

Annual Report 2015

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At last count (end of December 2015), 97 PhD students were registered in the doctoral program. In 2015, 6 PhD students received their doctoral degree. The average duration of their doctoral thesis was 4 years and 3 months.

16 courses or workshops were offered (see Table), which were attended by a total of **313** participants (**80 %** PhD students, **11 %** post-docs or researchers, **9 %** master students). Of the participants **53 %** were from the University of Neuchâtel, **19 %** from Geneva and Lausanne, **16 %** from Bern and Fribourg, and **12 %** 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 is used for the selection and improvement of future courses.

Table: Activities of the doctoral program year 2015

Activities 2014	Dates (2015)	Duration [days]	Speakers	*Participants [nr]	Credit points	Appreciation [min 1, max 4]
Communication activities						
Planning a career strategy - Part 1 - Networking & job finding methodology	3-4.3	2	P. Kraus (AHT ¹ intermediation)	17	1.0	3.6
How to make scientific presentations and posters interesting	4-5.5	2	Jeremy N. McNeil (University of Western Ontario, Canada)	10	1.5	4.0
Planning a career strategy - Part 2 - Improving your CV and practical training to meet your future employer's expectations -	29-30.9	2	P. Kraus (AHT ¹ intermediation)	15	1.0	3.7
Scientific writing clinic - <i>a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution</i>	23.10, 6.11, 18.12	3	M. Matter (HEG Fribourg), Jeannette Regan (ZUW Uni Bern)	12	2.0	4.0
Write a review, write now!		0.5	Ph. Mayer, science-textflow, Winterthur	16	0.5	3.7
Research tools						
Methods in animal communication research – Acoustic part	19.3	1	VIDEOS recorded from the course Methods in animal communication research – calls, facial expressions, gestures	5	0.5	3.6
Introduction to bioinformatics	6, 13, 20, 27.5, 3.6	5	Thomas Junier (Thomas.junier (at) unine.ch), SIB Lausanne, Vital-IT group & Université de Neuchâtel	21	2.5	3.0
An introduction to R, Lausanne - <i>in coll. with CUSO Doctoral Program in Ecology & Evolution</i>	1-4.6	4	Jérôme Goudet (Uni Lausanne)	25	2.0	-
Phylogeography, macroecology and biogeography - <i>a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution</i>	9-11.6	3	Maria Aguilar (Uni Alberta, Canada), N. Alvarez (Uni Lausanne), S. Dubey (Uni Lausanne), Diego Fontaneto (National Research Council, Verbania, I), Thierry Heger (Uni British Columbia, Canada), Joaquin Hortal (CSIC, Madrid, S), Enrique Lara, (Uni Neuchâtel), David Mann (Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, U.K.)	27	1.5	3.4

Biostatistics for non-statisticians: good practices, misuse and pitfalls	7.10	1	Romain-Daniel Gosselin & Adin Ross-Gillespie (Biotelligences LLC, Lausanne)	20	0.5	3.3
Symposium in RNAseq data gathering and analysis - a joint course with CUSO	2-3.11	2	Patrick S. Chain (Los Alamos National Laboratory, USA),	20	1.0	3.6

Scientific topics						
Forensic ecology - <i>a joint course with CUSO Doctoral Program in Ecology & Evolution</i>	18-19.2	2	Jens Amendt (Institute of Legal Medicine, Frankfurt, D), Wim Bert (Uni Gent, B), Bertrand Fournier (Uni Montpellier 2, F), Maria Alejandra Perotti (Uni Reading, U.K.), Hanne Steel (Uni Gent, B)	16	0.5 / 1.0	3.7
Phylogenomics: pitfalls and benefits	25-27.3	3	Pascal-Antoine Christin (Uni Sheffield, UK), Christophe Guyeux (Uni Franche-Comté, F), Thomas Marcussen (Uni Oslo, N), Christian Parisod (Uni Neuchâtel)	15	1.0 / 2.0	3.2
Animal social networks in behavioural research	27-28.4	2	Iain Couzin (Princeton Uni, USA), Darren Croft (Uni Exeter, UK), Will Hoppitt (Anglia Ruskin Uni, UK), Julia Lehmann (Uni Roehampton, UK), Andrew King (Swansea Uni, UK), Cedric Sueur (IPHC, Strasbourg, F)	41	1.0	3.5
Visions for a sustainable agriculture - <i>a joint course with CUSO Doctoral Program E&E and MPS</i>	4-7.5	3.5	Olivier Girardin (FRI), Michael Ilegems (Kanamy), Ulrich Kuhlmann (CABI), Urs Niggli (FibL), Guy Poppy (Uni Southampton, UK), Johan Six (ETH-Zurich), Romano De Vivo (Syngenta), Manuele Tamo (International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Benin)	36	2.0	3.2
Endosymbiotic organelles: dynamics of mitochondria and chloroplasts - <i>a joint course with CUSO Doctoral Program in Molecular Plant Sciences</i>	3-4.9	2	Benoit Kornmann (ETH Zurich), Sally Mackenzie (Uni Nebraska-Lincoln, USA), Livia Merendino (CNRS, Grenoble, F), Eva Nowack (Heinrich-Heine-Uni Düsseldorf, D), André Schneider (Uni Bern), Francis-A. Wollman (Uni Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris, F)	19	1.0 / 1.5	3.8

* most of the course have a limited number of participants

Supported registration fee or/and travel expenses at courses / workshops

An introduction to R, University of Fribourg	12-14.1	3	4 docs DP-biol	18	1.0	-
Zurich Life Science Day 2015, University of Zurich	12.2	1	1 doc DP-biol	-	-	-
SeeDS: Present your thesis in 3 minutes! University of Lausanne	27.11	1	3 docs DP-biol	30	0.5	-

Annual PhD students meeting 2015 - Novel Techniques in Science

The annual meeting of the doctoral program is organised by the PhD students themselves. This year the organizers were Christèle Borgeaud (University of Neuchâtel) and Olivier Hilfiker (University of Lausanne). The meeting took place on 26 May in Neuchâtel. Three invited speakers (Prof. Holger Puchta, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany, Prof. Serge Pelet, University of Lausanne, Switzerland, Prof. Ralph Schlapbach, Functional Genomics Center Zurich, ETH Zurich / University Zurich) gave a talk. A total of 56 PhD students attended the meeting. They presented the results of their research to their peers (18 posters presented and resumed with short 3 minutes presentation).

Mobility grants

Eight congress travel grants (total CHF 3100) 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 1700), 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 2015

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. in 2015. It was completed by 25 % of the students.

Overall the evaluation by the students was good. 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. Due to budget cuts we have had to reduce the course offer to some extent. We will continue collaborate with other programs to help us to broaden the spectrum of courses that we can offer.

Graph: Results of the global evaluation of the courses 2015

First line shows the overall impression.

The lines below detail the answers to the specific questions.

