



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



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# Doctorate

universität freiburg

## Spemann Graduate School of Biology and Medicine (SGBM)

University of Freiburg • Freiburg im Breisgau

### Overview

Degree	Doctor rerum naturalium (Dr rer nat)
Teaching language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>English</li></ul>
Languages	Courses offered by SGBM are held in English only. Participants can access additional courses offered by other institutions of the University of Freiburg, which may be held in German.
Full-time / part-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>full-time</li></ul>
Programme duration	6 semesters, 8 semesters
Beginning	Only for doctoral programmes: any time
Application deadline	Consult the website: <a href="https://www.sgbm.uni-freiburg.de">https://www.sgbm.uni-freiburg.de</a>
Tuition fees per semester in EUR	Varied
Combined Master's degree / PhD programme	No
Joint degree / double degree programme	No

#### Description/content

The Spemann Graduate School of Biology and Medicine (SGBM) is funded by the Ministry for Science, Research and Arts of the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg. This international school offers a multidisciplinary research and training programme that relies on outstanding research facilities as well as the Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology and Epigenetics, the Clusters of Excellence comprising the Centre for Integrative Biological Signalling Studies (CIBSS), Centre for Biological Signalling Studies (BIOSS) and BrainLinks-BrainTools (BL-BT), and the Bernstein Center Freiburg (BCF). At present, the graduate school counts approx. 110 doctoral fellows.

The programme covers a wide range of disciplines: protein structure and function, synthetic biology and signalling, developmental biology, neurosciences, immunology and virology, molecular medicine, and molecular plant sciences. Admission to the school is highly competitive. Doctoral fellows are awarded a PhD degree (Dr rer nat) from the University of Freiburg. Medical doctors can also join an MD/PhD programme.

Students do their experimental work in the laboratory of one of the principal investigators. Together with the school's management, students assemble their thesis committee, which provides efficient supervision and advice. The school operates in English. If they wish, international students can attend German courses, which facilitate their daily life outside the lab.

Students attend seminars, journal clubs, lectures, and conferences. They learn to present their data to their peers, including those who work in an area unrelated to their own. They attend practical courses in novel technologies (live imaging, genomics, proteomics, etc.) and soft skills courses (scientific writing, presentation skills, intellectual property rights, project management, good scientific practice, career coaching, etc.) Support for attending conferences and workshops as well as for a short-term stay in a partner laboratory abroad is also available.

The school provides help with settling and managing daily life in Germany: accommodation, residence permit, health insurance, bank account, registration at the university, etc. Students regularly get together in the SGBM House on the campus. The yearly SGBM retreat is another occasion for exchange between the different members of the school.

## Course Details

<b>Course organisation</b>	At the start of the programme, students perform three one-month rotations and then decide in which of the three laboratories they will perform their doctoral work. Practical courses (live imaging, animal handling course, genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, biostatistics, etc.) and soft skills courses (scientific writing, scientific presentation, intellectual property rights, project management, good scientific practice, career coaching, etc.) can be attended at any time during the three/four years of the PhD programme. In the monthly SGBM seminars, students present their results and learn to discuss them in a multidisciplinary context. Students meet the study coordinator twice a year to discuss their curriculum (list of lectures and seminars attended, workshops, courses, meetings, etc.), and they meet their thesis committee members at least once a year.
<b>International elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International guest lecturers</li> <li>• Projects with partners in Germany and abroad</li> </ul>
<b>Special promotion / funding of the programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other (e.g. state level)</li> </ul>
<b>Course-specific, integrated German language courses</b>	No
<b>Course-specific, integrated English language courses</b>	No

## Costs / Funding

<b>Tuition fees per semester in EUR</b>	Varied
<b>Semester contribution</b>	180 EUR per semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative fee: 70 EUR</li> <li>• Contribution to the constituted student body: 7 EUR</li> <li>• Contribution to the student union: 103 EUR</li> </ul>
<b>Costs of living</b>	Participants must ensure that sufficient funding is available to finance their participation in a course of study. The average cost of living in Freiburg for one month is currently approx. 850 EUR to 1,000 EUR.

Some details:

- Rooms in private accommodation including extra costs: 350 EUR – 700 EUR
- Rooms in student residences: 250 EUR and 550 EUR including extra costs
- Private expenses amount to around 350 EUR per month.
- Health insurance (recommended) is available for approx. 120 EUR per month.
- Transport: A special student ticket for regional transport costs approx. 89 EUR per semester.

[www.studium.uni-freiburg.de/en/counseling/welcome-guide-for-international-students/finance](http://www.studium.uni-freiburg.de/en/counseling/welcome-guide-for-international-students/finance)

**Funding opportunities  
within the university**

No

## Requirements / Registration

**Academic admission  
requirements**

Master's degree (in some cases, which are examined individually, also BA with honours)

Candidates with a medical degree (MD) are eligible for the MD/PhD programme.

Short-listed candidates invited for an interview have to present their Master's thesis project to the selection committee. In addition, each candidate has three individual interviews with a principal investigator of the school.

**Language requirements**

The language of the school is English. Applicants must provide proof of their English skills, but the TOEFL (or equivalent) is not required. Interviews and presentations to the selection committee will all take place in English, and candidates who are not fluent will not be considered.

**Application deadline**

Consult the website: <https://www.sgbm.uni-freiburg.de>

**Submit application to**

<https://www.sgbm.uni-freiburg.de/>

## Services

**Possibility of finding part-  
time employment**

Doctoral students are expected to work on their PhD on a full-time basis. Thus, a job outside the lab is not possible.

**Accommodation**

As Freiburg is an attractive city, finding a suitable and affordable place to live can take a little while. The University of Freiburg offers all newly enrolled international students the possibility to apply for student housing via the International Office. In addition to these dormitories, which are run by the Studierendenwerk Freiburg ([www.swfr.de/en](http://www.swfr.de/en)), several independent residence halls are listed on the university website (<http://www.housing.uni-freiburg.de>). The Studierendenwerk Freiburg and the International Office also offer a list of available private rooms.

**Structured research and  
supervision**

Yes

**Research training /**

Yes

Support for international  
students and doctoral  
candidates

- Welcome event
- Visa matters

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## Contact

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SGBM

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🌐 Course website: <https://www.sgbm.uni-freiburg.de/>

📘 <https://www.facebook.com/unifreiburg>

🐦 <https://twitter.com/UniFreiburg>

🌐 <https://www.linkedin.com/company/albert-ludwigs-universit-t-freiburg-im-breisgau>

📷 <https://instagram.com/unifreiburg/>

📺 <https://www.youtube.com/c/Universit%C3%A4tFreiburg>

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# International Programmes in Germany - Database

[www.daad.de/international-programmes](http://www.daad.de/international-programmes)  
[www.daad.de/sommerkurse](http://www.daad.de/sommerkurse)

## Editor

DAAD - Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst e.V.  
German Academic Exchange Service  
Section K23 – Information on Studying in Germany  
Kennedyallee 50  
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[www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de)

## GATE-Germany

Consortium for International Higher Education Marketing  
[www.gate-germany.de](http://www.gate-germany.de)

## Disclaimer

The data used for this database was collected and analysed in good faith and with due diligence. The DAAD and the Content5 AG accept no liability for the correctness of the data contained in the "International Programmes in Germany" and "Language and Short Courses in Germany".

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