

Annual Report 2019

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Annual PhD students' meeting – 29 May 2019

At the last count (December 20, 2019), **80** Ph.D. students were registered in the doctoral program. During 2019, **15** Ph.D. students received their doctoral degree, of which 12 completed the program. The average duration of their doctoral thesis was 4 years and 10 months.

During 2019, **18** courses or workshops were offered (see Table.1), which were attended by a total of **302** participants (**75 %** Ph.D. students, **2 %** post-docs or researchers, **17 %** master students). Of the participants, **61 %** were from the University of Neuchâtel, **20 %** from Bern and Fribourg, **12 %** from Geneva and Lausanne, and **7 %** from other partner institutions (University of Zürich, ETH Zürich, Agroscope, etc.) and foreign institutions (see Graph 1).

Graph 1: Origin of participants to the courses

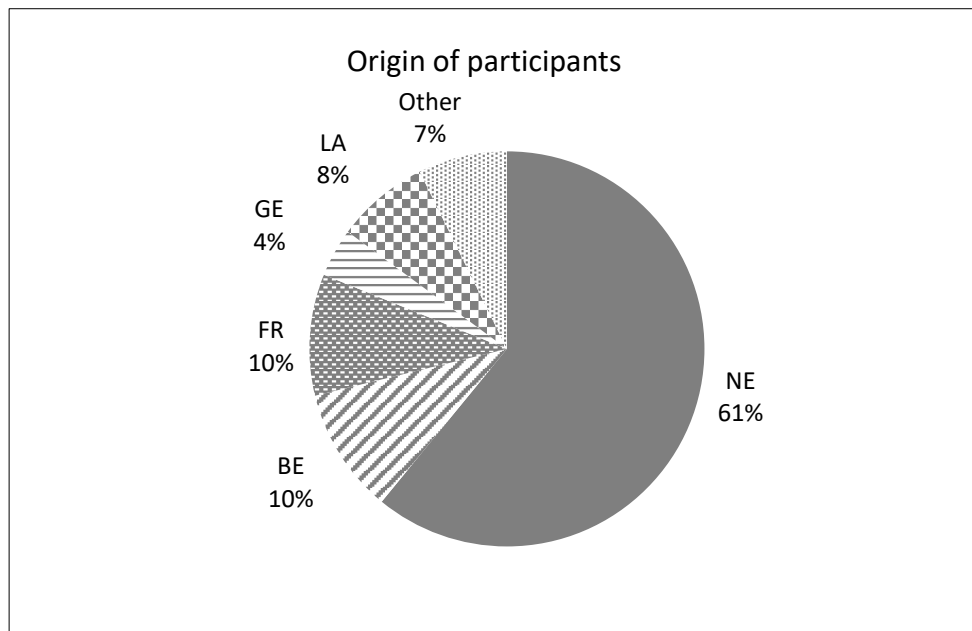


Table 1: Activities of the doctoral program year 2019 and evaluation scores

Evaluations were done by the participants at the activities (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.

Activities	Dates (2019)	Duration [days]	Speakers	*Participants [nr]	Credit points	Appreciation [min 1, max 4]
Communication activities						
Career Booster: how to communicate with impact in a job interview	28.02	1	D. Canella, T. Teichler (Lead to Trust, Zurich)	15	0.5	3.8
Energy & time management: how to perform in the storm	25-26.04	2	D. Canella, T. Teichler (Lead to Trust, Zurich)	12	1.0	3.8
Scientific writing clinic	11, 18, 25.06	3	M. Matter (HEG Fribourg), B. Hoyt (HEG Fribourg)	8	2.0	4
The art of effectively presenting your research	08, 15, 22.10	2.5	S. Lagier (SamSpeaksScience, Geneva)	14	1.5	3.9
Beyond standard texts: writing grant proposals and review articles	08.11	1	Ph. Mayer (Science-textflow, Winterthur)	15	0.5	3.6

Planning your career: Job Finding Methodology, Networking and Training to meet your future employer expectations	19.11 & 22-23.01.2020	1/3	P. Kraus (AHT intermediation GmbH, Pfäffikon)	8	1.0	-
Meet your future (local) employer	05.12	0.5	L. Mbow (Ichnos Sciences Biotherapeutics, Epalinges), D. Balmer (Syngenta, Stein), L. Bovet (Philip Morris International, Neuchâtel), J.-L. Perret & L. Rufener (INVENesis, Neuchâtel), I. Hiltbold (Agroscope, Nyon), V. Harraca (Firmenich International, Geneva), T. Turlings (University of Neuchâtel)	40	-	-

Research tools						
Advanced molecular cloning - <i>a joint course with CUSO Molecular Plant Sciences</i>	14.01	1	V. Bernard (BioConcept, Allschwil), S. Marillonnet (Leibniz IPB, Halle, Germany), G. Fucile (Biozentrum, University of Basel), P. Longoni (University of Neuchâtel)	11	1.0	3.4
Plant imaging: advanced light microscopy - <i>a joint course with CUSO Molecular Plant Sciences</i> (Geneva)	14-15.02	2	S. Loubery (University of Geneva)	9	1.0	4.0
Introduction to bioinformatics	08-12.04	5	T. Junier, (SIB & EPF, Lausanne & University of Neuchâtel)	7	2.5	3.9
Introduction to R - <i>a joint course with CUSO</i> (Lausanne)	04-07.06	4	J. Goudet (University of Lausanne)	29	2.0	3.5
Scientific visualisation using R	24-25.09	2	J. Wunder (WSL Birmensdorf & Wunder Consulting Wald, Zurich)	15	1.0	3.9
Advanced data management & manipulation using R - <i>a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution</i>	22-23.10	2	J. Wunder (WSL Birmensdorf & Wunder Consulting Wald, Zurich)	16	1.0	3.9
Bioinformatics and statistics for metabarcoding studies in environmental microbiology and ecology - <i>a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution</i>	09-10.12	2	G. Lentendu (University of Neuchâtel)	15	1.0	3.1

Scientific topics						
Visions for a sustainable agriculture - <i>a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution & Molecular Plant Sciences</i>	06-08.05	3	J. Pickett (Cardiff University, UK), U. Kuhlmann (Plantwise, CABI, Switzerland), L. Tamm (FiBL, Switzerland), M. R. Bellon (CONABIO, Mexico), C. Screpanti (Syngenta, Basel), J. Six (ETHZ), J. Tambo (Plantwise, CABI, Switzerland), P. Junier (University of Neuchâtel), B. Benrey (University of Neuchâtel), S. Rasmann (University of Neuchâtel)	50	1.5	3.3

The Temporal Dynamics of Evolution - Fribourg Ecology & Evolution Days 2019 - a joint course with CUSO Ecology and Evolution (Fribourg)	09-10.09	2	L. Becks (University of Konstanz, Germany), K. Guschanski (Uppsala University, Sweden), N. Overgaard (Thekildsen Cornell University, USA), A.-S. Malaspinas (University of Lausanne), P. Schmidt (University of Pennsylvania, USA), O. Seehausen (University of Bern), D. Wegmann (University of Fribourg), T. Flatt (University of Fribourg)	16	1.0 / 1.5	3.8
Protists diversity and ecology in aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems	02-03.12	2	T. Posch (University of Zurich), S. Gray (University of Fribourg), S. Geisen (Netherlands Institute of Ecology, Wageningen, The Netherlands), G. Lentendu (University of Neuchâtel), E. Lara (Royal Botanical Garden, Madrid, Spain), F. Altermatt (EAWAG & University of Zurich), E. Mitchell (University of Neuchâtel)	22	1.0 / 1.5	4.0

* all courses have a limited number of participants

Supported external courses

Biology19, Zurich-Irchel	07-08.02	2	M. Duffy (University of Michigan, USA), V. Lummaa (University of Turku, Finland), W. Salzburger (University of Basel), T. Slotte (Stockholm University, Sweden), B. König (University of Zurich)	na	0.5 / 1.0	na
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Annual Ph.D. students meeting 2019 – Ecology, Evolution and Beyond

The annual meeting of the doctoral program is organised by the Ph.D. students themselves. For 2019, the organizers were Luca Grandi and Ursula Oggenfuss (University of Neuchâtel). The meeting took place on May 29 in Neuchâtel. Three external speakers (Prof Rosmarie Honegger, University of Zurich, Prof Jan van der Meer, University of Lausanne and Nicola Genovese, Artists-in-labs program, Zurich) were invited to give a talk. 25 Ph.D. students attended the meeting. They presented the results of their research to their peers (9 posters presented and promoted with a 3-minute flash-talk, and 7 fifteen-minute oral presentations).

Two Best Oral Presentation prizes were equally attributed (1st place, tied) to Luca Grandi (University of Neuchâtel) and Pamela Bruno (University of Neuchâtel) for their presentations entitled “Communication among cotton plants” and “Sequestration of cucurbitacins by *Diabrotica balteata* larvae and possible effects against entomopathogenic nematodes”, respectively.

The Best Poster Presentation prize was attributed to Andrea Corona (University of Neuchâtel) for her poster entitled “Unveiling the biodiversity of bacterial spores in the environment”.

Congress and Mobility grants

3 congress travel grants (total CHF **2459,38**) were awarded to students enrolled into the doctoral program, which gave the awardees an opportunity to present their results (poster or oral presentation) to an international audience. In addition, **2** requests for mobility grants were received and all were partially granted (total CHF **3926,29**), allowing the students to visit other laboratories to conduct experiments, learn research techniques and/or discuss research results with experts in the field.