

1 Acquiring Qualifications in the Graduate program

The dissertations and postdoctoral projects funded by our graduate program are expected to fit into the thematic-methodological framework outlined in 2.1.3 and to make relevant contributions to the aim of reconceptualizing Europe. Further prerequisites for accepting doctoral students or postdocs are a) that the submitted projects are sufficiently defined and can be completed within the funding period, and b) that qualified advisors are available to supervise the project from members of our group, participating colleagues in Konstanz, and our cooperation partners. The research questions listed under 2.1.3 give a sense of the thematic spectrum that possible dissertation work might cover.

The program's plan to ensure its graduates and postgraduates receive appropriate qualifications is shaped by the interdisciplinary orientation of its research profile and its object of pursuing transnational European studies in dialogue with non-European interlocutors. Based on our previous experience, we assume that doctoral and postdoctoral scholars in the group will work independently from an early stage. We want to offer the best possible conditions for this work while specifically preparing our young scholars for the requirements of the academic and nonacademic job market. During the four-year period of a fellowship in the graduate program, we will enable recipients to achieve a profile of qualifications that is competitive on the academic job market through a record of interdisciplinary research and intellectual exchange, opportunities to organize academic events and realize publication projects, robust international networks developed during research stays abroad, mentoring by external faculty, international events organized by the research group, and last but not least targeted training in key academic skills. In addition, fellowship recipients will have access to a wide range of optional coaching and counseling services to help them prepare for careers outside academia.

2 Program of Study

The Department of Literary Studies at the University of Konstanz has many years of experience with graduate programs, which will directly benefit our new program as well. For example, the design of the curriculum can draw on formats that have been tried and tested in the past. We will also continue to integrate students into research and teaching and to afford them a high level of autonomy and responsibility in organizing their own research and intellectual community. The graduate program will moreover be able to benefit from the unique institutional structure of the University of Konstanz, which is not divided into small-scale institutional units and fosters open boundaries between intellectually related departments. This favors a lived practice of everyday, informal interdisciplinary exchange that is especially impactful in training doctoral scholars. We will continue to place particular emphasis on promoting the career paths of women.

4.1 Internationalization

Recipients of fellowships are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity for a **research stay of several months in a European or non-European country**. Depending on the individual research project, this stay abroad can serve to support field research, archival research, or exchange with established experts or external advisors and mentors. It is recommended that this take place in the second year of study. The program's coordinator and the Outgoing Centre (<https://www.uni-konstanz.de/outgoing-centre/>) of the university will support students in organizing their stay.

The previous graduate programs in literary studies at Konstanz have a strong record of international networking, marked in particular by relationships with universities in the United States; regular transatlantic seminars were held on average once a year with institutional partners at the University of Chicago and Yale University (documented at www.uni-konstanz.de/transatlantik). The international focus of this new program, however, is planned

to take a different form with its intention to go beyond the Euro-Atlantic academic world. The aim is to reflect the guiding idea of the eccentricity of Europe in the program of study and advising for doctoral scholars. Funding will be provided for Mercator Fellowships, i.e., guest stays of several months in Konstanz by renowned experts, as well as external mentorships, with emphasis on scholars from outside Europe. These cooperative relationships are also intended to produce a vibrant exchange of faculty in the form of visiting guests and longer-term placements of externally financed fellows in Konstanz. Our partner institutions will also have a right to nominate doctoral and postdoctoral scholars for fellowships, and these applications will be given special consideration.

4.2 Structure and Types of Academic Events

In its design, the program of study is based on the experience and best practices we have gained from the previous graduate programs in Konstanz, “The Figure of the Third” and “The Real in the Culture of Modernity.” It consists of the following types of academic events:

- *Research Colloquium.* The two-hour research colloquium is held every other week and is reserved for doctoral and postdoctoral scholars to present their work, along with individual invited guests. It provides a forum in which the projects of these young researchers can be discussed by all members of the graduate program. Each doctoral and postdoctoral scholar is required to present their project in the colloquium once a semester as it progresses through its various stages of development (in the fourth year, this is required only once over the course of two semesters). From the outset, the research colloquium encourages doctoral and postdoctoral scholars in the group to present their work to a selected audience and to prepare accordingly. It thus makes a crucial contribution to the quality assurance of the graduate program: in our experience, it has proven to be an extremely useful tool to ensure that dissertations are completed in a timely fashion (and that problems are detected early on). It also establishes a shared context for discussions among the junior scholars in the group that promotes intellectual exchange.
- *Foundational Seminar.* The foundational seminar (also two hours long) is held every other week alternating with the research colloquium. In the foundational seminar, members of the graduate program read texts together in order to engage with theoretical and methodological foundations of our research and test their concrete applicability to questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. The foundational seminar is thus the central site for the graduate program’s intellectual work.
- *Core Colloquium.* The core colloquium supplements the foundational seminar. It is open to the public and serves as a platform for lectures by the professors participating in the group and by guest speakers. The program will be initially designed in consultation with the group’s junior scholars, who will then entirely take over its organization. Guest speakers from outside of Konstanz will usually offer a shorter-length seminar.
- *Research Lab.* Once a semester, the core faculty of the group will meet together with doctoral and postdoctoral scholars in a closed session to discuss the main theoretical contours of the group and agree on interdisciplinary points of focus in the program of study.
- *Events with cooperation partners.* This regular core program will be supplemented by seminars and workshops with professors and possibly doctoral scholars from cooperating institutions. Similar forms of cooperation have been highly successful in recent years, especially with partners in the United States. In this new graduate program, joint events with external participants will focus on anchoring perspectives of the European peripheries and areas outside Europe in the program of study, including in the choice of invitations for guests. Plans for the first cohort include an event in Pretoria (2023) and one in St. Petersburg (2025), should this be possible by

then. Graduate students will be actively involved in making these plans—first, in order to meet the needs of their individual research projects, and second, to help them develop independence and skills in organizing academic events and exchange. As another important contribution to the teaching program, we will invite Mercator Fellows to actively participate in shaping the program of study during their stay in Konstanz.

- *Key Qualifications.* In addition, students will be encouraged to attend a full-day workshop once a semester organized by the university's Academic Staff Development. The workshop is specifically tailored to the career stage of doctoral scholars and teaches key academic skills that are important for successfully completing dissertations and developing an academic profile.

The working languages in the graduate program will be English and German. Applications can be submitted in both languages. Fluency in English is assumed in all sessions for the entire group. However, it will generally be possible to present projects in German when this is the main scholarly language of the topic. Students from non-German-speaking countries will be offered free German courses by the Welcome Centre. In order to maintain the linguistic diversity of the disciplinary cultures involved, flexibility is called for here depending on specific needs. The language in which research is to be published will depend on the conventions of each respective discipline.

- *Events from the regular teaching program of the university.* Of course, students are free to take advantage of the regular courses offered by the university.

Members of the graduate school are expected to be present on site during the semester. Persons who are on research visits abroad are expected to participate in events of the graduate school via the internet.

4.3 Guests and Mercator Fellows

Both the interdisciplinary nature of our research agenda and the international orientation of the group are strong reasons for a program of visiting scholars. As a smaller university, Konstanz lacks faculty in many important areas of expertise. Here, however, we can also make use of existing regional networks (Tübingen, Basel, University of Zurich). The graduate program expressly aims to integrate doctoral scholars into international academic exchange.

Recognized scholars from Germany and abroad will be invited as part of the core colloquium (for one-day visits), and for workshops and conferences (for visits lasting several days). In order to best support the specific research interests of our doctoral and postdoctoral scholars, invitations for visiting scholars and Mercator Fellows are expected to be made on their initiative, or at least in coordination with them. All invited visiting scholars will enjoy access to the comprehensive services of the university's Welcome Center.

4.4 Further Qualification Measures

As elaborated here, the graduate program sees itself as a research institution and as such it is committed to the basic theoretical profile of research in cultural studies at the University of Konstanz. However, its purpose is not only to train young scholars. As with the earlier doctoral programs in Konstanz, "The Figure of the Third" and "The Real in the Culture of Modernity," it aims to give participants a theoretical awareness of the special conditions characterizing sites of political and social interaction and transition zones. Not only is this reflected in the current professional activities of former participants: analyzing the global dimensions within European self-conceptions and perceptions of Europe by others has implications that go far beyond academia. Similar to the master's program "Cultural

Foundations of Europe,” which was founded in 2008 and prepares graduates for a dissertation in cultural studies while also providing qualifications in additional professional fields within an international context, we expect that graduates will work in a broad spectrum of contexts, as well as moving on to further study to obtain additional academic qualifications. They will be well positioned to find work in international organizations and NGOs, in the field of cultural exchange and foreign cultural policy, in foundations and publishing houses, or in the media and in public relations. We can expect that employment opportunities in these fields will continue to experience strong growth in the coming years as a result of European integration and global political and cultural networking.

3 Advising and Career Development

5.1 Procedures for Announcing Fellowships and Selecting Fellows

We invite applications from students in disciplines in cultural studies and the social sciences whose previous study and possible research activities are evidence of a desire to pursue an academic career, and whose respective research projects can be productively integrated into the overall program. Moreover, in selecting fellows we will consider the balance between the participating disciplines. Applicants can be expected to have completed their previous degrees in a timely manner, with the grade of at least “gut” (“good” = the second highest grade possible). Applications should be based on a project outline of approximately ten pages. The selection of concrete areas in which future doctoral scholars can work is limited by the fact that we must be able to offer research advisors from among the faculty in Konstanz with appropriate expertise. Decisions on awarding fellowships are made by the selection committee, which includes all faculty members of our group.

5.2 Plan for Advising and Career Development

Advising in the graduate program aims to give students solid support in writing their dissertations and making timely progress while fostering their independence, in consideration of their individual circumstances. Although it should be possible for students to continue an advising relationship with an external advisor (depending on the university and field from which they come), an (additional) advisor from among the faculty in Konstanz will be required. Doctoral students must submit a report on the status of their work to their advisors in Konstanz at least once a year and have a discussion about the state of their progress, which will be documented in a report submitted to the group’s speaker. All doctoral scholars are expected to present their projects at the research colloquium twice during their first year. In accordance with the university’s Code of Practice for Doctoral Researchers (<https://www.uni-konstanz.de/en/research/research-career/code-of-practice-for-doctoral-researchers-at-the-university-of-konstanz/>), which sets standards for appropriate research advising, supervision agreements will be signed with all doctoral scholars.

5.3 Equal Opportunities in Research

The University of Konstanz committed itself to a family-friendly university and to gender equality in a Strategy to Promote Equal Opportunity (<https://www.uni-konstanz.de/en/equalopportunities/gender-equality-in-science-and-studies/standards/equal-opportunity-plan/>) adopted in 2018, which was formulated on the basis of previously successful measures to ensure equality. As an additional focus area, the university has established the Konstanzia program to foster gender equality in career and personnel development, which includes the mentoring programs MEiN (Mentoring with Experts and international Networking) and the Konstanzia Fellowship (a mentoring program for women postdoctoral scholars). In addition to these objectives and actions, the university committed itself to a Code of Practice on Diversity to ensure an organizational and academic culture that is free of discrimination (<https://www.uni->

[konstanz.de/en/equalopportunities/diversity/diversity-at-the-university-of-konstanz/mission-and-vision/code-of-practice-on-diversity/](https://www.uni-konstanz.de/en/equalopportunities/diversity/diversity-at-the-university-of-konstanz/mission-and-vision/code-of-practice-on-diversity/).

Measures taken by the University of Konstanz to support families follow the “Family in the University” charter developed by the Best Practice Club of the same name (signed and published in 2014), which is organized in three programs targeted at specific groups: “Studying while Raising a Child,” “Combining Research with Raising a Child,” and “Combining a Career with Raising a Child.” The compatibility of academic research and work with family responsibilities is to be ensured through a wide range of benefits or services (daycare, subsidies for research trips, etc.) and by the possibility of flexible working hours (flexible submission deadlines and requirements to be present on campus) along with targeted support (training, coaching, personal assistance). Parents on parental leave should be included in all communications and remain involved, in particular, in any decisions made by the group regarding the program of events and invitations to scholars. As in the past, flexible childcare options will continue to be offered for students with children or caregiver responsibilities in order to provide relief during conferences, block seminars, or summer schools. Grants for travel or childcare costs awarded on the basis of need are intended to make it possible to reconcile extended absences (conference visits, research trips, etc.) with family responsibilities. Junior scholars with family caregiver responsibilities should have access to targeted advising from the RGFD and discipline-specific support in career planning. In addition, these individuals will be offered mentoring by a designated faculty member from among those participating in the graduate program. Family caregiver responsibilities are always to be considered in evaluating progress and applications.

4 Academic Setting for the Graduate program

It is not only the Center of Excellence “Cultural Foundations of Social Integration,” which existed from 2006 to 2019, that has set the University of Konstanz apart as a center of foundational research in cultural studies. Cultural studies is also designated as one of the five focus areas for the university as a whole. In 2020, the Center of Excellence was reorganized as a Center for Cultural Studies Research (ZKF, director: Christina Wald). The ZKF will doubtless provide a conducive setting for our program. Institutional and scientific synergies may also arise with the university’s Institute for Advanced Study for Junior Researchers (<https://www.uni-konstanz.de/zukunftskolleg/>), which is financed by the university’s excellence funding and open to projects by scholars from all disciplines. The Institute of Advanced Study is currently increasing its focus on promoting scholars from the global South through special fellowship programs (ZUKOnnect- and Herz_Fellowships).

Even more important, however, are existing institutions and initiatives at Konstanz that, taken together with our new program, are developing into a new research priority in the field of European cultural studies. Among these are the research center “Cultures of Europe in a Multipolar World” (spokespersons: Albrecht Koschorke and Kirsten Mahlke), which opened in January 2019, funded by the Dr. K.-H. Eberle Prize; and the Constance Mediterranean Platform headed by Manuel Borutta. Since 2020, the university has been working with four other universities to form the “European Universities Initiative” (EUI), an association of five European universities committed to reforms aimed to develop synergies above all in the field of university teaching. This cooperation could also be extended to doctoral training. The university’s participation in the nationwide Social Cohesion Research Center (Forschungszentrum Gesellschaftlicher Zusammenhalt, <https://www.uni-konstanz.de/en/research-institute-social-cohesion-risc/>) directed by legal scholar Daniel Thym, also has a strong European component. Social science expertise can be added to our research activities through cooperation with the Konstanz Center of Excellence “Politics of Inequality” (<https://www.exc.uni-konstanz.de/en/inequality/>), to which applying faculty member Christina Zuber belongs. Forums for this collaboration with local research institutions could include core colloquia or workshops.

These institutions document the high level of commitment characterizing the University of Konstanz's promotion of young scholars. They are, moreover, an expression of a cross-disciplinary research agenda focused on Europe that has become increasingly prominent in recent years. Our (post)doctoral fellows should thus have ideal conditions for their study and research. The large number of activities at the university with direct relevance to their work will ensure that members enjoy many rich opportunities for informal encounters and intellectual exchange, while also being able to develop their own research profile.