



TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DRESDEN



GRADUATE
ACADEMY

Newsletter 01 | 2016

Dear readers and members,

In its third year, the Graduate Academy is still developing constantly, as the increasing number of members and our growing range of services prove. And the GA is also expanding in terms of space. I am delighted that, thanks to extensive refurbishment, two additional rooms in the basement of our building will soon be available for use. Considering the multitude of events, for us, this additional space is like winning the lottery. We will now not only be able to offer parallel workshops and seminars in-house, but we can also provide additional services, which – we hope – will be of great use to our members. I am thinking here particularly of the GA Writing Lab. Every Thursday, you will now have the opportunity to work on your thesis in our rooms and turn to our writing coaches for advice concerning any problems you may have. We are looking forward to high levels of participation.

Yours,

U. Bohn

Room for New Ideas!

The days are growing longer again. Spring is upon us. It's time for something new. We made use of the winter months to get new projects and event formats off the ground.

During the past few months, anyone wanting to see hard-working builders and decorators in action was in the right place at Mommsenstraße 7. Now, the noise of construction is happily a thing of the past: In future, two new rooms in the basement will be available to the Graduate Academy. On the floors above, too, a lot of equally brisk work has been done on implementing new ideas and event formats.

For example, the **first PhD-Day** will take place in April, aimed at providing students and “fresh” doctoral candidates with information on important questions concerning doing a doctorate at TU Dresden and encouraging

them to take the PhD plunge. The new rooms will also be ready at exactly the right time. Starting in May, the work stations, advisory sessions and workshops of the Graduate Academy's **“Schreibwerkstatt” (GA Writing Lab)** will find their home here. In addition, we are planning a one-week **writing retreat** in September, where everything will revolve around academic writing and the doctoral thesis. Since outstanding supervision is as fundamental to an excellent education at the doctoral level as good scientific practice, we are – exclusively and for the first time – offering an intensive workshop on professionalizing doctoral supervision to those members of our university teaching staff who are supervisors. For the role of coach, we have been able to recruit Dr. Helmut Brentel, an internationally renowned expert in this field. You can find a short interview on the subject on page 4.

Of course, along with all the work, we should also remember the importance of having fun. For the first time, in the summer semester, the **Prof(S)essions** will be staged – in collaboration with **die bühne**, TU Dresden's Theater – and will examine various aspects to do with the doctorate. We are already looking forward to interesting and amusing evenings.

From April you can find more information on events and other interesting news on the Facebook page of the Graduate Academy. We *Like* it. And you will hopefully too...



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Save the date!

As already mentioned above, the GA team has been very busy over the past few months, designing new services for training and support, as well as new event formats. These are intended to provide our members with even better and more goal-oriented assistance on their career paths. So, here is our tip: Take out your pen now and jot down the following dates in your diary!



be presenting the Prof(S)ession **“Oh Happy Day. Wie die Promotion trotz Prokrastination noch fertig wurde”** (How the doctorate managed to get done in spite of procrastination) on stage at die Bühne. Junior Professor Stefan Scherbaum (Methods of Psychology) and Dr. Sacha Hanig (parasitologist and Project Scout) will be discussing writer's block and methods for combatting the inner procrastinator.

Then, from **12 May 2016** onwards, our new **GA Writing Lab** will be open. Every Thursday from 9 a.m. till 6 p.m., our members will be able to work on their theses in peace and quiet in the newly renovated basement of the Graduate Academy and if required, seek advice from our writing coaches. Once a month, short additional workshops on a variety of topics to do with academic writing will take place (e.g. structure, outline or application letter).

In April, we're encouraging you to take the PhD plunge

On **14 April 2016**, the Graduate Academy is inviting all students and doctoral candidates to **“PhD Day”** in the banquet hall (**Dülfersaal**) of the “Alte Mensa” (on Dülferstrasse). At this event, we will be answering all your questions on the subject of doing a doctorate at TU Dresden: From choosing the right supervisor to funding opportunities or stays abroad. Also, an information market will provide the opportunity to talk to and get valuable tips and information from those funded by various scholarship providers, the Graduate Academy's Doctoral Council and members of staff from various service facilities at TU Dresden.

At the same time, also on 14 April, the **elections for the new representatives of the Doctoral Council** will be taking place. Make sure you come along. Your vote counts!

And in the evening, the Graduate Academy together with „die Bühne“, the theater at TU Dresden, is inviting you to the start of the third season of **“Prof(S)ession”** at Teplitzer Strasse 26. **“Alma Mater. Doktorvater. Ich. Einblicke in eine ganz besondere Beziehung”** (Alma Mater. My Doctoral Supervisor and I. Insights into a very special relationship) will make a fitting subject. From 7.30 p.m., Professor Thorsten Mascher (microbiology) and Moritz Greifzu (Doctoral Council) will exchange ideas on highlights and times of crisis in doctoral supervision. Matthias Spaniel, artistic director of “die Bühne”, will be presenting Prof(S)ession. Afterwards we will celebrate – on stage.

From May onwards, we'll be curing writer's block

To kick off the Graduate Academy's Writing Lab, on **11 May 2016**, we will

And in June, we'll be celebrating

We are looking forward to celebrating our annual **summer party** together with our members in the Graduate Academy on **22 June 2016**.

Have you already successfully taken the PhD plunge? Then send us a photo of your mortarboard and show it off at the summer party. The most creative head(dress) will win. The finishing touch: On this summer evening, the final instalment of Prof(S)ession will devote itself to the question **“Hi(r)n & weg. Wohin führt die Doktorwürde?”** (Where is this doctorate taking me?) Together with Dr. Kerstin Schmidt (molecular biologist and winner of the 2015 GA-Science Slam) and Prof. Marina Münkler (German Medieval and Renaissance German Literature and Culture), we are sure to find trailblazing answers

You can find more information about all the events on our website.

Putting it in a Nutshell: GA Writing Lab and Retreat

Writing is as essential to academic and scientific work as the proverbial air is to breathing. And that includes the moments when the writing flow begins to falter, which can have a variety of causes: Sometimes what's lacking is a suitable place for concentrated work, sometimes difficulties arise from the writing itself and you reach a point where talking about your writing project would be helpful.

From the 2016 summer semester onwards, the GA will therefore be offering two new events concerned with the subject of academic writing: The **GA writing lab** and the **GA writing retreat**.

The GA Writing Lab

Starting in May 2016, Thursday will be writing day at the Graduate Academy. From May 12, we will provide our members with a room and work stations (without a PC; you will need to bring one along yourself). You can work here on your writing projects such as your dissertation, a scientific publication or an application for funding. Together with the Project Scouts, we will also be offering – if required – individual advisory sessions on writing and, once a month, a short workshop on various topics to do with academic writing.

The GA Writing Lab offers:

- **Rooms:** Every Thursday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., work stations (without PCs) can be used in the newly renovated basement of Mommsenstr. 7. It will also be possible to hold meetings in the adjacent room.
- **Advisory service:** If questions arise while writing your dissertation or another scientific publication or proposal, the GA writing service will provide you with advice and support in developing strategies for solutions.
- **Workshops:** In the 2016 summer semester, a short workshop will be held once a month as part of the overall GA writing lab. Planned topics include structuring, writing an outline and writing proposals or funding applications.



St. Marienthal © Julian Nitzsche /Wikipedia

You can find more information and dates regarding the GA writing workshop on our website.

The GA writing retreat

For those of you for whom once a week at the GA is insufficient for working on your scientific texts, and who would therefore like a longer time-out in order to be able to concentrate fully on their papers, from 6 to 11 September 2016, the GA is offering the first GA writing retreat.

For almost a week, 20 GA members – both doctoral candidates and postdocs – will have the chance to retreat to and write at the meeting center of the St. Marienthal monastery. During that time, everything will revolve around academic writing. Every day, there will be set writing times – about four hours in the mornings, and another two hours during the afternoons.

On top of that, a varied program will be on offer: A morning warm-up session, writing tips, exchanging ideas in small groups, individual discussions with trained writing coaches, and an evening program composed of lectures, films and the opportunity to exchange experiences in a relaxed atmosphere and to pick up further suggestions for making your writing more professional.

You are more than welcome to apply to participate in the first GA writing retreat. Membership in the Graduate Academy is required. For more information on the application formalities and the program, please take a look at our website.

The deadline for applications is 31 May, 2016.

Three Questions to:

PD Dr. Helmut Brentel

Dr. Helmut Brentel is a university lecturer, researcher and supervisor in organization sociology, organizational learning and change, and has gained international experience in developing and assessing graduate schools. Since 2011, he has carried out numerous measures for training and continuing education for supervisors at more than 20 European universities.

In recent years, a lot has happened in doctoral supervision. How do you see the development, and what further steps are necessary in your view?

Initiated by the Excellence Initiative and the internationalization associated with the Bologna Process, the quality of doctoral education in Germany has improved markedly over the past few years. The training opportunities of the newly structured graduate schools and the growing number of examples of best practice in doctoral supervision, such as supervision agreements, supervision guidelines, voluntary commitment to good doctoral supervision in a code of conduct, regulations for good scientific practice or awards for outstanding doctoral supervision have contributed significantly to this development. What needs to be particularly highlighted are the university association's activities and range of services for training junior researchers in Germany (UniWiND), which has compiled recommendations and exemplary approaches in a brochure (UniWiND Publication Vol.4/2014). (Editor's note: The next UniWiND conference will take place in collaboration with the GA in Dresden from 22 to 23 September 2016).

Mind you, in Germany and in large parts of Continental Europe, it was assumed for a long time that a very good researcher would automatically make a very good supervisor or that the necessary supervising skills would result from learning by doing, practically as a matter of course. However, the success of the British and Australian graduate schools is not just based on the excellence of university research, but also on the quality and continuity of supervisor training, the continuing education of their doctoral supervisors.

What does good supervision involve?

Good supervision requires a comprehensive concept of supervision involving the best institutional requirements, and the supervisor's conceptual knowledge and systematic analytical and practical skills. Specifically, this means that universities have to make available the time and training needed for good supervision. On the other hand, it means supervisors need to approach openly and with a professional attitude the topics and problems of doctoral supervision, such as the changing role of the supervisor, an honest clarification of the mutual expectations, the significance of the selection process or the questions relating to the transition to a profession within and outside the university.

The understanding of the supervisor's tasks has changed from the old doctoral supervisor model, from being a mere expert in one's field to being a manager of the doctoral degree procedure and a coach in the synthesis of science, profession and life.

How can this be implemented in everyday practice regarding the doctoral process?

In terms of everyday practice in the doctoral process, this means more time or rather more systematically prepared time for the tasks and problems of the doctoral candidates, for consultations and team meetings, for the comprehensive joint overview of the entire doctoral procedure, for good mutual feedback, for transparency and for an understanding of the assessment criteria, for promoting conference presentations and for integration into the scientific community: Altogether, then, for the development of an extremely attractive

and successful supervision relationship, for a project involving two scientists (one who is a little older and more experienced and one who is somewhat younger and in a process of development) – a "professional couple" in the best sense of excellent supervision.

On 7 and 8 April 2016, Dr Brentel held a workshop at the GA exclusively for university lecturers acting as supervisors on the topic of "Professionalization in doctoral supervision." Other dates are being planned.

Should you have any questions or be interested in finding out more, Angela Böhm (Qualification Program and Public Relations) will be happy to help. She can be contacted via email at: angela.boehm@tu-dresden.de



GA Future Career Program: Academia – Planning Your Career in Academia

Beginning in the winter semester 2016-17, the GA will be offering a new certificate program, the *GA Future Career Program: Academia - Planning your Career in Academia*. It is specifically targeted at postdocs who are aspiring to an academic career or a professorship and are looking for support with planning their academic career.



The postdoc phase represents an important career stage in the life of an academic: Forward-looking decisions have to be made, the professional course has to be set with a view to a successful future – and all of this often at the same time as starting a family.

During this phase, developing your own research profile is crucial. Simultaneously, however, other challenges associated with responsible work in the field of academia have to be faced: Assuming leadership and responsibility for projects, establishing yourself as a member of the community, forming viable networks etc.

To provide junior researchers with support in dealing with this wide range of challenges, the GA has created a new certificate program for the 2016-17 winter semester: the **GA Future Career Program: Academia**.

Starting in winter semester 2016-17, twelve places per semester will be available for postdocs at TU Dresden to apply for. Membership in the Graduate Academy is the prerequisite.

Altogether, the program is compiled of four workshops from the following areas:

- “Professional in Science”,
- “Management & Leadership”,
- “Career Development”

The events can be chosen from the courses on offer in the GA's qualification program. The workshops are held in English.

The selected modules are supplemented with the opportunity for participants on the program to avail themselves of individual professional coaching sessions with a career coach.

GA Future Career Program: Business - Fit for Non-University Career Paths

Are you interested in a career in the private economy or in the public sector and would you like to acquire valuable skills in addition to your academic qualifications that will be of benefit at the start of your career?

In the shape of the **GA Future Career Program: Business**, we provide you with the opportunity to attend a program specifically developed to prepare you for non-university careers in a small interdisciplinary group of selected participants.

Apply now!

Application deadline for the 2016-17 winter semester is 15 July, 2016.

You can find more information on the program and the application formalities on our homepage.

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You can find more information on the program and the application formalities on our homepage.

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Introducing our Members

On 14 April, the GA's Doctoral Council will be elected for the second time. Mario García Tzintzun, doctoral candidate and research assistant at the Institut für Statik und Dynamik der Tragwerke at TUD, was already elected to the first council in January 2015 and became its deputy speaker. He is now once again standing for election. For the GA newsletter, we interviewed him about his experiences from his first term in office and about new challenges for another term.

How did you learn about the GA Doctoral Council and what was your key motivation to join it?

I got to know about the Doctoral Council through Moritz (Greifzu), back in August 2014, when the first Council was still under construction. The idea of having a group that represents the interest and concerns of PhD students sounded appealing to me since the first time I heard of it.

Looking back after one year as the deputy speaker of the Doctoral Council: What are the most important experiences you gained?

One of the most important experiences is to collaborate with wonderful people from different areas, not only

PhD students in the council, but also people from the Graduate Academy, from the administrative department of the University and also from the Senate. People who may have a different point of view but share similar ideals, to keep improving the condition at TU Dresden.

What turned out to be the biggest challenges for your work as Doctoral Council? And what was most fun about it?

The language. As deputy speaker I had to attend some official meetings taking place at Graduate Academy or at the Senate of the University, and of course all of them are in German. On the bright side, I improved my language skills in this past year. Moreover, nowadays there is more and more information available in English, which is very useful for foreign students.

The most fun is to organize social activities for PhD Students. We start with an idea and develop it step by step, and while the process may not be so easy, to see at the end people enjoying and giving positive feedback is very satisfying. Examples of this are the 1st GA Science Slam and the PhD Party.

Now, the new Doctoral Council is going to be elected. What do you think is going to be new in the 2nd term of office of the GA Doctoral Council?

I would expect to have new academic and social activities. Now we have a solid ground and many people collaborating with us. If the number of the members in the council increases, it will be easier to organize and develop new projects. And, therefore, I think we will also have more visibility in the University.

Last but not least

News about our funding program (next application deadline: 30 April, 2016)

- Along with doctoral candidates, postdocs can now also be involved in the organization team at the **Conference Awards**.
- Applications for the **DAAD-STIBET Program** are once again possible at any time for international PhD candidates at TUD – with higher levels of funding: Grants of 750 euro, and if applicable, 250 euro family allowance per month are available for a maximum of four months for the final phase of the doctorate.
- The **Sächsische Landesstipendium** (stipend of the state of Saxony) and the **PhD and Habilitation Funding for Women** are being announced via the GA with immediate effect. In the latter program, levels of funding have also been increased. Doctoral candidates now receive 1,365 euro per month, and habilitation candidates, 1,750 euro per month, plus, if applicable, a family allowance.
- Workshops within the **great! ^{ipid4all} funding program** can now also be invoiced for a maximum funding duration of five days. In addition, we have raised the lump sum available for food allowances for meetings/workshops at TUD. This now means that a food allowance of 30.68 euro per day can be approved for a maximum of five days per international researcher.

“PhD Day”:

- 14 April 2016, 9.30 a.m. - 2.30 p.m., Dülfersaal and GA
- Includes the election of the new GA Doctoral Council: GA members can cast their votes between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. in the foyer of the GA, and between 12 noon and 2 p.m. at the CRTD (Fetscherstrasse 105).



M. García Tzintzun © Matthias Schumann