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Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center

Guide to the PSC PhD Program in Science & Policy 2018

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Table of Contents

1.	Why a PhD Program in Science & Policy?	3
2.	Admission, Registration and Regulations	4
2.1.	Admission to the PhD Program	4
2.2.	Registration for the PSC PhD Program	4
2.3.	Institution-specific regulations during PhD studies	5
2.4.	Admission to Courses	7
2.5.	PSC PhD Certification	7
2.6.	Confidentiality	8
3.	Curriculum	9
3.1.	Policy Workshops	9
3.2.	Basics of Policy Sciences	13
3.3.	Courses in Research Skills and Transferrable Skills	14
3.4.	Other Courses through the Universities	14
3.5.	Poster presentation at an International Conference (max. 1 ECTS)	14
3.6.	PSC PhD Symposium (3 ECTS)	15

1. Why a PhD Program in Science & Policy?

The Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center (PSC) offers a cutting-edge PhD Program in Science & Policy with high-quality transdisciplinary skills training. The natural sciences have strong implications for political topics, e.g. in the fields of sustainable development, adaptation and mitigation potentials in the light of climate change, and genetically modified organisms. As a young researcher, you may perceive a gap between research and its implementation in these domains, and you may be wondering how this gap could be bridged.

Are you interested in how to involve different stakeholder groups in the decision-making process? How scientific evidence is created and communicated to different actors in the policy-making process, and why some topics do not make it to the political agenda? Would you like to learn to build communication strategies for different target groups? Interested in knowing more about the main actors in the policy-making process in Switzerland and abroad?

Then, the PhD Program on Science & Policy is the right choice!

With this program you will:

- Improve your communication of scientific evidence towards policymakers, the media and the public
- Know how to involve different stakeholder groups in a participative process
- Understand the general process of policy development and endorsement
- Use existing tools and platforms for contribution of research results into political processes
- Increase your network of peers and policy implementing organizations in your own field of research

What if you are leaving the academic world after your PhD? Our policy workshops as well as the courses of the main PSC PhD Program in Plant Sciences aim at training you in a range of transferable skills that will be valuable for a successful career outside of academia, especially in some implemental or policy-making organization. The courses in the main PSC PhD Program in Plant Sciences are also open for you to participate. Besides, many potential future employers inside and outside of academia expect completion of a structured PhD program.

We also have a 'Science and Policy' Blog, where you are invited to post interesting articles, events, comments relating to science and policy: https://blogs.ethz.ch/Science_and_Policy/

2. Admission, Registration and Regulations

2.1. Admission to the PhD Program

The PhD Program is open to you if your research group has a membership within the PSC (overview of affiliated groups: www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/aboutus/people.html).

All PSC PhD students must be enrolled at the University of Zurich, ETH Zurich or at the University of Basel. The candidate is conditionally accepted to the PhD Program after requirements are fulfilled. Final acceptance depends on the formal admission requirements of the University of Zurich, ETH Zurich or University of Basel.

To ensure equal treatment of Track I (recruitment via LSZGS) and Track II (direct application to PI) candidates, and in accordance with the rules of the LSZGS, group leaders are required (as of January 2013) to organize a formal admission interview with their future PhD students if recruited via Track II. The interview should be conducted in presence of at least one other PI or faculty member, and the supervisor should fill out an interview protocol to be submitted to the program office. Please contact your supervisor if you are a Track II student.

2.2. Registration for the PSC PhD Program

All necessary documents can be downloaded on our webpage:

<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdsciencepolicy/procedures.html>

All students: Register for the PSC PhD Program in Science and Policy by filling in the registration form provided on our webpage within 3 months after start of your PhD. We will then send you a welcome package with all necessary documents.

Upon registration, we will open an account on the following online database:

<https://www.dissgo.uzh.ch/login>. Once open, you will be notified in an email on the login to use.

At this database you need to upload all the documents for certifying the progress of your studies (doctoral agreements, thesis committee meeting protocols, certificates of courses).

UZH MNF: All PhD students must register for a structured PhD program. The PSC office must sign the "Acceptance confirmation Structured Doctoral Program" letter that is part of your matriculation documents (for information about the matriculation see:

<http://www.uzh.ch/en/studies/application/doctoralstudies>

PSC can only sign the form after admission interviews have been conducted, and after we have received the signed interview protocol and the signed registration form. Registration is necessary within 3 months of beginning your PhD.

Furthermore, PhD students must register to the UZH Faculty of Science by using the following link: Registration Doctoral Studies <http://www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/studium/phd/ anmeldung.html>. For more information on the Graduate Schools and Doctoral Studies at the Faculty of Science (MNF), please visit the following website <http://www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/studium.html>.

ETHZ D-USYS and ETHZ D-BIOL: PhD students must register to the ETH Admission for Doctorate by using the following link: <https://www.ethz.ch/en/doctorate/registration-admission.html>.

They need to fill the form to complete their application to the ETH:
https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/main/doctorate/files/application_form_doc.pdf.

University of Basel: PhD students must register to the University of Basel, Philosophisch-Naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät by using the following link:
<https://philnat.unibas.ch/de/forschung/promotionphd/immatrikulation-ab-hs-2016-registered-fall-semester-2016-or-later/>.

2.3. Institution-specific regulations during PhD studies

You must carry out your PhD studies in accordance with the regulations of either the University of Zurich, the ETH Zurich or the University of Basel, depending on the academic affiliation of the host laboratory where the research work is carried out (= home institution). Please refer to Doctoral regulations of your home institution and of your home department/faculty.

Here we present a brief summary of some of the relevant regulations at the three partner institutions:

University of Zurich, MNF:

Teaching requirements: PhD candidates must complete the “Planning teaching hours” form from the Department (Fachbereich) of Biology for the fulfillment of a minimum of 100 teaching hours and maximum of 420 hours. Please consult the following website for in-depth explanations of the teaching requirements: <https://www.biologie.uzh.ch/de/Studium/Doktorat.html>.

Planning teaching activities have to be filled in this document:
http://www.biologie.uzh.ch/Studium/Doktorat/Planning_teaching_activities_Nov_2017.pdf.

Thesis Committee: The PSC PhD student and the supervisor select the thesis committee 6 months after the beginning of the project. The composition of the committee has to be as following: at least three members, including the supervisor. Two members of the committee (including the chairperson) are from the MNF with “Promotionsrecht” (Professors with the right to award doctorates). Members with “Promotionsrecht” can be consulted on the following website:
<https://www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/fakultaet/fakultaetsangehoerige/promotionsrechtler.html>.

The thesis committee composition **must be communicated to the program office** as part of the Doctoral Agreement.

The first committee meeting should be held 6 – 12 months after the beginning of the PhD. Subsequent meetings are held every 12 months. If at the yearly meeting the thesis committee finds that the progress of the PhD candidate is not sufficient, it can request that the Dean of Studies disqualify the candidate. At least three members of the thesis committee (including thesis supervisor) have to be present. Participation of external members can also be arranged by using Skype, etc. It is the responsibility of the PhD student to set up the composition of the thesis committee, arrange the yearly

thesis committee meetings, and document the activities. The signed thesis committee meeting protocol is to be sent back to the program office within 4 weeks after the meeting took place.

You can find the templates on the following webpage of the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center Doctoral:

<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdplantscience/procedures.html>.

For details see: <http://www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/studium/reglemente.html#4>

ETH Zurich, D-USYS and D-BIOL:

Research Plan: A written research proposal, including the research plan, is to be defined 12 months after registration. The research plan needs verification through the representative of the doctoral board and the thesis committee. Should a thesis be carried out outside the ETH domain, it should be specified in the research plan. Doctoral students who are requested to take qualifying exams may only submit their research plan once they have completed those exams.

Information on the research plan:

<https://www.ethz.ch/services/en/teaching/administration-doctorate/informationen-departemente/forschungsplan.html>.

Submission of the research plan for D-BIOL: <https://www.biol.ethz.ch/en/doctoral-studies/research-proposal.html>; and for D-USYS: <https://www.usys.ethz.ch/en/doctorate.html>.

Thesis Committee: The PSC PhD student and the supervisor select the thesis committee 6 months after the beginning of the project. For D-BIOL: The committee has min. three members: the official thesis supervisor (professor at the Department), the immediate supervisor (if applicable), two additional professors or senior scientist of which one is independent from the institute of the official supervisor. For D-USYS: Direct supervisor plus at least one co-examiner (should not be from own group and not be a co-author with the candidate on papers or manuscripts up to the point of the PhD defense).

The thesis committee composition must be communicated to the PSC program office in the Doctoral Agreement. The first committee meeting should be held 6 – 12 months after the beginning of the PhD. Subsequent meetings are held every 12 months. It is the responsibility of the PhD student to set up the thesis committee, arrange the yearly thesis committee meetings, and document the activities. Participation of external members can also be arranged by using Skype etc. The signed thesis committee meeting protocol is to be sent back to the program office within 4 weeks after the due date of the thesis committee meeting.

You can find the templates on the following webpage of the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center:

<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdplantscience/procedures.html>.

D-BIOL: <https://www.biol.ethz.ch/en/doctoral-studies.html>

D-USYS: <https://www.usys.ethz.ch/en/doctorate.html>

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University of Basel, Philosophisch-Naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät:

Thesis Committee: The composition of the doctoral committee consists in the first supervisor, second supervisor, external experts and other experts (subject to application). The thesis committee composition must be communicated to the program office in the Doctoral Agreement. The first committee meeting should be held 6 – 12 months after the beginning of the PhD. Subsequent meetings are held every 12 months.

You can find the templates on the following webpage of the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center:
<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdplantscience/procedures.html>.

- For an description, please refer to:
https://philnat.unibas.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/philnat/3_Forschung/Doktoratsstudium_Leitfaden_ENG_Version_10.2017_1.pdf.

2.4. Admission to Courses

We accept PhD students from LSZGS programs into our courses, provided that spaces are available. PSC students registered in the PSC PhD Programs (i.e. Plant Sciences or Science & Policy) have enrollment priority. For PhD students registered in LSZGS programs, all courses of the PSC PhD Program in Plant Sciences and Science and Policy are fully recognized.

PhD students select their individual course work in agreement with their PhD supervisor or their PhD thesis committee.

2.5. PSC PhD Certification

Upon successful completion of the PSC PhD Program in Science and Policy, the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center will award a program certification based on the following criteria:

- 12 credits (ECTS) acquired during doctoral term from lectures, courses and workshops. 1 ECTS is equal to either a lecture of 1 hour per week during one semester or a full two- to three-day workshop including home-work or preparatory work (=30 learning hours).
- 8 ECTS from Science and Policy Workshops (Compulsory activities) those are organized by the PhD Program in Science and Policy. We fully accredit the following workshops: organized by the Zurich-Basel Plant Center (<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdsciencepolicy/courses.html>)
- 1 ECTS from the course "Introduction to Political Sciences" (Compulsory activity in Basics of Policy Sciences) organised by the Zurich-Basel Plant Center (<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdsciencepolicy/courses/approved.html>). Alternatively, other courses can fulfil the requirement for "Basics of Policy Sciences" in the Science & Policy curriculum. Please, contact the PSC PhD program coordinator and ask for approval in any case you choose an alternative course.
- 3 ECTS may be acquired in courses outside of our own program, for example from the PhD Programs associated within the Swiss Plant Science Web (www.swissplantscienceweb.ch/education/phd-programs/) or other national and international PhD courses. Note, all ECTS acquired outside of Universities of Zurich and Basel, ETH Zurich and associated PhD Programs need a confirmed accreditation through the PSC office: fill the form at

<https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdsciencepolicy/procedures.html> ->
Accreditation of external ECTS.

- 1 ECTS can be earned for active presentations at international conferences (presentation and posters. Please contact the coordination office to receive the adequate template to fill.
- 3 ECTS should be acquired in the area of transferable skills.
- It is possible to obtain credit points through the organization of the PSC PhD symposium (3 ECTS).

The PSC issues a program certification after all requirements have been fulfilled and the Doctoral Degree Certificate of your home university has been awarded. Required submissions (**uploaded to DissGo**):

- A copy of course participation documents
- Transcript of record: A list of all completed courses (at least 12 ECTS), signed by the PhD supervising professor
- A copy of your Doctoral Degree Certificate

The certification will be prepared and send to you within 3 weeks of submission.

Exam Registration and Doctoral Examination: The final degree is conferred by your home institution.

UZH MNF: For your registration for the examination (www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/studies/regulations-information-sheets/doctoral-studies.html, 'Registration for the PhD Defense') you will need to include 'List of credit points' together with all copies of certifications of course participation. This document needs to be signed by the responsible faculty member.

ETH D-USYS and ETH D-BIOL: For your registration at the doctoral administration (www.ethz.ch/content/associates/students/en/doctorate.html) you will need to include a completed copy of the form [Registering for the doctoral examination](#) including confirmation from the department of your credits (with original stamp and signature of the department). The doctoral student must hand in the form Registration for the Doctoral Examination and a bound thesis copy to the Doctoral Administration ETH at least 12 working days before the exam.

Detailed information at:

D-USYS: <https://www.usys.ethz.ch/en/doctorate.html>

D-BIOL: <https://www.biol.ethz.ch/en/doctoral-studies.html>

ETHZ: www.ethz.ch/content/associates/students/en/doctorate.html

2.6. Confidentiality

It is an important goal that the participants of the PhD program exchange their scientific results between different institutes and the host institutions. Any such results shall be kept strictly confidential by all participants of the program and shall not be disclosed to persons outside of the program as long as the results are not published by the author/originator of the results. No participant of the PhD program shall use any scientific result to the detriment of one of the host institution. In particular, no participant shall impair a host institution's right to seek protection for intellectual property contained in such results by way of a premature publication or other premature disclosure of results.

3. Curriculum

Note: For all students that have started their PhD after February 2016 it is mandatory to visit the LSZGS introduction event “Introductory Lecture to Good Scientific Practice and Scientific Integrity” (2 hours, no ECTS). Within the event, you will sign the declaration of “Good scientific practice” that is will become part of your DissGo documents. All PhD students that have or will visit a course on “Research Integrity” or “Ethics” in their PhD program don’t need to visit the introduction.

Activities	ECTS
Compulsory Activity: 4 out of Policy workshops A – F [corresponding: 3.1] Course A: Evidence-based Policy-making in Plant Sciences Course B: Stakeholder Engagement Course C: Communicating Science Course D: Building Political Support Course E: Contributing to Policy Action Plan Course F: Understanding Policy Evaluation	8
Compulsory Activity: Introduction to Political Sciences [corresponding: 3.2]	1
Facultative Activities: Remainder of 12 ECTS may be chosen from* [corresponding: 3.3-3.6]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in international scientific symposium with own scientific contribution (oral or poster presentation) (max. 1 ECTS) • Organization of PSC PhD Symposium (max. 3 ECTS) • Other scientific or transferable skill courses 	min. 3

* with approval from principal investigator or thesis committee

PhD students select their individual course work in agreement with their PhD supervisor or their PhD thesis committee.

The actual list of all current workshops and courses (for both PhD programs, ‘Plant Sciences’ and ‘Science & Policy’) can be found on our website:

www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/teaching/phdplantscience/courses.html

3.1. Policy Workshops

Please note: In the weeks between the two workshop days you should plan for available time for group work and individual work of min. 30 hours.

Workshop A: Evidence-Based Policy-Making

Lecturers and case study supervisors:

Dr. Kathrin Frey (Dept. of Political Science, University Zurich), Holger Gerdes (Ecologic Institute), Dr. Christian Hirschi (Parliamentary Control of the Administration PCA), Dr. Manuela Di Giulio (Natur Umwelt Wissen GmbH), Dr. Susanne Menzel (Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG)), Dr. Luisa Last (PSC)

Objectives:

The aim of this course is to gain methods, tools and competencies to improve the effectiveness of science in informing policy-makers. The lectures will introduce the concepts of environmental governance and evidence-based policy making. The case studies will serve as a learning process on how policy-relevant evidence is produced and incorporated in practice. In the case studies you will contribute to evidence or evaluate on concrete examples of policy making how scientific evidence is incorporated.

Lecture *Environmental governance*

Environmental governance: From government to governance in environmental policymaking

- What are new approaches to address persistent environmental problems?
- What does a governance approach in environmental policymaking entail? What distinguishes it from traditional forms of political steering (government)?
- What is/could be the contribution of a governance approach in environmental policymaking to better address pressing and persistent environmental problems today and in the future?

Lecture *Evidence-Based Policy Making*

What is evidence? What are the different concepts of evidence from scientists and policy-makers? Do policy-makers base their decisions on evidence? What else may influence them?

Case Studies

Case study work involves literature research, expert interviews and group discussions.

Individual Performance and Assessment: Students work in case study groups fulfilling different tasks which have to be accepted by the case study supervisors.

Workshop B: Stakeholder Engagement

Lecturers and case study supervisors: *Dr. Minu Hemmati and Dr. Luisa Last (PSC)*

Over the course of their worklife, scientists will have to deal with issues relating to the development of their field, some of which may be subject to controversies in society. Or they may engage in implementing policy programs which will involve changing habits and adopting new techniques. Communicating and collaborating effectively within the context of different stakeholder groups and engaging constructively with representatives of different sectors of society in multi-stakeholder processes will be key competencies in this context. In this course, students will learn how to build and work with multi-stakeholder groups.

Objectives:

- Gain a basic understanding of stakeholder engagement and multi-stakeholder processes
- Get an overview of possible issues within natural sciences where stakeholder engagement could play a role
- Understand the different possibilities and forms of involvement the government uses to engage stakeholders
- Learn to identify and analyze stakeholders
- Know different levels of involvement and how to plan them; understand their strengths and weaknesses
- Know criteria and methods for evaluating stakeholder engagement processes

Individual Performance and Assessment: Students complete a journal fulfilling different tasks which has to be accepted by the case study supervisors. Student teams will discuss and present their case studies in plenary. Additionally, each student will answer key questions on literature self-study.

Workshop C: Communicating Science

Lecturer and case study supervisor: *Dr. Jacopo Pasotti*

Policy-makers rarely seek knowledge to assist them in taking decisions. Furthermore, years of top-down form of communication have eroded public trust in science. Thus, academic researchers play an essential role in providing information to allow policy-makers to develop and properly assess science policy options. Communicating with the public is increasingly seen as an important aspect of facilitating dialogue between scientists and policy-makers.

In this course, students will learn how to communicate science in an effective way to the media, policy-makers and a wider public. They will be introduced to different communication tools and best-practice examples.

Objective:

- Identify and communicate aspects of one's own research that are relevant to policy-makers and different stakeholder groups
- Know and understand different communication tools such as short effective texts and press releases
- Practice public speaking techniques to react to interviews and a non-specialist audience
- Discuss cases of scientists influencing policies and different stakeholders

Although the course is geared to practical issues, it is also grounded in the latest theory and practice of science communication.

Workshop D: Building Political Support

Lecturers and case study supervisors: *Dr. Sarah Bütikofer, Global Governance, ETH Zürich; Marcel Falk, chief communication officer, Swiss Academy of Sciences; Dr. Urs Neu, Deputy Director (ProClim) Swiss Academy of Sciences; Dr. Luisa Last, PSC*

During the last decades different ways of bridging science and policy have been explored. Policy is understood as a principle or guideline for action in a specific context. In this course, the students shall learn what kinds of actions are necessary to implement policies in different sectors, such as public agencies, the civil society or the private sector. Who are the main actors and when do they need to be involved?

Decision and policy-makers in Switzerland

This lecture gives an overview on main actors in the policy-making process in Switzerland. Comparison to the situation in Europe is drawn.

Process of policy endorsement

This lecture introduces the essential steps in the process of policy endorsement in Switzerland including examples related to Life Sciences.

Ways to form alliances with policy-makers

Getting support from policy-makers will depend among others, upon convincing them of the benefits that implementing the actions can provide and upon the timing. With an actual example from the life sciences, those facts, values and procedures which are important for dealing with policy-makers and politicians are highlighted in a collaborative workshop.

On the second course day a visit to the Swiss Parliament and to the Swiss Academy of Sciences in Berne is scheduled.

Objectives:

- Identify the relevant policy- and decision-making sectors in Switzerland
- Understand the common procedures for establishing and monitoring measurable national goals and targets
- Identify the different legislative measures existing in Switzerland
- Know different existing policy management and oversight arrangements
- Plan for successful impact

Individual Performance and Assessment: Students work in case study groups fulfilling different tasks which have to be accepted by the case study supervisors.

Workshop E: Contributing to Policy Action - Analysis and Communication of Risks and Uncertainties

Lecturers and case study supervisors: *Prof. Tobias Krüger (Humboldt University, Berlin), Dr. Christoph Beuttler (Risk Dialogue Foundation, St. Gallen), Dr. Sergio Bellucci (TA Swiss), Prof. Anthony Patt (ETH Zurich)*

The reliability of scientific data and models are frequently subject of public and political debate. The aim of this course is to understand the concepts of risk, uncertainty and ignorance in relation to these data and models in order for course participants to be more aware of and work more effectively at the science-policy interface. During the first two workshop days, lectures will introduce the concepts of risk, uncertainty and ignorance and apply these in discussion to the course participants' problems. In exercises, the participants will get first hands-on experiences with applying quantitative (risk-type) uncertainty models to practical examples.

Objectives:

- Understand the concepts of risk, uncertainty and ignorance
- Apply quantitative models to measure and propagate uncertainty
- Understand the role of risk-based evidence as a decision tool/framework for policy choices (e.g. IPCC, Technology Assessment)
- Develop effective strategies for communicating risk and uncertainty

Individual Performance and Assessment: Students work in case study groups fulfilling different tasks which have to be accepted by the case study supervisors.

Workshop F: Understanding Policy Evaluation

Lecturer and case study supervisor: Dr. *Sibylle Studer (INTERFACE, Lucerne)*

The course provides a general overview of different policy evaluation approaches, as well as opportunities for concrete applications and reflections on impact models. It aims at discussing how, when, by whom and for what purpose policy is evaluated as well as under what conditions the effectiveness and efficiency of a policy can be measured. Based on the theoretical and methodological introduction on policy evaluation conducted by social scientists, participants reflect on how natural science can contribute to policy evaluation and on how research can become socially relevant. Between the first and the second workshop day, participants are solving a case study (in groups or individually). The main objective of the case study is to practice the application of logic models.

Objectives:

- Know different types of policy evaluation and their methods
- Understand logic models in the context of policy evaluation
- Gain insights on how policy evaluation helps to improve policy implications
- Apply policy evaluation logics in a case study

Individual Performance and Assessment: Students work in case study groups fulfilling different tasks which have to be accepted by the case study supervisors.

3.2. Basics of Policy Sciences

We are offering a tailor-made block course which gives you a broad overview over political processes and the world of policymaking:

Introduction to Political Sciences

Lecturer: *Dr. Sarah Bütikofer (Department of Political Science, University of Zurich)*

Credit Points: 1 ECTS

The course offers an introduction to political science for experts from natural sciences. We discuss theoretical approaches to the study of politics and policies across a range of states, international organizations and issue areas. You will learn about the influence of political actors on decision-making processes, political negotiations and public opinion.

Alternatively, you can choose from several lectures in policy sciences (min. 1 ECTS).

For an updated course catalogue that meets our criteria to be of high added value for a basic introduction into the political sciences please go to our website: <https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/teaching/phdsciencepolicy/courses/approved.html>

For students from the University of Basel who want to follow lectures at the ETHZ: Please note that pursuant to an official agreement all students from the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center (PSC) may register at ETH Zurich as a Special Student. See Information for "Fachstudierende" at ETHZ: Special

Students UBa (<https://www.ethz.ch/en/studies/non-degree-courses/special-students/special-students-university-of-Basel.html>)

If you want to attend these courses at the ETH Zurich, please complete this form: Registration as Special Student "UBa - PSC" (<https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/main/education/non-degree/fachstudierende/formulare/90en/registrationform-special-uba-psc-en.pdf>). Please send the signed form together with a copy of your student ID to the PSC office: Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center ETH Zurich LFW, B51 Universitätstrasse 2, 8092 Zurich. Only then can we guarantee that you can take these courses at the ETH free of charge. For registration to these courses please go to: ETH myStudies (<https://www.lehrbetrieb.ethz.ch/myStudies/loginPre.do?lang=en>)

3.3. Courses in Research Skills and Transferrable Skills

The PSC offers a wide range of courses on research skills for plant scientists and on transferable skills for all life sciences within the PhD Program Plant Sciences. Please go to the website:

www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/teaching/phdplantscience/courses.html

For courses on research skills within your research area, please contact your supervisor.

3.4. Other Courses through the Universities

Excellent English language skills are one of the requirements for successful completion the PSC PhD Program in Plant Sciences. Additional training can be obtained through:

- Language Skills for PhD students of University of Zurich and ETH Zurich
<http://www.sprachenzentrum.uzh.ch>

The PSC organizes some of its transferable skill courses in cooperation with the Life Science Zurich Graduate School. All skills courses are accredited within the PSC qualification framework. Please regularly check the website of LSZGS to be able to enrol in these and other transferable skill courses.

- Details and Registration for LSZGS courses: <http://www.lifescience-graduateschool.ch/graduate-courses/transferable-skill-courses.html>

Transferable Skill Courses, University of Basel: <https://www.unibas.ch/de/Forschung/Graduate-Center/Doktorierende/Training-Coaching-und-Beratung/Transferable-Skills.html>

Transferable Skill Courses, University of Zurich, Graduate Campus: <http://www.ueberfachliche-kompetenzen.uzh.ch/index.html>

Courses of the Didactica Program of UZH: some of the courses offered by "Hochschuldidaktik UZH" can be finished with ECTS (active participation and individual assessment necessary). We accredit these courses in the PSC PhD Programs. Online registration: <http://www.hochschuldidaktik.uzh.ch/de.html>

3.5. Poster presentation at an International Conference (max. 1 ECTS)

We can award 1 ECTS for a poster or oral presentation at an international conference. We need a pdf of the poster, resp. of presentation abstract as proof.

3.6. PSC PhD Symposium (3 ECTS)

For Plant science students only

Note: will be organised every two years

Together with a group of 5 – 6 PSC PhD students, you will be responsible for the organization of an international and interdisciplinary PSC symposium. As a member of the scientific and organization committee, you will fulfil the following tasks:

- Development of a symposium topic or question
- Invitation of speakers from all over the world to contribute to a high-quality scientific program
- Organization of the symposium day
- Fundraising and finances (budget)