

Dear doctoral candidates,

The corona crisis poses great challenges for all of us. The GraFA team is at your side to support you as much as possible.

We conducted a small survey last week about the specific challenges our doctoral candidates are currently struggling with the most. Thanks to everyone who answered us!

Based on your answers, we will add some further training and advisory services to the GraFA program for the next few weeks, which will take place online:

- We are developing an **online coaching in the field of writing** for doctoral students who are currently having difficulty getting into the flow of writing or who are struggling with motivation problems. Ms. Fröde will do this. We will inform you about the GraFA blog and the newsletter as soon as it starts.
- With your questions and requests for advice you can, at any time, contact us by email: grafa@tu-freiberg.de. We will respond promptly or arrange a **virtual consultation appointment** with you. Especially if you are concerned about the end of funding or visa questions, a conversation can be helpful to develop new perspectives. Do not hesitate to contact us.
- We will set up **new courses** as an accompanying format, which are expected to start within the next 2 weeks and, in addition to developing skills, will also provide inspiration and **exchange in the interdisciplinary group of doctoral candidates**. We will inform you about the GraFA blog and the newsletter. Registration takes place as usual on the GraFA website.

Before we give you further information on the problems and questions reported in the survey, we wish you a relaxing Easter. Stay healthy!

Your GraFA - Team

More Information

1. Literature / delivery service of the university library / book delivery services

You can find the **internal delivery service** via the link <https://tu-freiberg.de/en/facilities/university-library/service/delivery-services/university-internal-delivery-service>. You will receive the documents as PDF by email.

Contact: Heike.Schwarz@ub.tu-freiberg.de

The **University Library** has created an overview (<https://blogs.hrz.tu-freiberg.de/ub/e-angebote-corona/>) of extended access offers from publishers and database providers, which is constantly updated and supplemented. In particular, it is about the following offer:

- Herdt Verlag: 850 titles on more than 500 IT topics until May 31, 2020
- Springer Nature: free access to numerous e-books in various disciplines
- World Scientific: free access to e-journals from 2001 to June 30, 2020

The University Library also uses Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/UnibibFreiberg>) and Twitter ("<https://twitter.com/UBFreiberg>") to point out current offers and library services.

Contact: erm@ub.tu-freiberg.de

The **book and document delivery service SUBITO** <https://www.subito-doc.de/> also delivers books and copies of literature to your home by post or email. The service is chargeable.

2. German Language Courses

Rundmail Nr. 53979 ueber UNIINFO-L!

Registration for German courses in SoSe 2020 is now possible until April 15 on the page https://tu-freiberg.de/international/Deutsch_studienbegleitend. Courses start online on April 20.

If you have any questions, please contact: deutschkurse@iuz.tu-freiberg.de

3. Submission of the dissertations and defense of the thesis

It is still possible to **submit dissertations**. Please contact Katrin Langer in advance: katrin.langer@grafa.tu-freiberg.de

After prior agreement, she will take over the package with all documents at the front door / at the entrance to the Schlossplatz district.

Doctoral award procedures will also continue to be opened. The Faculty Board meetings currently take place in so-called circulation procedures or via video conferences.

Defenses of doctoral dissertations are currently not possible, but in urgent / emergency cases, defenses can take place online.

An excerpt from the Rector's Information dated March 16, 2020 states: „For defenses of doctoral dissertations it also applies that in principle from 17th of March defenses no longer will take place. In individual cases, in consultation with the examiner, a defense can be carried out using digital formats.“ (<https://tu->

freiberg.de/sites/default/files/media/Presse/2020_03_16_rektorinformationen_beschaeftigte_coronavirus.pdf)

4. Equipment home office workplace

Access to the university's servers is possible via a **VPN client**. So may important programmes for the dissertation be accessible; partly there are also programmes that can be used in the **Application Server**.

In individual cases, you can clarify with your supervisor whether the computer with the relevant software and the screen can be used in the home office.

5. Writing and working in the home office

When working, it is very helpful to create a clear daily structure with breaks and communication as well as concentration times. Define clear time slots in which you will NOT work for the doctorate.

Especially if it is unclear how you should complete your doctorate in the financed period, because you still lack data that cannot currently be collected, it is particularly important to prevent yourself from turning your thoughts into a so-called worry circle. Do not be afraid to exchange ideas with others virtually. You will see that you are not alone with your worries. And also focus on positive moments every day. In these times of uncertainty, it is particularly important for maintaining the mental performance to focus on the positive aspects several times a day and to create a balance.

On some websites, such as of Dr. Jutta Wergen <https://coachingzonen-wissenschaft.de/> you will find current information and offers (sometimes free of charge) on the subject of **writing in the doctorate**.

More tips for the **home office**: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/when-self-isolation-how-take-good-care-yourself-niels-van-quaquebeke/>

6. Consultation with supervisors and colleagues

Contact your supervisor by phone or online and suggest having regular progress meetings with the doctoral students online. The University Computer Centre (URZ) provides communication rooms via the TUBAF cloud: https://cloud.tu-freiberg.de/index.php/login?redirect_url=/index.php/apps/files/%3Fdir%3D/%26fileid%3D28446965

Make active contact to exchange ideas.

7. Courses on quantitative research methods, e.g. Methods of optimization / modeling or other topics

For specific requests regarding thematic training or support offers, please contact Ms. Alena Fröde (alena.froede@grafa.tu-freiberg.de). We will then find ways to implement your wishes.

8. Financing

Ask your **scholarship provider** directly whether your scholarship can be extended due to the current situation. We will also inform you by newsletter and in the blog if we receive appropriate information.

The **DFG** (German Research Foundation) has e.g. published a press release on further financing:

https://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/presse/download/20200318_schreiben_an_alle_gefoerderten.pdf

The **federal government** wants to mitigate the consequences of the corona pandemic for scientists and students. To this end, the cabinet passed a legislative package. There should be more flexibility and more planning security for scientists in their qualification phase. For this purpose, the government wants to add a temporary transitional regulation to the so-called Science Contract Act (**Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz**): This is to **extend the period for qualifications** such as a doctorate or a habilitation **by six months**. This should be possible if, for example, research projects are delayed due to the corona crisis (source: MDR-Nachrichten-App, date: April 8, 2020)

9. If you are already at an advanced stage of doctoral studies and want to help other doctoral candidates, you are welcome to provide yourself as a peer mentor. Even if you want more contact, GraFA is the right address for you. We would be happy to support you in organizing small cross-institute success teams in order to motivate each other and support you in this difficult phase.