

Master's program "Agriculture, Ecology and Societies" (AGES)

MENTORING GUIDE

In an interdisciplinary Master, mentoring is an important component of student success. Students have different profiles and future career aspirations. Mentoring allows for a more specific focus on students' orientation within the program and their targeted career perspectives.

Mentoring should be distinguished from other, more organizational, advisory services to which reference can be made (central points of contact: Holger Mittelstraß, Dean of Studies, Examination Board).

The first mentoring meeting is mandatory. Please, submit the signed form to the Student Secretariat. It must be submitted to the Student Secretariat at the latest when registering for the Master's thesis.

Organizational issues:

Student-mentor pairs are assigned prior to the start of the program based on undergraduate studies and professional background.

Students are advised to use the orientation questions (on the registration sheet) to prepare for the first mentoring meeting. Initial mentoring meetings will take place in the first six weeks.

Further meetings, depending on the student's needs, will take place at the beginning of February (to discuss course selection for Semester 2), or based on individual agreements between mentor and mentee.

See attached the Template that students have to fill in.
Appointments are made via email or phone.

Context and goals of mentoring

The goal of mentoring is to provide assistance to orient the individual's course of study. The following steps can be used:

- Information about the compulsory modules
- Advice on the selection of elective modules
- Are there personal conflicts with other students or teachers?
- Are there individual challenges and personal crises (financial, social, cultural, related to studies)?
- Identify special personal potentials (strengths/weaknesses) - Encourage acquisition of additional qualifications
- Address possible exchange semester options
- Develop ideas about possible career paths

For mentors: Possible questions for the meeting:

Ways of asking through questions:

- On a scale of 1-10, where do you stand in relation to...?
- What gives you cause for change now?
- What ideas do you have about... already? - And what else?
- What has already worked?
- Suppose you were to..., what would...?
- What have you already done in relation to...?
- What is your next step in terms of...?

Topic: Personal context, personal challenges:

- How satisfied are you with your general study situation?
- Do you intend to do an internship?
- Germany / EU as a possible place of work?
- Would you like to pursue a doctorate after your master's degree? If yes, where? Possible subject area?
- What do you feel comfortable with in your studies?
- What do you feel uncomfortable with in your studies?
- Is there anything that is overwhelming / underwhelming you?
- Has your personal situation changed since you started your studies? If yes, how (financially, personal relationships, place of residence)? Does this result in any changes for you with regard to your career prospects?
- Other ideas or questions you have regarding your course of study?

Questions for students:

Prepare for your mentoring meetings! Here are some issues you could address during the first or any of the subsequent meetings with you mentor:

- Would you consider your first degree more oriented towards social sciences or towards natural sciences and what should this imply for your module choice during AGES in your view?
- What is your long-term professional goal that you would ideally like to work towards with by choosing the AGES Master program?
- What are career options you ponder currently and do you think your module choices should take account of these? How? What are options you consider?
- a particular role for extracurricular activities to support your studies and desired professional development? Could the university and staff help you in regard to that?
- What would you like to discuss at the first mentoring meeting?