Lab Rotation Guide

General facts
The curriculum comprises three lab rotations. At least one project has to have an experimental focus, at least one project a theoretical focus. A theoretical lab rotation consists of a modeling task or an extended data analysis; a simple data analysis does not count as a theoretical lab rotation. Each project shall be completed in a different working group of the Center. One lab rotation can be done in an external place. Time frame of a lab rotation is seven weeks including report and presentation.

In agreement with her/his mentor and the future supervisor of the project, the student will determine the topic and work schedule. Topic and work schedule must be approved by the examination board, whereby – as a general rule – the student’s proposal should be complied with.

The head of the examination board can approve all project proposals except those where he is the supervisor or the mentor. In such cases, the vice-head can approve the proposals.

Students should not be paid for the work on their lab rotation. However, work done as a student research assistant can be used for a lab rotation.

TU examination office
Lab rotations are ‘Study achievements equivalent to the examination’. They can be registered with the TU examination office after the achievements have been accomplished. Students have to submit the form for the registration of Lab Rotations (Laufzettel für die Erstellung eines Examen) completed with the signatures of all supervisors and of the person responsible for the module.

Teaching and Learning Methods
The students will work on original publications (in English) and prepare a ‘project proposal’ under supervision (1,5 weeks). They will work on the scientific question (4 weeks), write a report and present their research project in an oral presentation (1,5 weeks). The main goal of a lab rotation is to gain insight into laboratory work and to learn methods. Obtaining scientific results is not the main goal and usually not possible in the short time.

Workload and Credits
Literature research and ‘project proposal’: 60h (1,5 weeks @ 40h/week) Work on scientific project: 150h (4 weeks @ 40h/week minus 10 hours) Presentation and project report: 60h (1,5 weeks @ 40h/week).
Total: 270h / 9 credit points

Evaluation of the project report and project presentation
The project report shall be corrected by the supervisor. It shall be written according to the “Guidelines for Writing a Scientific Report”; maximum length is five pages. The student should be given the opportunity for corrections of the project report according to the supervisor’s comments. The student should finish the report and give the presentation within the seven weeks. The examination board can grant an extension upon request. Alternatively, it is allowed to prepare a poster instead of one of three lab rotation reports, according to the prior agreement with the lab rotation supervisor. Students are welcome to present their posters at the annual lab rotations symposium for BCCN master students or at the yearly retreat’s poster session.

The project presentation shall take place during a lab meeting of the supervisor's group.

The project will be assessed by the supervisor and will be graded as ‘pass’ or ‘fail’. A written assessment is not required. A copy of each written LR reports must be submitted to the coordination office (as pdf file).

If the lab rotation is done outside the Center, the mentor is responsible for choice of the project topic, the work schedule, as well as the assessment of the project report. In agreement with the mentor another supervisor of the BCCN can be appointed for supervision of the external lab rotation.