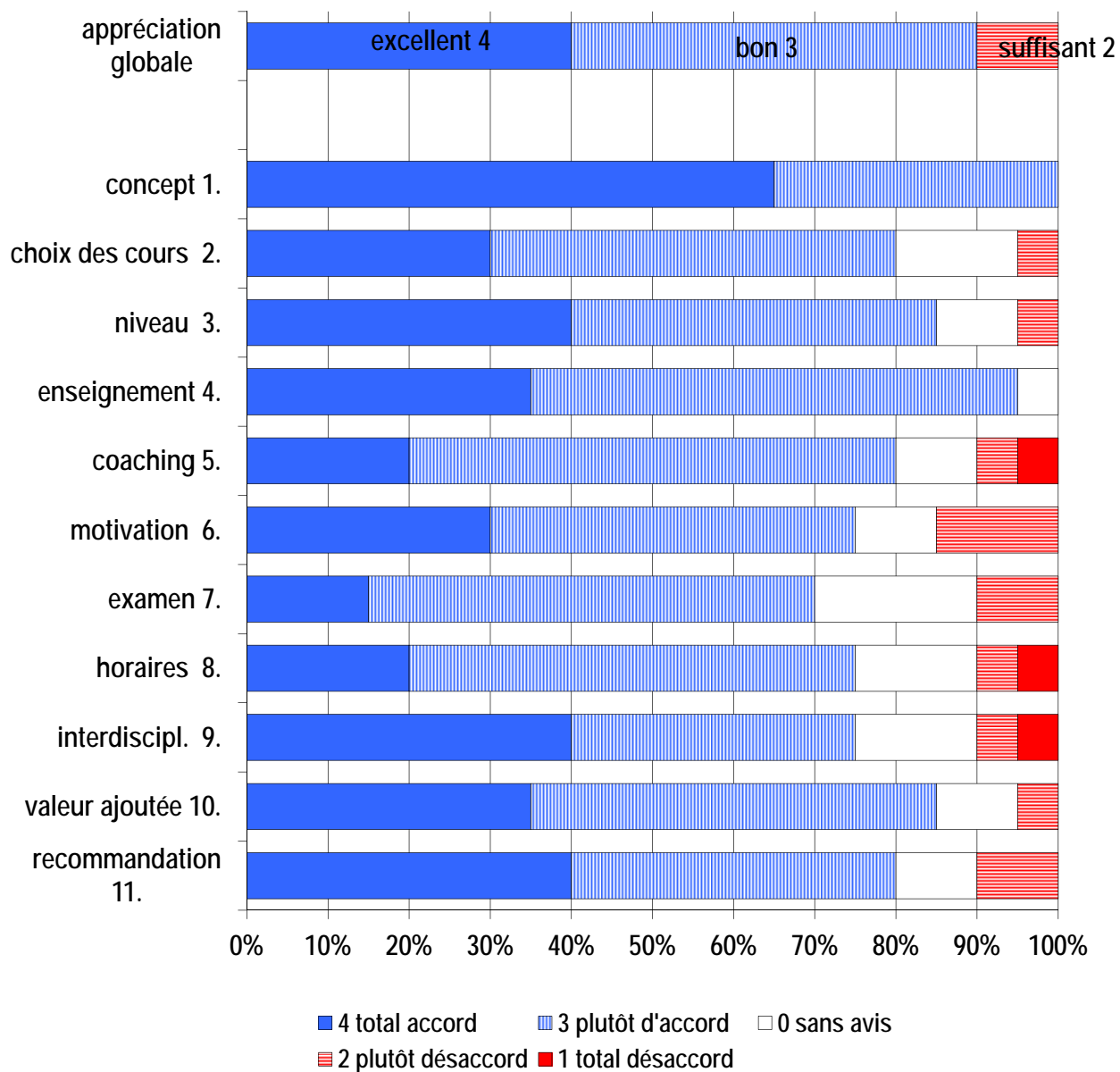
Eight congress travel grants (total CHF 7400) were awarded, which gave the awardees an opportunity to present their results (poster or oral presentation) to an international audience. In addition, 3 requests for mobility grants were received and all were partially granted (total CHF 1800), allowing the students to visit other laboratories to conduct experiments, learn research techniques and/or discuss research results with experts in the field.

Global evaluation of the year 2013

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 25% of the students.

Overall the evaluation by the students was good, with an overall positive impression by more than 90% of the participants (first line). This is very consistent with the evaluations of previous years. The additional comments made by the students (not shown) reflect their personal preferences and their respective domains. 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 and by collaborating more with other programs we aim to broaden the spectrum of courses that we can offer. The emphasis on communication continues to be appreciated. At the request of the students we have increased the number of tools courses.

Evaluation globale des cours du programme doctoral
Global evaluation of the courses / 2013



Graph: Results of the global evaluation of the courses 2013

First line shows the overall impression.
The lines below detail the answers to the specific questions.