

## Program

**Target group:** staff members who are supervising their first doctoral students and experienced supervisors who want to share their insights with starting supervisors.

Dates: July 5 & 6, 2011

Preparatory activities: a short questionnaire will be sent in advance to participants

### Introduction

We are still facing the absence of any formal program for training supervisors. Though it is interesting to discover where the supervisors gained their ideas on what to do. It seems that many tended either to react strongly against their own experience and do the opposite, or replicate what they saw as successful. Although supervisory styles and intensities may vary through disciplines there are major tasks which are common across the disciplines and related to three stages. At the beginning significant effort is put into helping the doctoral candidates to find or establish a research question, problem or topic for their thesis. Thereafter the doctoral candidate is regularly monitored but interaction is less frequent, and often left to the doctoral candidate to initiate unless there are warning signals that the doctoral candidate is losing track. The third stage is when it is time to stop 'doing' and to write up the thesis which is a major task even though other writing may and usually has been going on during the process in many areas. In parallel to the three stages guiding the move from dependence to independence is critical and usually extends to areas which are beyond to the research topic and endeavor to finalize the dissertation. Reflecting on the purpose of a dissertation a discussion on the expected outcome of the dissertation process is needed. This should be matched with the profile of our doctoral graduates to identify if the graduates are professionally prepared to embark on a career inside or outside academia.

In the proposed program we will co-operate with a real workshop character. That means that we will strive for a nice balance between transfer of knowledge and theory on the one side and the exchange of valuable experiences between yourselves and the collective development of plans for the near future on the other side!

### Schedule<sup>1</sup> 9 – 17

1. Getting acquainted, warming up
  2. Analysis of the supervision context: International trends in supervision
  3. Mutual responsibilities and expectations: supervisor's, student's, institution's perspectives
- Lunch (13-14)
4. Biography of the dissertations process: looking at the different stages of a dissertation project from the supervisor's perspective
  5. Developing plans for the (very) near future.
  6. Conclusion and Outlook
    - a. Presentation of some tools that might help supervisors and doctoral students
    - b. Further issues left open to discuss in future meetings

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<sup>1</sup> The program is based on the results of a working group meeting of Helmut Brentel, Melita Kovačević, Slaven Mihaljević, Hans Sonneveld and Lucas Zinner from Universities in Frankfurt, Zagreb, Utrecht and Vienna resp. held in Dubrovnik 2010.

## Professionalization Ph.D. supervision, Cluj, March 2011

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**Facilitators:** PD Dr. Helmut Brentel (Goethe-University Frankfurt) and Dr. Lucas Zinner (University of Vienna)

Helmut Brentel is a scholar, researcher and supervisor in the areas of sociology of organisations, organisational learning and change, sociology of industry, environmental sociology. His special professional focus is on the development of higher education and doctoral schools within the framework of the Bologna process. From 1998 to 2001 he coordinated a pilot project of German universities "Modularisation in the Humanities and Social Sciences". From 2001 to 2006 he established the "International Postgraduate Programme Social Sciences", the first structured doctoral school at the Goethe University Frankfurt, and developed from 2007 to 2011 the "Frankfurt Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences". During this time he contributed with numerous presentations on these topics to conferences and workshops organised by EU, EUA and EUA-CDE, and served as presenter and adviser for European universities planning to establish doctoral schools. Since April 2011 he is academic director of the newly built Goethe Graduate Academy (GRADE) covering all departments of the Goethe University. Helmut Brentel published in 2009 the article "Establishing a Doctoral School" in the Bologna Handbook. With the "Quality Circle Dissertation", a group of graduate school managers from 11 German universities he developed in 2010 the booklet "Designing the Doctorate Together" with guidelines for doctoral candidates as well as for supervisors.

Lucas Zinner began his career as a researcher, working in the fields of complex analysis, statistics and econometrics at the University of Vienna, Mid Sweden University and the Technical University of Vienna. In 2002 he joined at the Austrian Science Foundation (FWF) as Scientific Administrator. He was in charge of applications in the fields of Mathematics, Engineering and Computer Sciences, as program manager he developed the FWF program scheme "Translational Research" and was contact person for all programs for applied research. In 2004 Lucas Zinner became Vice-Director of the Research Services and International Relations Office, helped organize a Research Services Office including Technology Transfer and set up a university-wide research documentation database. Furthermore he became responsible for the newly implemented program scheme "Initiativkollegs", an internal funding scheme to promote structured doctoral programs at the University of Vienna. Since 2008 he is heading the Center for Doctoral Studies of the University of Vienna, a central service unit for doctoral candidates and supervisors. He is partner in several EU funded projects and head of the UNICA PhD working group.

References and recommended reading:

- Delamont, S, Atkinson, P, & O. Parry (2004) *Supervising the Doctorate: A Guide to Success*, Oxford University Press
- Lovitts, B. E. (2007). *Making the implicit explicit: Creating performance expectations for assessing the outcomes of doctoral education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus
- Lovitts, B. E. (2008). The transition to independent research. Who makes it, who doesn't and why, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 79, No. 3
- Phillips, E.M. & Pugh, D.S. (2005). *How to get a PhD : A Handbook for Students and their Supervisors*. McGraw-Hill