



Topics for the periodical dialogue

This document proposes a list of topics and a timeline to guide the periodical meetings between supervisors and PhD candidates in the GSBE. In addition to topics that should be discussed regularly, it also highlights “milestone topics” that may arise in specific phases during the graduate studies.

This list focuses on general research-related aspects and should be adapted to the situation of each student. Issues related to the working environment, as well as teaching and administrative duties should also be discussed on a regular basis.

Regular topics for yearly meetings

- Review the key targets set in the previous meeting and assess progress.
- Discuss the current state of each research project (completed tasks, challenges faced and resolution).
- Discuss a concrete plan with a schedule of tasks to be completed for each project, i.e. identify milestones, anticipated results, and possible complications and how to address them.

Milestone topics

At the start of the PhD

- Discuss expectations of both the supervisor and the student concerning goals that should be achieved during the PhD and the corresponding timeline.
- Discuss possible topics for the research proposal (see “Guidelines for the research proposal”).
- Discuss additional planned or potential research projects and expected output. In case of third-party funding, clarify which output can be integrated directly in the thesis and what only constitutes deliverables as required by the funding organizations.
- Identify key elements required to start the projects (e.g. obtaining data, setting up an experiment, acquiring skills).
- Set up a course program.

6 months into the PhD (approximately 3 months before the research proposal defense)

- Discuss the progress of the proposal, in particular remaining open questions, and its potential to satisfy the main evaluation criteria. Set a deadline for completion.
- Assess the progress of the coursework and the need for acquiring any additional skills, in light of the planned projects.



9 months into the PhD (upon acceptance to continue the program)

- Discuss the plan of tasks to be completed for planned projects, and a timeline for first results and a first draft.
- Assess the need for any additional skills or coursework.
- Discuss options for the choice of second supervisor.

Around 1 year into the PhD

- Finalize the choice of second supervisor.

About 2 years into the PhD

- Discuss presentation at Economics Lunch, and potential conferences to attend (deadlines, requirements, funding).
- Discuss possible research visits (persons of contact, organization, timeline, funding, suitability with teaching responsibilities).

Around 3 years into the PhD

- Clarify possible career pathways, e.g. wish to go on the academic job market or to pursue a non-academic career
- Evaluate the need and possibilities for an extension and the funding thereof.

Around 4 months before handing in

- Evaluate the progress of the dissertation, in particular remaining open questions, and its potential to satisfy the main evaluation criteria.
- Implement concrete steps to pursue career plans, e.g. preparation for the job market, opportunities to build a network in industry.
- Discuss necessary steps to ensure potential continuance of the research projects after the PhD is finished (e.g. publication agenda, data access authorizations).

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