

# WINTER SEMESTER 2023/24

## MASTER BIOCHEMISTRY.

**GUIDELINE FOR YOUR MASTER STUDIES**

**WRITTEN BY THE STUDENT INITIATIVE BIOCHEMISTRY (FSI)**

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## SCHEDULE OF THE ORIENTATION DAY

**Monday, 9.10.2023**

<b>10:00</b>	Welcoming by lecturers of the faculty
<b>10:30</b>	Introduction to the biochemistry master program by various professors
<b>11:30</b>	<i>"Life at FU"</i> – introduction by the student representation and time for questions

The orientation days for the Winter Semester 2023/24 will be held as a video conference on the first day and on campus the following days. You should receive an email with the invitation link to the Webex Meeting by October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Please be on time and make sure to test Webex before Monday, as we won't have any time to focus on video- or audio problems.

During the OE, we will guide you on your first semester at the FU and tell you more about the courses that are offered online this semester. We will also show you how you can register for the courses via Campus Management. This means, that you won't have to register for the courses now, as you will have plenty of time after the OE.

## FOREWORD

### WELCOME TO FU BERLIN!

If you are reading these lines, you have done it! You are going to do your Master Biochemistry studies at the FU Berlin and your studies start now! You are going to meet a lot of new people, learn a lot and hopefully also have a lot of fun.

To give you some orientation at the beginning of your Master studies, we have generated this overview. The following pages will provide you with helpful information about the Biochemistry masters program and the university system of the FU. (Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee completeness nor correctness)

At the very beginning a little reminder of two very important things:

1. Working in a team makes everything a lot easier! This includes for example the lab work, writing of assignments and studying for the exams. Lone warriors will definitely have it a lot harder.
2. Show your own initiative and try to change things you don't like. You can always talk to the professors or to us.

**Good luck and a lot of fun with your studies wishes**

Your student initiative Biochemistry (FSI Biochemie)

## THE STUDENT INITIATIVE BIOCHEMISTRY (FSI)

Because the previous lines show our signature, you probably wonder by now who “we” are. We, the Student Initiative Biochemistry (German: Fachschaftsinitiative – short: FSI), are a random group of Biochemistry students out of all semesters (Bachelor and Master) who stand up for the students and the degree program.

We organize the orientations for the first semester students, represent the students in different committees (see university policy), help with the organization of the student parties (“Biochem-Keggers”), give advice to students and generally try to help improving our degree program.

If you now think: that’s way too much work, I will never join that group; don’t be afraid: Not everyone does everything. There are no fixed duties, you can also just come by and listen to what we are talking about and what is going on at the Biochemistry department at the moment. Important to us is, that everyone feels welcome to join our meetings. Every helping hand and every thinking head is always welcome to join the FSI.

More about the FSI, you can find on our website:

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/index.html>

or on padlet and instagram:

<https://padlet.com/fsi1/fu-berlin-biochemistry-news-and-vacancies-6z6jom9xjpl0ewnz>

<https://instagram.com/fsibiochemistryfuberlin>



**WE WANT YOU**  
**FOR THE FSI BIOCHEMISTRY**

Next FSI-Meeting:

**TBD, 7pm, Seminar Room HMB**

possible changes will be announced here: [http://www.bcp.fu-](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/Herzlich-willkommen/index.html)

[berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/Herzlich-willkommen/index.html](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/Herzlich-willkommen/index.html)

## THE MASTER PROGRAM

Let's start with the goals for our studies - at least the ones stated in the study regulations of the program:

During your studies, you will gain biochemical knowledge, will learn to recognize, structure and carry out research tasks independently and you will gain practice in scientific literature search, reading and writing of scientific texts and presentation of your work. At the end, you will be prepared to work in research and other practical live science jobs.

Great that we learn all that - but how?

The Masters program is regularly planned for 4 semesters. The program is built up by different kinds of modules (e.g. lab courses, lectures) out of the three main areas: structural biochemistry, molecular cell biology and molecular biomedicine. You also have the possibility to choose some modules out of other areas you are interested in. In total, you will collect 120 ECTS (at the FU called LP: "Leistungspunkte"; 1 ECTS = 30 hours of work).

All the regulations for the Master program and the specific modules are written down in the "Studien- und Prüfungsordnung". Unfortunately, this regulation is only available in German so far, but if you have any questions to that, you can always ask us (the FSI), the Mentoring department or the

Examination office (see student counselling). In the following, there will be a short overview over the Master program.

Overall, there are not a lot of fixed modules - you have a bunch of possibilities to choose the courses you are interested in.

During the Master program, you will collect 90 ECTS by choosing different modules and 30 ECTS through your master thesis. The 90 ECTS are divided into four parts:

### **1. The basic lecture (10 ECTS): Advanced Biochemistry**

This basic lecture Advanced Biochemistry (sometimes referred to as BC V because there are four lectures in the Bachelors program) is mandatory and divided into 2 parts. Each part takes place on Friday afternoon, so it's not possible to attend both parts at the same time. This lecture is graded, so the grade you get on both exams will count for your final grade.

### **2. Methods (15 ECTS)**

Method courses are usually two-week long all-day courses in which you will gain knowledge about one specific method or one method-area. The courses are not graded but you usually have to give a talk and / or hand in a protocol in the end. Method courses are offered in the three main areas:

- a. Structural biochemistry
- b. Molecular biology
- c. Molecular biomedicine

You have to take two method courses out of two different areas. The third method module can be out of the third area or out of an



affine area (biology, chemistry, pharmacy, physics, bioinformatics, medicine).

The places for the method courses are given away during the **Tombola** (always on the first day of the lecture period). Since the courses have a limited number of places, the places often have to be drawn. Be sure to bring your valid student ID to the Tombola. Also, please make sure you actually have the time and fulfill the requirements for the courses you apply for, so that you do not occupy places you won't actually use. The first semester master students are prioritised for the lottery drawing of their first method course, so be sure to attend! If you didn't get a placement in your desired method module during the Tombola, it is always worth contacting the responsible professor and ask to be put on a waiting list. If you are unsure about which method module to take, it is always a good idea to talk to higher semester students, to us, or later also to your fellow students.

A new addition to the program are **decentralized method modules**. If you want to learn a method, that is not offered in a course or did not get a place in your favorite module you can organize a three week stay in the lab and learn the method then. The Form can be found here:

[https://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/pruefungsbuero/pruefungsbuero\\_unterlagen/biochemie\\_master/08\\_Formular\\_Anmeldung-dezentrales-Methodenmodul.pdf](https://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/pruefungsbuero/pruefungsbuero_unterlagen/biochemie_master/08_Formular_Anmeldung-dezentrales-Methodenmodul.pdf)

### **3. Research (45 ECTS)**

In the research part, you will do three research projects in total (each 9-week internships; In total 12 weeks of workload with preparation and post-processing time - 15 ECTS). As for the method modules, you have to choose two projects out of the areas: structure biochemistry, molecular biology and molecular biomedicine. The third research project can be out of the third area or again out of an affine area (biology, chemistry, pharmacy, physics, bioinformatics, medicine).

The research projects, you have to find and organise on your own. You can apply for FU internal internships in the FU groups or you can do your internship externally. External internships can be done for example at research institutes like the MPI, FMP or Fraunhofer Institutes, but also in the industry.

After finding your internship, the examination board has to approve of your internship before you actually start your internship. At the end of your research project, you will give a presentation about your work and write a short report. The presentation will be graded and will make up your grade for the research project. If you are doing an external internship, you have to make sure that you have a supervisor who is officially eligible as an examiner. Professors, lecturers with a teaching assignment at the FU and individuals approved by the examination committee are eligible to grade your presentation. You might have to find an additional eligible supervisor if you do your internship externally.

#### **4. Electives (20 ECTS)**

The elective part is non-graded and divided into the parts elective biochemistry courses (10 ECTS) and free elective courses (10 ECTS).

##### **a. Elective biochemistry courses**

In this sub-part, you can for example attend method courses you haven't taken yet, do shorter research projects (3-6 weeks), or attend biochemical lectures.

##### **b. Free elective courses**

In this sub-part, you are totally free to choose whatever you want, as long as you have not already taken that course. For example, you can take more biochemical modules or choose modules out of other programs. This sub-part can also be used to learn another language or extend your knowledge about business, philosophy, or other things.

#### **5. Master thesis**

Your master thesis is planned for your fourth semester. You have to find a place for your thesis on your own. Like the research projects, you can do your thesis at FU or in another institution. If you do it externally, you, again, have to find an eligible supervisor who will supervise your thesis. Your topic also has to be approved by the examination board before you start.

To start your thesis, you have to have collected at least 60 ECTS and for all the other missing modules you have to be enrolled. After starting your thesis, you have 6 months to finish. At the end

of your project, you will write a thesis and give a presentation about your work. Different from the research projects, this time, both the thesis (3/4) and the presentation (1/4) are marked.

Overall your Master grade will consist only of the main lecture, the research projects and your master thesis. The remaining courses are ungraded and only have to be passed in order for you to obtain the degree!

A summary over all the modules gives you the so called “Studienverlaufsplan” (Figure). It also gives you an orientation on when to take what kind of modules, but you don’t have to do it that way. You can structure your studies like you want to. For example, you can take more lectures and method modules in the first semester in order to have more time for research projects in your later studies. Or you can do the majority of your lectures during a semester abroad, in for example your third semester.

Semester	Study parts: basics and electives	Study part: methods	Study part: research
<b>1. (30 ECTS)</b>	Main lecture part I (5 ECTS)	Method module - 1. Area (5 ECTS)	Research project - 1. area
	Elective biochemical module (5 ECTS)		
<b>2. (30 ECTS)</b>	Main lecture part II (5 ECTS)	Method module - 2. Area (5 ECTS)	Research project - 2. area
	Elective biochemical module (5 ECTS)		
<b>3. (30 ECTS)</b>	Free elective module (10 ECTS)	Method module - 3. Area or affine area (5 ECTS)	Research project - 3. area
<b>4. (30 ECTS)</b>	Master thesis with defence (30 ECTS)		

## PLANNING YOUR MODULES

After this long part about the modules you can or have to take, the question comes up: How do I find out about the courses?

All the courses offered directly from the FU, you can find in the course catalogue ("Vorlesungsverzeichnis" – short: VV):

[www.fu-berlin.de/vv/](http://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/)

A whole list of the method modules and when they will take place, you can find on the website of the department:

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/master/Information-for-enrolled-students/index.html>

Since a lot of the modules are offered in blocks, you will not really have a regular timetable like you might have had in your Bachelor studies. During your Bachelor studies, you may also be used to study along with your fellow students. This is not the case for this Master program, since everyone chooses different courses and internships. You are going to meet some of your fellow students only rarely. But as you probably know, studying together with your fellow students is much easier than alone, e.g. to exchange information which method modules may be interesting to you. Therefore, socialize right from the beginning!

## ENROLLING INTO MODULES

Generally, the „Campus Managment“ is the platform where at the end all your courses and grades should be found ([www.fu-berlin.de/sites/campusmanagement/](http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/campusmanagement/)). Depending on the module, you either enroll in the course directly in the campus management yourself or, most of the time, the examination or study office does it for you.

The basic lecture (Advanced Biochemistry Part I and II) is the main module for which you enroll yourself manually in the Campus Management. Enrolling in modules yourself is only possible in the first weeks of the semester. If you miss the deadline, you can always write to the examination office and they post-enroll you.

For almost all the other modules, the examination office enrolls you. By filling out a form, given to you at the Tombola, and handing it in to the study office, you let the offices know which modules (lectures, seminars, and method modules) you are planning to take in the coming semester, and they enroll you. If you got a placement in a module later in the semester (for example by writing the lecturer of the module), the lecturer of the module usually will let the examination office know and they will post-enroll you into the module. You should check whether the lecture will let the examination office know and maybe write to them yourself.

For the research projects, the examination board has to approve of your internship. For that, you fill out a form (link below) and hand it to the examination office. If the examination board approves the project, you will be enrolled automatically in the course, and it will show up in the Campus Management.

[http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/pruefungsbuero/pruefungsbuero\\_unterlagen/biochemie\\_master/z\\_ressourcen/formular\\_antragforschungsprojekt-benotet-mit-hinweisen.pdf](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/pruefungsbuero/pruefungsbuero_unterlagen/biochemie_master/z_ressourcen/formular_antragforschungsprojekt-benotet-mit-hinweisen.pdf)

If you are planning to take modules from different institutes (e.g. biology / bioinformatics) the procedure might differ and you have to find out for each institute how to enrol in the courses.

## **YOUR ZEDAT-E-MAIL ADDRESS**

The zedat-e-mail address (x@zedat.fu-berlin.de) is your email address from the FU. Every information will be sent to this address. Therefore, you should check this email address regularly. You also can have your emails forwarded to your private email address automatically or save the account in your mail program (e.g. outlook). Make sure to use this address when contacting university staff or professors, since e-mails from other providers may be identified as spam and never be read.

One last tip: you can set up an alias-address, which makes out of the x@zedat.fu-berlin.de ending the nicer x@fu-berlin.de ending.



## UNIVERSITY POLITICS

At FU, politics is not only a subject, but you can experience it and even participate! The elections for the students' parliament (StuPa) will probably be your first encounter with FU politics. They take place annually in January. Plenty of posters will be stapled to trees and Dahlem will look as if federal elections were about to take place. But what does the students' parliament do? Every student at FU can elect a list, which will represent the student in the parliament. The StuPa will then elect the "executive" organ, the General Students' Committee (AStA). All of this reminds of federal politics. However, there are some major differences:

First of all, there are numerous lists to choose from. About 40 lists compete for 60 seats in the parliament every year. As there is no 5% threshold to be reached in order to enter the parliament, basically every list will get a seat. 30 votes are necessary for a single seat in the StuPa and residual seats are distributed percentage-wise.

Secondly, the self-conception of several organs is substantially different from those in federal politics. Many lists do not belong to any political party and insist on their independence. They either originate from student councils or represent so-called status groups. Examples for the latter are the

“Queeferministische Frauen-Lesben-Trans Liste” (queer feminist women-lesbian-trans list) and autonomous political organisations such as the “Antifaschistische Linke Liste” (anti-facist left wing list). Last but not least, there are also student associations belonging to political parties. Among them are Jusos, RCDU, GHG, LHG and SDS (belonging to the social democrats, Christian democrats, green party, liberal party and socialist party respectively). Unfortunately, StuPa elections suffer from low voter turnouts of about 10%.

The AStA does not envision itself as the students’ representative. It rather rejects hierarchies and has a symbolic value. However, real work is done in the AStA’s departments (german: Referate), which again remind of ministries in federal politics. The departments cover different topics, and each consists of three referents. Among them are autonomous departments, which do not have an equivalent in the federal government. Referents of the gays’, lesbians’, women’s, foreigners’ department are elected directly at the plenary assembly of the respective status groups and are confirmed by the StuPa afterwards. This ensures, that each status group can select its referent without interference by others. For example, men cannot participate in the election of the women’s referent.

So, who is part of the AStA?

Long-since, the AStA is build up by a grand coalition. However, this does not refer to a coalition between the strongest political parties. It rather is a federation of several different groups. Traditionally, the AStA is made up by the student councils of different faculties. It insists on its independence from political parties, which is why their student's associations are hardly ever seen in it. Still, the AStA's attitude is clearly left-autonomous. However, this does not disturb the collaboration with differently minded people or associations and counselling as well as financial aid are offered to everybody.

What does the AStA do?

Each department works individually and independently. Among others, the AStA offers a variety of consulting services for students and publishes and distributes magazines (for example "out of Dahlem"). Furthermore, it organizes the annual summer party. Importantly, you will never find a political initiative implemented by the AStA as it has no political mandate.

In last year's elections, the student council of the biochemistry department (FSI) got one seat. We do not actively support the AStA nor do we oppose it. The biochemistry FSI rather decides independently without obligation towards any party.

In some faculties, a student representative (Fachschaftsrat, FSR) is officially elected. Often, however, there is only the unofficial student council (FSI) in which every student can participate without previous elections. Another advantage of student councils is that each area of study can have its own group whereas the FSR takes care of topics concerning the entire faculty. In our case the FSR would have to deal with topics concerning the biochemistry, biology, chemistry and pharmacy departments.

Apart from elections for the StuPa, representatives can be elected for the institute's council, faculty's council, academic senate and curatorium biennially. All of these councils are made up of professors, academic staff and students. Importantly, professors always have the absolute majority in these councils.

### **Institut's council (Institutsrat, IR):**

The institut's council makes decisions concerning the institute of chemistry and biochemistry. It is especially important for personnel decisions at the institutes.

### **Faculty's council (Fachbereichsrat, FBR):**

The faculty's council issues statutes for the entire faculty, decides on professorships and habilitations and coordinates teaching as well as research.

**Academic senate (Akademischer Senat):**

The academic senate comprises the highest panel at FU. It issues statutes for the entire university and takes basic decisions for the overall studies. For example, it decides on study regulations and sets the academic calendars.

**Curatorium (Kuratorium):**

The curatorium does not only consist of professors, academic staff and students but involves representatives from politics, economy and labour unions. Although the curatorium is currently not active at FU, members can get a seat in the academic senate or in the extended academic senate.

Additionally, all female students can participate in elections for the full-time women's representative at FU.

## INTERNET AT UNI

At FU the internet can be accessed via Wifi (for instructions see <http://www.zedat.fu-berlin.de/WLAN>) or in computer pools. The latter can be found in the Silberlaube ("Zedat pools", Habelschwerdter Allee 45) or in the institute for organic chemistry (Takustr. 3, room 33.02.). In order to work at the organic chemistry computers, you need to register at [www.chemie.fu-berlin.de/chemnet/general/benutzer-antr.html](http://www.chemie.fu-berlin.de/chemnet/general/benutzer-antr.html) and subsequently see the network administrator (PD Dr. Kiste, OC, room 26.10).

### Some important web addresses:

Institute for chemistry and biochemistry: <http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/chemie/index.html>

Website of biochemistry: [www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/chemie/biochemie/](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/chemie/biochemie/)

Student counselling: [www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/chemie/biochemie/Studienberatung/index.html](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/chemie/biochemie/Studienberatung/index.html)

FSI biochemistry: [www.facebook.com/fsi.biochemie](http://www.facebook.com/fsi.biochemie)  
<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/index.html>

Course catalogue: [www.fu-berlin.de/vv/](http://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/)

Campus Management: [www.fu-berlin.de/sites/campusmanagement/](http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/campusmanagement/)

Blackboard: [lms.fu-berlin.de/](http://lms.fu-berlin.de/)

Zedat (mailing, printing, ...): <https://www.zedat.fu-berlin.de/Home>

Library Portal (Literature search, Online Textbooks, ...): [https://fu-berlin.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo\\_library/libweb/action/search.do?&vid=FUB&](https://fu-berlin.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?&vid=FUB&)

## CISCO WEBEX

Due to the changing health situation, the Winter Semester 2022/23 may be different than usual, as the organization of in-class courses at the FU depends on the development of the pandemic.

For this reason, some lectures, seminars and practice sessions will be made available in a digital format, so that you have the opportunity to continue to attend them.

Therefore, the FU Berlin arranged an own Webex-account (exempt from charges) for all lecturing tutors and students, to enable an access to several Webex-products. The establishment of a connection between Webex and the conventional E-learning platform Blackboard is in progress.

The registration itself is uncomplicated:

You log in with your FU-account on the Zedat-portal (<https://portal.zedat.fu-berlin.de>) and receive access to the Webex-portal when clicking on “Webex Meetings” (belongs to „Dienste für Studierende“). However, the access for students is not released for everyone so far.

Further information regarding the login and use of Webex can be found on the following website:

<https://wikis.fu-berlin.de/display/webexwiki/Webex+Wiki+Startseite>

## CAMPUSCARD

The Campuscard combines your student ID with the public transport card and the anonymous Mensa (cafeteria) and library card (lending books, use lockers, pay fees, print, ...). If you are new to the FU, you have to issue the card ones at one of the five card issuance machines with your QR code given to you by the registration office (locations can be found in the link below). After the initial issuance and before the start of each semester you have to validate your card at one of the validation machines.

<http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/studienorganisation/immatrikulation/campuscard/standorte-automaten-campuscard/index.html>

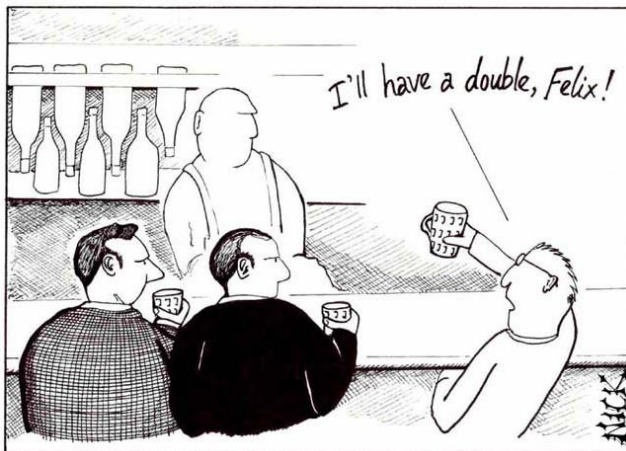


## WHAT'S THAT? – FU ABBREVIATIONS 101

At university, many abbreviations are used. This guide should help you out in the abbreviation-jungle.

<b>AC</b>	inorganic chemistry (Anorganische Chemie)
<b>AS</b>	academic senate (Akademischer Senat)
<b>AStA</b>	<i>General Students' Committee</i> (Allgemeiner Studierenden Ausschuss, students' "government")
<b>BC</b>	biochemistry
<b>BCP</b>	Biology, chemistry, pharmacy, biochemistry
<b>c.t.</b>	<i>cum tempore</i> (lat. "with time"): the event starts 15 min later
<b>FaKo</b>	faculty coordination (Fachschaftskoordination, all FU student councils together)
<b>FB</b>	faculty (Fachbereich)
<b>FBR</b>	faculty's council (Fachbereichsrat)
<b>FSI</b>	student council (Fachschaftsinitiative)
<b>FSR</b>	student representative (Fachschaftsrat)
<b>IR</b>	institute's council (Institutsrat)
<b>LNdW</b>	long night of sciences (Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften)
<b>LP</b>	credits (Leistungspunkt, correspond to 30 hours of work)
<b>MiBi</b>	microbiology (Mikrobiologie)
<b>OC</b>	organic chemistry (Organische Chemie)
<b>PC</b>	physical chemistry (Physikalische Chemie)

- PfgL** award for good teaching (the award bestowed annually to a lecturer of our faculty )
- PflaPhy** plant physiology (Pflanzenphysiologie)
- s.t.** *sine tempore* (lat. "without time"): the event starts on time
- Studis** students
- StuPa** students' parliament (Studierenden-Parlament)
- SWS** hours per week during the semester (Semesterwochenstunden)



Cambridge 1953.

Shortly before discovering the structure of DNA, Watson and Crick, depressed by their lack of progress, visit the local pub.

## STUDENT COUNSELLING

During your studies, you might have questions, which you cannot solve on your own. For this reason, there are several services to help you out and guide you through your studies.

Information and contacts can also be found online:

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/bachelor/beratung/index.html>

### **Mentoring faculty of biology, chemistry, pharmacy**

*General Mentoring:*

Rafaela Münch (Takustr. 3, room 14.10)

Consultation hour: any time after arrangement by mail

E-Mail: [mentoring@bcp.fu-berlin.de](mailto:mentoring@bcp.fu-berlin.de) | phone: 030-838 50971

Website: <http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/studium-lehre/verwaltung/mentoring/index.html>

### **Student counselling by students**

Dana Reddmann

Consultation hour: any time after arrangement by mail

E-Mail: [studbiochem@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:studbiochem@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

**Student counselling by faculty advisor**

*Dr. Jens P. Fürste (Thielallee 63, room 319)*

Consultation hour: Thursday 12-1 pm

Please contact the secretary Frau Hoffmann for an appointment:

E-Mail: [katharina.hoffmann@fu-berlin.de](mailto:katharina.hoffmann@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: 030-838 52938

**BAFöG student counselling**

*Dr. Jens P. Fürste (Thielallee 63, room 319)*

Consultation hour: Thursday 11-12 am

Please call 030 838-52938 for an appointment

Please bring a transcript of records and the BAFöG-form

**Erasmus student counselling**

*Dr. Bernhard Loll (Takustr. 6, room 307)*

Please mail for an appointment

Email: [lol@chemie.fu-berlin.de](mailto:lol@chemie.fu-berlin.de)

**General student counselling (Info-Service)**

Info-Service (Ittisstr. 4 close to U station Dahlem-Dorf)

Consultation hour: Monday – Thursday 9 am – 5 pm,  
Friday 9 am – 3pm

Please call 030 838 70000 for an appointment for personal counselling

[info-service@fu-berlin.de](mailto:info-service@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: 030-83870000 or 030-83877770

Chat (Mondays 3-4 pm): [www.fu-berlin.de/sites/studienberatung/info-service/Chat/index.html](http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/studienberatung/info-service/Chat/index.html)

Website: <http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/studienberatung/infothek/index.html>

## **Psychological counselling**

Appointments need to be arranged via email/ phone

E-Mail: [psychologische-beratung@fu-berlin.de](mailto:psychologische-beratung@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: 030-838 52247

Website: [http://www.fu-](http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/studienberatung/psychologische_beratung/index.html)

[berlin.de/en/sites/studienberatung/psychologische\\_beratung/index.html](http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/studienberatung/psychologische_beratung/index.html)

besides individual counselling, workshops about specific topics are offered (English and German)

## **OTHER IMPORTANT ADDRESSES**

### **Study office**

Herr Björn Kleier (Arnimallee 22, Room A.012)

Consultation hour: online after arrangement via email/ phone

E-Mail: [studienbuero@chemie.fu-berlin.de](mailto:studienbuero@chemie.fu-berlin.de)

Phone: 030-838-55330

Website:

[http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/studienbuero/studienbuero\\_chemie/index.html](http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/studienbuero/studienbuero_chemie/index.html)

### **Examination office**

Frau Heinrich

Consultation hour: Tuesday (10 am – 1 pm), Thursday (1-4 pm)

E-Mail: [pruefungsbuero-biochemie@fu-berlin.de](mailto:pruefungsbuero-biochemie@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: 030-838-55255

Website:

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/studium-lehre/verwaltung/pruefungsbuero/index.html>

## **Campus-Library (Campus-Bibliothek)**

**Library for Science**, Cultural Studies, Education, Mathematics, Computer Science and Psychology

Located in the L-Street of the “Rost- und Silberlaube”: Access from Fabeckstr. 23/25

Opening hours: Mo-Fr: 9 am – 10 pm, Sa-So: 10 am – 8 pm

Lending desk closes 30 min before library closing time

Counselling: Mo-Fr 9 am – 6 pm

Website: <http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/campusbib/index.html>

Library portal (Primo):

[https://fu-](https://fu-berlin.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?&vid=FUB&)

[berlin.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo\\_library/libweb/action/search.do?&vid=FUB&](https://fu-berlin.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?&vid=FUB&)



Figure 3: Happy, freewheeling, first year biochemistry students in front of Hahn-Meitner-Bau

## RESEARCH GROUPS (BIOCHEMISTRY, FU BERLIN)

An overview of the biochemical research groups can also be found here:

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/research-groups/Overview/index.html>

Listed here are only professors leading a research group directly in the Biochemistry institute at the FU Berlin. Further associated docents are also involved in the master program, which can be found under the link below.

<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/research-groups/associated-groups/index.html>

Biochemical related research at the FU Berlin is also done in for example the organic chemistry or the biology institute.

### **Prof. Dr. Sutapa Chakrabarti**

mRNA Metabolism (signals triggering mRNA degradation)

Address: Takustr. 6, Room 129

Mail: [chakraba@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:chakraba@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49-(0)30-838-75094

### **Prof. Dr. Helge Ewers**

Membrane Biochemistry (assembly of multiprotein complexes at the membrane-cytoskeleton interface)

Address: Thielallee 63, Room 102b

Office: Manuela Gibson

Mail: [manuela.gibson@fu-berlin.de](mailto:manuela.gibson@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49 30 838 59517

**Prof. Dr. Christian Freund**

Protein Biochemistry (scaffolding proteins mediating non-covalent interactions in immune cells and other eukaryotic cells)

Address: Thielallee 63

Mail: [chfreund@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:chfreund@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Office: Lisa Kewitz

Mail: [lisa.kewitz@fu-berlin.de](mailto:lisa.kewitz@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49 30 - 838 54389

**Prof. Dr. Florian Heyd**

RNA Biochemistry

(Alternative splicing in the circadian clock and T-cell activation)

Address: Takustr. 6 Room 127

Mail: [florian.heyd@fu-berlin.de](mailto:florian.heyd@fu-berlin.de)

Office: Karin Hesse

Phone: +49 30 838 56920

Mail: [khesse@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:khesse@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Office hours: Monday 12 am – 1 pm

**Prof. Dr. Petra Knaus**

Signal Transduction (BMP signalling)

Address: Thielallee 63, Room 228

Mail: [knaus@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:knaus@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49-(0)30-838-52935 (direct)

Office: Karin Hesse

Phone: +49-(0)30-838-52938

Mail: [katharina.hoffmann@fu-berlin.de](mailto:katharina.hoffmann@fu-berlin.de)



**PD Dr. Tobias Stauber**

Cellular Biochemistry (ion homeostasis)

Address: Thielallee 63 Room 117b

Mail: [tobias.stauber@fu-berlin.de](mailto:tobias.stauber@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49 30 838-54069

**Prof. Dr. Sigmar Stricker**

Biochemistry and Genetics

(Musculoskeletal development and regeneration)

Address: Thielallee 63

Mail: [sigmar.stricker@fu-berlin.de](mailto:sigmar.stricker@fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49 30 838 75799

**Prof. Dr. Markus Wahl**

Structural Biochemistry (ribonucleoprotein complexes)

Address: Takustr. 6 Room 333

Mail: [mwahl@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:mwahl@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Phone: +49 30 838 53456

Office: Karin Hesse

Phone: +49 30 8385 3410

Mail: [khesse@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:khesse@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

## IMPORTANT DATES

### **Next meeting of the student initiative (FSI)**

TBD, 7pm, Seminar Room HMB

Changes might be announced here: <http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/Herzlich-willkommen/index.html>

### **Evening seminar**

Check our homepage, FSI padlet or Instagram for dates  
<https://padlet.com/fsi1/fu-berlin-biochemistry-news-and-vacancies-6z6jom9xjpl0ewnz>

### **Biochemkegga**

**(Party organised by biochemistry bachelor students):**

At the end of the semester

### **Biochem-Christmas Party**

Usually in the last weeks before christmas break

## EVENING SEMINARS

From time to time, the biochemistry student council organises so-called evening seminars with different referees from the area of biochemistry. The invited referees work at university, in the industry or in teaching and are willing to share experiences they made in their lives and careers. They can not only answer questions, which might come up during your studies but can also give you some advice for the future. However, the evening seminars are not only informative but also a nice opportunity of getting together and hearing funny anecdotes. They are held in a cosy atmosphere, allow for chats and questions concerning work, life and others. Everybody is welcome – this does not only include biochemistry students but also interested friends and colleagues - and drinks and snacks are provided by the FSI. Check our Facebook site for the next date!

(<http://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/student-representatives/Herzlich-willkommen/index.html>)

## CHECKLIST

### ☐ 1. Visit the orientation days

- ☐ get to know your colleagues
- ☐ exchange whatsapp/ facebook to stay in contact
- ☐ sign up in the email-list
- ☐ get your Campuscard (*best before the orientation days*)

### ☐ 2. Activate your FU-Account

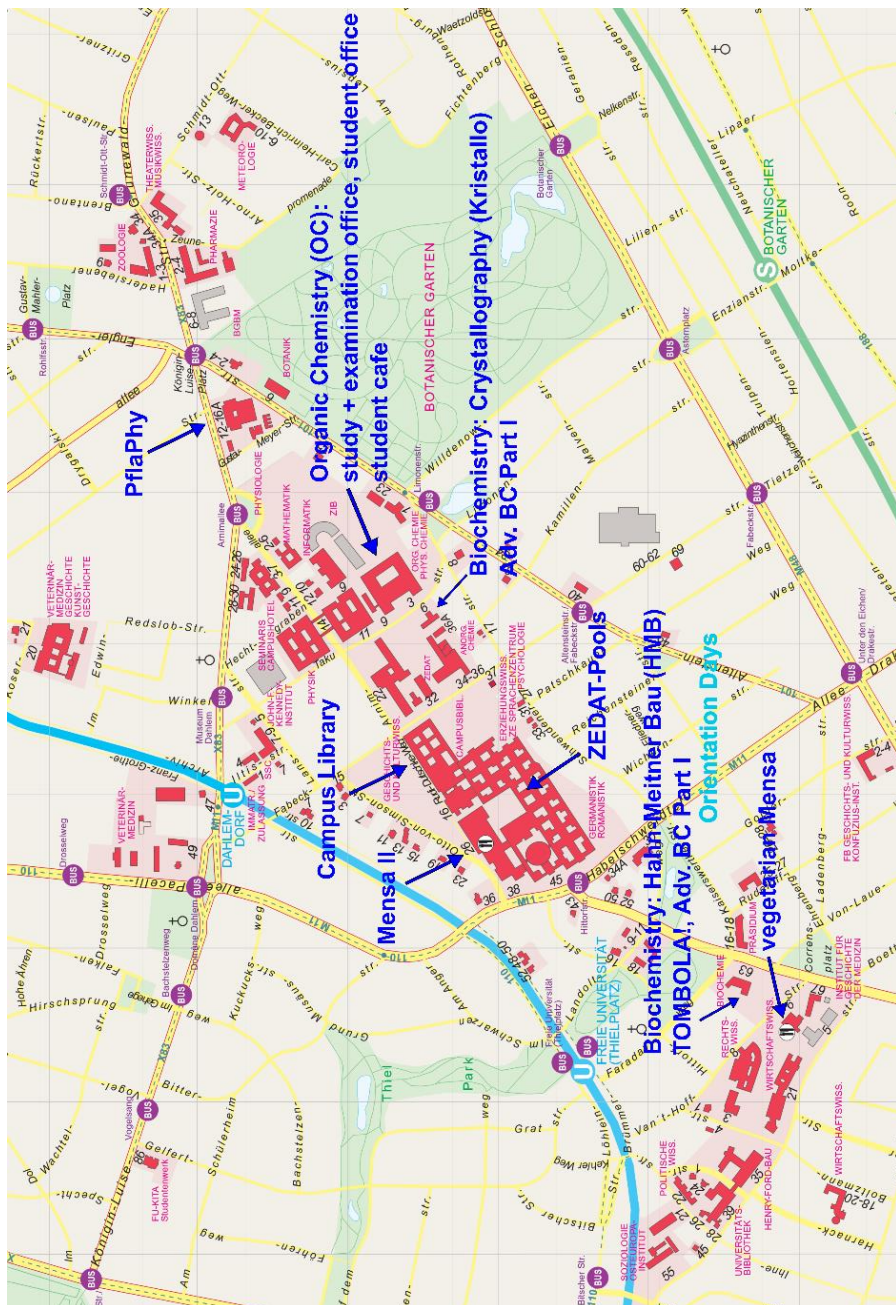
- ☐ Information on activating your FU (zedat) account can be obtained from the letter you received 1 week after your matriculation
- ☐ ZEDAT-Mail:
  - forward zedat-mails to your private Email account
  - install your email program on your phone/ computer
  - establish your “alias” address: max.mustermann@fu-berlin.de

### ☐ 3. Get access to Eduroam and Cisco Webex

- ☐ On the campus, activate Wduroam for wifi access
- ☐ At home, you can access the campus network via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) or Proxy-Server of ZEDAT
- ☐ Login on the zedat-portal for access to Webex

### ☐ 4. Make your schedule| register for modules

- ☐ Check out the course catalogue for interesting courses
- ☐ Enrol your method modules via Campus Management
- ☐ Visit interesting courses in the first two weeks and decide if you really want to take them
- ☐ Register for courses in the study office
- ☐ (pay attention to different enrollment procedures for language and ABV-courses)



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANIZING YOUR MASTER'S STUDIES

The Biochemistry Master's program at Freie Universität Berlin offers students a high degree of flexibility to organize their curricula. There are only three types of required courses. Firstly, a lecture/seminar series (Advanced Biochemistry I and II; mandatory for every student). Secondly, methods courses (three mandatory in at least two different fields but with specific contents flexible). Thirdly, research projects/lab rotations (three 15 CP research projects mandatory in at least two fields but with specific contents flexible). Students can enroll in a wide spectrum of additional courses to fulfill the requirements of the program in terms of elective courses (20 CP total required in electives). In addition, we allow and even encourage taking some of the courses elsewhere (at other Berlin institutions, at other places in Germany or at institutions abroad). While this organization is attractive in terms of gearing study contents to your individual interests and will allow you, e.g., to document mobility and gain international experience, it poses particular challenges in terms of efficient organization and requires a high degree of self-reliant and judicious planning on your part right from the beginning. Note that the formal "exemplary curriculum" ("Studienverlaufsplan") for our program (<https://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/master/curriculum>) may not be the ideal plan for you. In designing this plan, we were limited with

respect to the amount of time we could officially plan for you to be physically present in lectures, seminars, labs, etc. It may actually be very useful to consider a different plan, if you can cope with longer times in events at the university or in labs.

**Please do not underestimate the importance of planning meticulously right from the beginning of your studies and take a minute to consider the remarks below in organizing your studies. Please also note that it is your own responsibility to design your studies; if you are not actively searching and applying for lab rotations, you will most likely not get any opportunities.**

Make sure to enroll in the Advanced Biochemistry lecture series during your first and second semesters. Do not postpone this. Make every effort to take each partial exam right after the first time you have attended each part of the course. Take the first possible retake exam as an improvement option if you really want. Note that contents of this course will change over time and if you do not take the exam right after you participated in the lectures/seminars, it may turn out to be even necessary that you attend them again at a later time to pass the exam. In the end, this would require a lot more work on your part.

In case you obtain a passing grade after your first two semesters in the Advanced Biochemistry lecture series, judiciously consider

if it is worthwhile at all to take an improvement option (provided you still have one). To have a realistic chance for an improvement sometime after you actually took the course might require you to sit through the lectures/seminars again and certainly to study the course contents again. This may severely delay you in finishing your Masters. In the end, really calculate how much improvement in the overall final grade you can hope for and whether this outweighs the potential downside of prolonging your studies. Be aware that whether you finished your formal studies swiftly may be an important point for future supervisors, recruiters or employers.

Make sure that after the “tombola” at the beginning of your first semester you are enrolled in at least two methods courses for the first semester. If you did not receive the chance to participate in two methods courses, please contact the instructors of your preferred courses directly. Many of them keep waiting lists and you may make it into a course if somebody cancels or fails to show up. Be aware that in such cases you may have to be ready to participate on short notice.

For the tombola, please consider: It may be much more important for you to finish your course requirements on time than to make it into each and every of your first choices for methods courses. Thus, consider alternative courses if you do not make it into your preferred courses. And then attend the courses you did get in the



tombola, even if not your first choice. It may be very good and turn out to be very useful to learn methods that were not on your agenda.

In case you do not make it into the number of methods courses you planned for, be flexible and instead fulfill some of the requirements in terms of elective courses. Please remember – you can choose essentially any course offered by Freie Universität Berlin as a free elective.

Make sure you complete at least one research project during the first semester, but make sure to not overload your schedule. It may be a good idea to schedule this research project for the first lecture-free time. The Advanced Biochemistry lecture is a good place to get an impression of topics and PIs that could host your first lab rotation.

Make sure that in the second semester you complete the Advanced Biochemistry lecture/seminar series and your third methods course. Again, if you did not get into a methods course, contact the instructors directly to be placed on the waiting list. Furthermore, plan for your second research project during the second semester, which could be again during the next lecture-free time but may also fit into the months when there are lectures.

Note that research projects have a maximum total duration but that you can of course work part time in the lab at least some of the time or on certain days of the week, in case your supervisor agrees. The research project may then extend over a longer time than the minimal time required to finish it, but this may allow you to attend a lecture/seminar in the same timeframe.

Make sure you have covered at least 10 CP of elective courses by the end of your second semester.

If you manage to organize your first two semesters as outlined above, this will leave you with only 10 CP in elective courses and one more research project as formal requirements for the third semester and the Master's thesis in the fourth semester. This way, you will have almost an entire semester to go after your special interests. *E.g.*, you can plan for the third semester abroad, in which you not only do a third research project, but also take courses offered by the host institution that we would count towards your degree here (make sure this covers the 10 CP electives still missing and you are done with formal coursework).

Very important: **Make sure that the examination board will accept the envisioned courses for your degree before you go abroad.**

The 4<sup>th</sup> semester can then be fully dedicated to your Master's thesis. Note that general rules force us to limit the Master's thesis to a six-month duration, including writing and defending the thesis (although you can choose to defend it later). This is a very short timeframe. Experience shows that students tend to defend their theses after they have finished the research and after they have handed in the written thesis, although this is not a formal requirement. Thus to realistically finish your studies within four semesters, it is essentially mandatory that you start your Master's thesis before the fourth semester formally begins. Thus, plan to be back in Berlin and start your thesis (or start your thesis elsewhere if you received permission to do so) already during the lecture-free time between the third and fourth semester.

A good idea might be to combine 5 or 10 CP research projects (with which you can also cover the requirement for elective courses) with subsequent (or preceding) 15 CP research projects or the Master's thesis. This would give you the opportunity to work longer on a project, which might make it more attractive both for you and the supervisor. You might find many PIs reluctant to give out very short-term projects, but in the way outlined above you will find them very open to accommodate this. Important: while the combined research projects/theses can of course be on the same research topic, the exact contents (e.g. specific questions addressed, specific parts of a larger study or specific techniques employed) have to be clearly separable. You

still need to hand in separate reports for the 5/10 CP research projects that you combine with 15 CP research projects or theses.

Consider applying for a leave of absence for semesters spent abroad. While this will not be an option for people receiving BAföG or similar support, and you may have other reasons for not taking this option, it can be an efficient way to formally finish your studies in the regular timeframe. Note that it is no problem to earn credits towards your degree during times when you are on leave of absence. You can apply for leave of absence *via* <https://www.fuberlin.de/en/studium/studienorganisation/immatrifikation/rueckmeldung/urlaubssemester/index.html>.

Likewise, if there are times, during which you cannot study full-time, e.g. because you have to work besides your studies, consider changing your student status to part-time. Again, this might allow you to formally finish your studies in the normally prospected timeframe. You can change your status *via* <https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/studienorganisation/immatrifikation/rueckmeldung/teilzeit/index.html>.

Please note that the number of students who finish within the regular timeframe allocated to our program has direct financial consequences for the Biochemistry Division. Funds for our program, ultimately provided by the State of Berlin, will in part depend on this quota.

If you have been admitted to the Master's program while you still had course requirements in the Bachelor's, please make every effort to finish all your obligations for the Bachelor's before your Master's program starts. You will almost certainly not be able to cope with a full Master's workload and remaining obligations for the Bachelor's at the same time.

Of course, it is always possible that you may not be able to follow your initial plans due to unforeseen events, such as illness, family obligations, courses delayed from the Bachelor's (in spite of your best efforts to avoid that ...) or other reasons. We also realize that many of you may have to work besides your studies to cover your living expenses. Please contact the Student Advisor (<https://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/master/counselling>) in case you realize that you fall behind your study plans and do not know how to catch up. The Student Advisor will pair you up with a faculty member, who will try to assist you in getting back on track.

Note that dedicated counselling is also available for other special issues (<https://www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en/chemie/biochemie/master/counselling>)