

LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS-UNIVERSITY MUNICH

MASTER'S PROGRAM FOR EVOLUTION, ECOLOGY AND SYSTEMATICS

HANDBOOK FOR NEW EES STUDENTS

WINTER SEMESTER 2010/2011

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1. General information

1.1 Munich

You are going to spend 2 years of your life in place full of history and places to visit. The most famous point of the city is the **Marienplatz** (Mary's plaza), located in the heart of the city. Another of the most recommended places is the **BMW world**, located close to another important sight to see, the **Olympiazentrum** (line **U3** towards Olympiaeinkaufzentrum). You can also visit the **Deutsches Museum** or the **Zoo**. On Sundays you can visit one of the **Pinakotheken**, paying just 1 € on Sundays. If you prefer the open areas, you can visit the **Englischer Garten** or the river **Isar**.

Located around the city, there are many other interesting places like **Dachau** (the concentration camp), **Neuschwanstein** (real castle of the Disney's logo), which is located in the Alps, or the **Chiemsee**, which is Germany's third largest lake and a very popular tourist attraction.

All in all, these are just a few possibilities on a seemingly endless list.

1.2 General recommendations

- Bring several passport photos. You are going to need them for the paperwork.
- Some people bring their own books. The LMU has a good library and all the things that you cannot find there are available on internet. So, think about it twice!

1.3 Housing

It often takes quite a long time to find housing in Munich! So the sooner you start looking for a place to live, the better!! DO NOT wait until just before you arrive to start looking...

For information about housing in Munich, have a look at this information from the university:

www.en.uni-muenchen.de/students/int_student_guide/life_in_munich/housing/index.html

If you would like to live in biking distance from the Biozentrum, you should ask the Studentenwerk, if you can be placed in the **Heighofstraße**, **Sauerbruchstraße** or **Stiftsbogen**.

If you arrive before your room is available or you need a place to stay while you are looking for a room, you may be able stay in one of the guest rooms at the Biozentrum (Biology Building). However, these rooms fill up quickly. Please contact Alice Edler (ees@biologie.uni-muenchen.de) for more information regarding the sign-up. The cost is 23 € per night.

For information on other housing options, have a look at our website.

At the **Kreisverwaltungsreferat (KVR)** you will need to register your address, obtain your residency permit, and get your tax card (if planning on working). You will need to register your address within 8 days of moving into your new apartment. Depending on your country of origin, you may have up to three months to obtain a residency permit.

Warning: When you move to another place, remember to change your address in the health insurance, in the bank and in the university. Don't forget to put your name on the mailbox and on your door as soon as possible. That way you won't miss any important letters.

1.4 Health insurance

You need to have proof of German health care before you are allowed to enroll with the university. If you arrive in time for the EES Orientation in early October, we will help you sign up for health care. However, here is some information for you if you have to do this on your own...

The easiest place to get insurance is at the **Techniker Krankenkasse (TK)**. TK provides insurance to students for around 58 Euros per month. It costs 10 Euros to see any doctor and you can see another doctor within three months without paying the 10 Euro fee again (plan all of your appointments so they are near each other). When going to the pharmacy you only have to pay 10 Euros regardless of the type of medication. One of the TK offices is located at the main Mensa (cafeteria) of the University. The address is: **Leopoldstraße 13a, München.**

You can go directly to the office and the people there usually speak English and are very helpful. You need to bring a *passport* and *bank account information*. You can set up a monthly withdrawal or pay the total for the whole year at once. When you enroll with the University, you need to bring your proof of matriculation back to the TK office so that you are insured at the student price.

If you are more than 30 years old, there are different rules for health insurance.

Check the University website for more information about health Insurance.

1.5 Bank account

This is probably the easiest step in the bureaucratic process, because all you need is your passport and you can choose almost any bank in Munich. Sometimes you may need an appointment, but you can just make it the first time you visit the bank. We recommend picking a bank that is close to your home for easy access. It is essential to have a bank account in Munich because you either have to pay with cash or by bank transfer for almost everything (housing, insurance, school etc).

1.6 Enrollment

Once you are accepted to the program, have found housing, and are in Munich, you will need to enroll at the university (LMU). If you arrive in time for the EES student orientation in early October, we will go there together with you and make sure you have everything you need! However, if for some reason you come at a different time, you will need to enroll on your own. Before arrival in Munich, all students should fill out the online form (http://www.uni-muenchen.de/studium/hochschulzugang/bewerb_einschreib/verfahren/online_einschreib/online_einschreibung/index.html) with help of the guideline and print out their matriculation number.

For more information, please have a look at the EES website.

1.7 German Courses

The EES program pays for German courses, with a maximum of 300€, so you can take several courses during your 2 years.

DKFA: I strongly recommend DKFA, it is through LMU. I took an intensive course with them for 3 months and could speak basic German afterwards. They also offer affordable during the term classes in the evenings, which is a nice option if you want to learn German during the semester. Matriculated students also get a 25% discount on DKFA courses.

Goethe Institute: Very good, but expensive and better suited to students who are staying in Germany to learn German. Most courses are intensive and housing is included in the pricing

IUCM: The LMU international club has a special summer language course each year for the month of August. They also take the group on outings and other social activities are arranged. This is a nice way to get to know Munich and German if you are in the city before the semester start.

DAF: If your German is already at a high level and you would like to take academic German than the LMU faculty of languages is the way to go.

DUO: This is an online option for learning German.

TIP: Regarding private institutions, these can be nice as they have more variable and flexible schedules and may offer smaller class size. However, the quality is extremely variable! Just be careful.

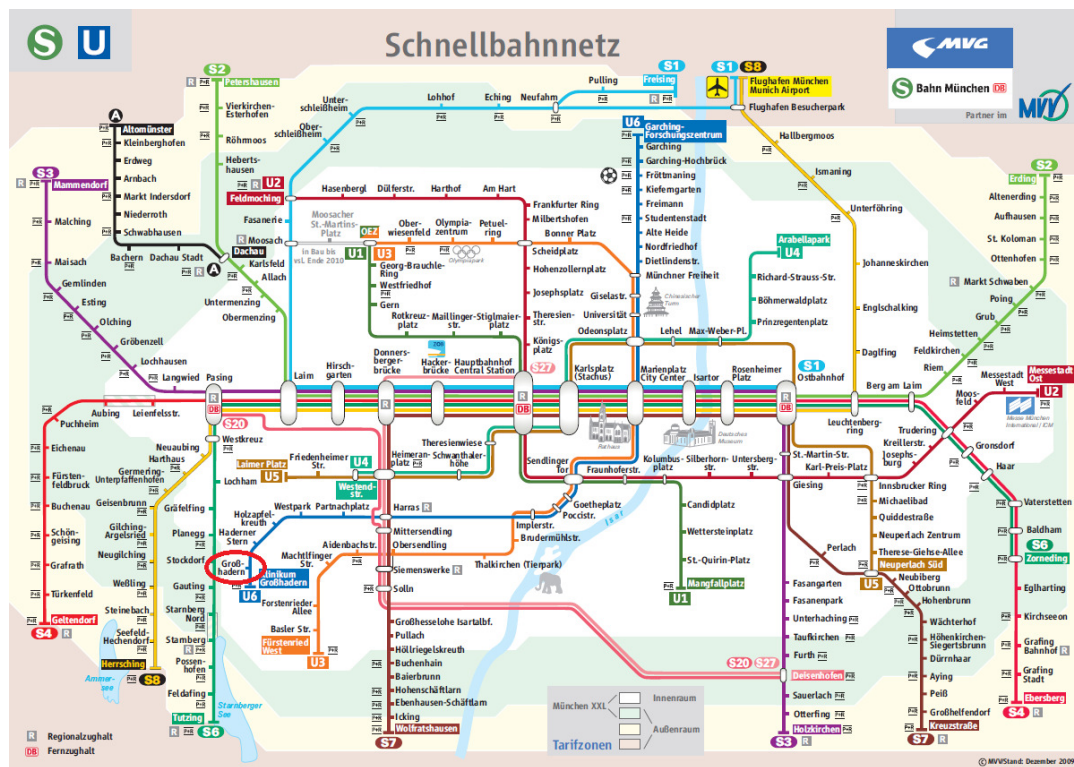
1.8 Public transport in Munich: MVV

The city is divided into 4 rings. All the places where you have to do the paperwork, the Biocenter and lots of touristic places are located in the first one. This is called **Innenraum** (interior). The U-bahn lines are restricted to this area. However the airport, for example, is

located in the last one. The 2nd, 3rd and 4th rings are the **Aussenraum**. A one day ticket for the Innenraum costs 5 euros. If you just wanted to go to the biocenter, spend the whole day there and go back home (and, of course, if your house is in the interior area), you can buy a one-way ticket for each route.

As students we have a special price, however it is only in weekly and monthly tickets. It is called **Ausbildungstarif II**. To get this special ticket, you have to go to the **MVV Kundencenter** at **Hauptbahnhof**, **Marienplatz** or **Poccistraße** and hand in your proof of immatriculation and an ID picture.

The best way to arrive at the biocenter for the first time from Marienplatz is taking the U6 towards **Klinikum Grosshadern**. You have to get out at **Grosshadern** and there take the **bus 266** towards **Planegg**. Then you have to get out at the station called **Grosshaderner Straße**.



Warning: The monthly ticket starts on the first day of the month and lasts until the last one. This means that even if you buy a monthly ticket on October 15th, you are paying the entire month for just 2 weeks.

For the weekends and other short trips in Bavaria you can find special offers. One of them is the **Schönes-Wochende-ticket**, with which you and 4 other people can take any regional train on one day of the weekend for 37 €. The other attractive option is the **Bayern-ticket**. – five people can travel in Bavaria for one day, for 28 €.

1.9 Shopping

In Munich you can find really cheap places for buying your food and personal stuff. The cheaper places are **ALDI**, **Lidl** and **Penny-Markt**. Other options are **REWE**, **HIT** and **Tengelmann**.

If you want to buy furniture or new things for your house, **IKEA** is one of the cheapest options – there are two stores in the city, one in **Brunnthal** and the other one in **Eching** (this is out of the central zone (Innenraum), so you need a different ticket to get there).

2. The EES master program

2.1 The ECTS system

In total, you must obtain 120 ECTS (or "European Credit Transfer System") credits to graduate from the program, which means approximately 30 ECTS per semester. There are a total of 11 modules that must be completed for the degree program.

In order to receive credit for a block course, you must receive a grade. The Skills Courses and the Excursion are evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

2.2 The different course types

There are different types of courses you have to take to get your degree:

ECTS	Module	# of courses	Type of grade
19	Lab rotations (IRT 1, 2 & 3)	3	Grade
8	Skills courses	5	Pass/fail
10	Seminar and discussion	3	Grade
18	Introductory courses and tutorials	3	Grade
30	Elective courses	8-10, depending on credit amount	Grade
6	Statistics course and excursion	1	Grade
29	Master's thesis	1	Grade

120 Total

The Master program lasts 4 semesters. In the first one you are all going to be in the same classes. They are going to be **Skills 1 & 2**, **Evolutionary Genetics**, **Evolutionary Ecology**, **Systematic Data and Evidence** and **Seminar and Discussion 1**. In the second and third

semesters you have to take some courses together (**Seminar and Discussion 2 and 3, Skills 3, 4 and 5, Statistics**) but you will be able to choose the elective courses you want to take. Those courses are usually given in blocks, meaning that you have to spend more or less 4 weeks (one block) attending daily classes. The regular semesters have 4 blocks, but the university offers classes before and after the regular blocks. At the end of the course, the professor will grade you according to your final exam or final work that you have to develop during the lessons. It is different depending on each class and each professor. In Germany, the highest grade is 1 and the lowest to approve a course is 4. One of the options that the program offers out of the normal semester is the summer school. It lasts one week and is usually offered in a nice place close to Munich. Remember to check the deadline for applications for this summer school!

2.2.1 Lab rotations

Before the start of each semester (except the first one) you have to choose a lab where you want to do your **IRT (Individual Research Training)**. At the end, you have to write a report (1st and 2nd semester), create a poster (2nd semester) or write a grant proposal (3rd semester).

2.2.2 Skills courses

These courses are the only ones that are not graded, you just have to pass. Attendance of every course is mandatory! Otherwise, you won't get your credits. In the skills courses, you learn about presentations, discussion leading, poster making and organization of a seminar series.

2.2.3 Seminar and Discussion

In these courses, you read papers about larger topics, present and discuss them with your group. You apply what you learned in the skills courses.

2.2.4 Introductory courses and tutorials

These courses all take place in the first semester. You learn about general topics in Evolution, Ecology and Systematics and expand your knowledge in the tutorials.

2.2.5 Elective courses

In the 2nd and 3rd semester you have the possibility to choose between several courses. Be aware, that you have to take at least one course in every part of the master's program, which means if you are very interested in ecology, you still have to take at least one course in evolution and one course in systematics as well!

2.2.6 Statistics course and excursion

This takes place in the 2nd semester. You learn about statistics, then go on an excursion (for example the Alps) and gather data which you then analyze statistically.

2.2.7 Master's thesis

This covers your 4th semester: you have six months to do research, read articles and finally write up your thesis. You will present your results at the EES conference.

2.2.8 External courses

If you want to do an external internship or to take a course in a different place, the EES program can give you credit for these. After you find such activity, related with your studies of ecology, evolution and systematics, you need to get permission from EES by sending a one-page email to the coordinator specifying how long the course will last and what are you going to do, making clear how you are going to be graded. You will also need to explain why you cannot do this in EES. Lastly, you will have to find a supervisor from within EES, who also needs to send an email to the coordinator, supporting your application for external work. If it is an internship, you should present a report at the end of it.

2.3 Seminars and conferences

In the frame of the EES Master program you have the possibility to take part in different seminars and conferences.

2.3.1 Annual EES conference

One of the first things that you are going to do when you arrive is take part in the annual EES conference on the 12th and 13th October 2010 at the LMU Biozentrum. At this conference, finishing Master's students and PhD students will give talks on their research, and Master's students completing their first year will present posters. In addition, two invited speakers will present their work. During the conference, we will welcome you, the new EES Master's students, hold a graduation ceremony for our second cohort of EES Master's students, and award the EES Young Researcher Prizes for best Master's/Diplom and PhD talks.

2.3.2 EES and Forschergruppe seminar series

The EES program and the Forschergruppe organize a weekly seminar where you have the opportunity to get to know new researchers, learn about their work and establish contacts for future projects.

It usually takes place every Monday, 5pm. Participation is mandatory. In the 4th semester, you organize the seminar series, so think of interesting people to invite!

2.4 Mentor system

During your first weeks here you will choose a faculty mentor, whose role it is to help guide you during your academic career. Unless you inform the program coordinator (Alice Edler) otherwise, the supervisor of your first lab rotation project will also serve as your mentor.

In the EES Master's program, students are encouraged to be independent right from the start – you can choose where you would like to carry out each of your lab rotation projects and your Master's thesis, and you will decide which classes to take during your second and third semesters. However, you are just beginning your career, and it is very important to get regular feedback from people who are intimately familiar with the university and with your fields of study. This is why we set up the faculty mentorship program. The EES faculty members are a wonderful resource, but they can only help you if you make the effort to seek their advice and ideas about coursework, research, and your future career.

You should meet with your with your mentor regularly, at least twice a semester. Before the start of every semester (except for the first semester), you are required to fill out a course list and discuss your course choices with your mentor, who will then sign the form

to indicate that he/she has discussed your schedule with you. The signed form is due to Alice by the first day of the semester. If you apply for a travel grant or if you want to do an external course or conduct a lab rotation at a non-EES or non-LMU lab, you should discuss this with your mentor well ahead of time, and he/she will then need to send Alice a short email of support. If you decide to do your Master's thesis in your mentor's lab, you will have to choose a new mentor.

Some recommendations: Remember that a mentoring meeting does not consist of seeing your mentor during a class or in the hallway. It means a one-on-one meeting, just the two of you, lasting at least a half an hour. Before each meeting, tell your mentor what you would like to discuss. For your own record, after each meeting you should write down what you have discussed with your mentor.

Don't forget that your mentor is there to advise you, but you are responsible for making your own decisions.

2.5 Important deadlines

31.10.10	decision on where to do the IRT1 – submit “IRT1 Approval Form” to EES coordinator
18.02.11	1 st draft of report is due
04.03.11	submit to supervisor as well as coordinator supervisor fills out “IRT1 and IRT2 feedback form” (students, make sure your supervisor has this form!) and submits copies to the student and to the coordinator.
Beginning of February	pay your students fees for the next semester!
First week of March	present work at IRT1 conference
23.03.11	final version of manuscript is due submit to supervisor and coordinator
15.04.11	supervisor submits final grade for IRT1 project supervisor must fill in the “IRT1 and IRT2 grading form” and return it to the student and coordinator.

2.6 Staff

Name	Position
Alice Edler	EES coordinator - The most important person, if you have questions, ask her!
John Parsch	Speaker of the EES Program and a member of the Admissions Committee and the Examination Committee
Reinhard Agerer	Member of the Curriculum Committee and the Admissions Committee
Wilfried Gabriel	Member of the Admissions Committee and the IRT3 Committee
Susanne Renner	Member of the Board of Directors and the head of the EES Prize Committee
Wolfgang Goymann	Member of the Admissions Committee
Gisela Grupe	Member of the Admissions Committee
Gerhard Haszprunar	Member of the Board of Directors and the EES PhD Committee
Bart Kempnaers	Member of the Board of Directors
Christian Laforsch	Member of the Curriculum Committee
Dirk Metzler	Member of the Board of Directors, the chair of the Admissions Committee, the chair of the Curriculum Committee, and a member of the IRT3 Committee
Laura Rose	Member of the Admissions Committee and the Curriculum Committee
Justyna Wolinska	Member of the Board of Directors, the Admissions Committee and of the organizational committee of the PhD program

2.7 EES rules

Attendance:

In order to obtain the ECTS credits for an obligatory EES course, students **have** to attend every class of the course.

If a student misses a class:

- the student always has to inform the instructor in advance if she/he is going to miss a class

- the student is only allowed to miss a class for a serious reason (e.g. illness with doctor's note)
- the student will not obtain the ECTS credits for the course if she/he misses a class without obtaining the instructor's approval in advance

Deadlines:

In order to obtain the ECTS credits for an obligatory EES course, students have to meet all of the official deadlines.

If a student misses a deadline:

- the student must inform the instructor in advance if she/he cannot meet the deadline, and extensions will be granted only in rare cases
- if a project is graded, the project will be marked down by one-third of a grade every two days until it is submitted (this includes holidays and weekends)
- if a student receives a failing grade, she/he must redo the course in the next semester
- if the course was an IRT, the student has to pick a new topic and conduct a new research project

2.8 EES travel fund

EES^{LMU} has a fund of € 20,000 per year to cover travel expenses and fees for summer schools and workshops. It is also possible to apply for EES money to pay (part of) a stay in another country to do research. It is mainly for PhD students but in exceptional cases Master's students can also apply for it. The maximum amount you can request is 500 €, and the maximum number of awards you can receive during your career at the LMU is two. You can apply for money to go to a summer school, meetings, to visit another lab or to do fieldwork. If you go to a meeting, you should present a talk. If this is not possible, you should always present a poster. You should write a personal letter of motivation in which you explain how you will benefit from the travel. You should explain why your current funding cannot pay for the trip. Your application should include a letter of motivation, budget, your CV, and whichever of the following are applicable: abstract of your talk, program of the meeting, description of your research project, and invitation from the lab you plan to visit. Deadlines are the 1st of January, March, May, July, September and November of each year. The EES Board of Directors will decide which projects to fund and how much you will receive. You will hear back within 2 weeks of application.

2.9 HiWi possibilities

Living in Munich is expensive, but luckily EES can support you a bit. You can apply for a HiWi job at the coordinator's office or in one of the labs. Usually, you are paid 400€/month for 40 hours/month.

2.10 MEME

The Erasmus Mundus Master Program in Evolutionary Biology (MEME) is a new two-year research-oriented master program for talented and motivated students who are interested in understanding evolution in all its facets. MEME is a joint project between four European universities (University of Groningen, Netherlands; Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, Germany; Uppsala University, Sweden; University of Montpellier II, France) and Harvard University (USA). Students will start the program at one of these universities, and will spend at least one semester at a partner university. Upon completion of the program, students will be awarded double or (in some cases) triple degrees from two or three partner universities.