

Involving PhD Candidates in their Own Education: Consequences for Supervision

Martin Brokate and Felix Dietrich

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Speakers

Prof. Dr. Martin Brokate

- Professor for mathematics
- Vice dean of TUM Graduate School
- Spokesperson of TopMath Graduate Center

Felix Dietrich

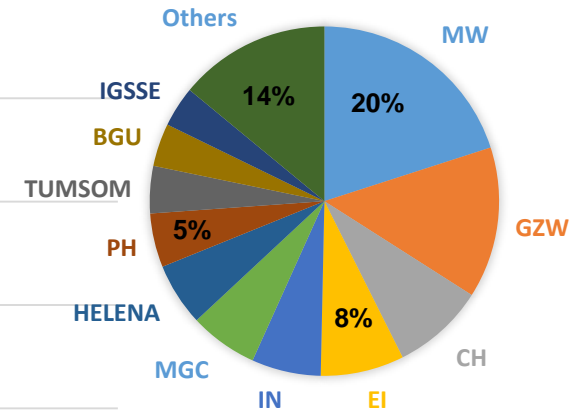
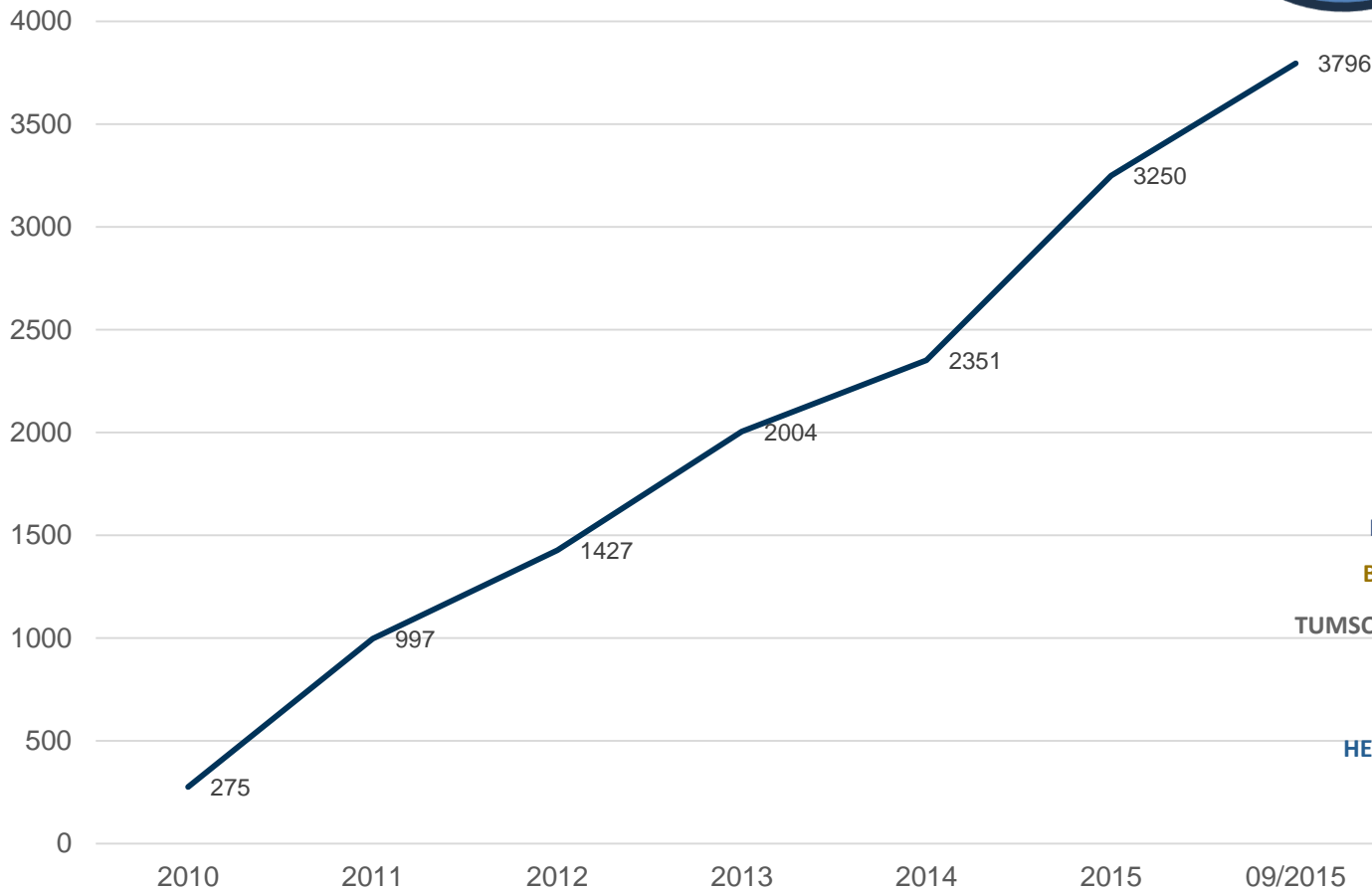
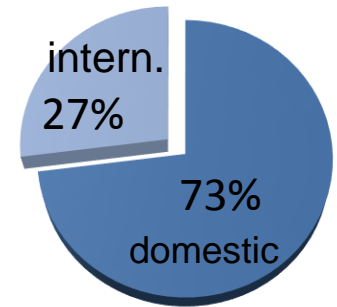
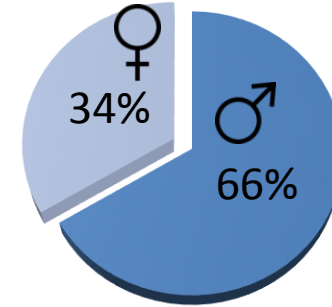
- TopMath PhD candidate 2013-2016
- Spokesperson of the TUM Graduate Council
- PhD representative of TopMath Graduate Center

Outline

TUM Graduate School and Graduate Council

Survey of PhD candidates: organization, results,
consequences for supervision

Membership

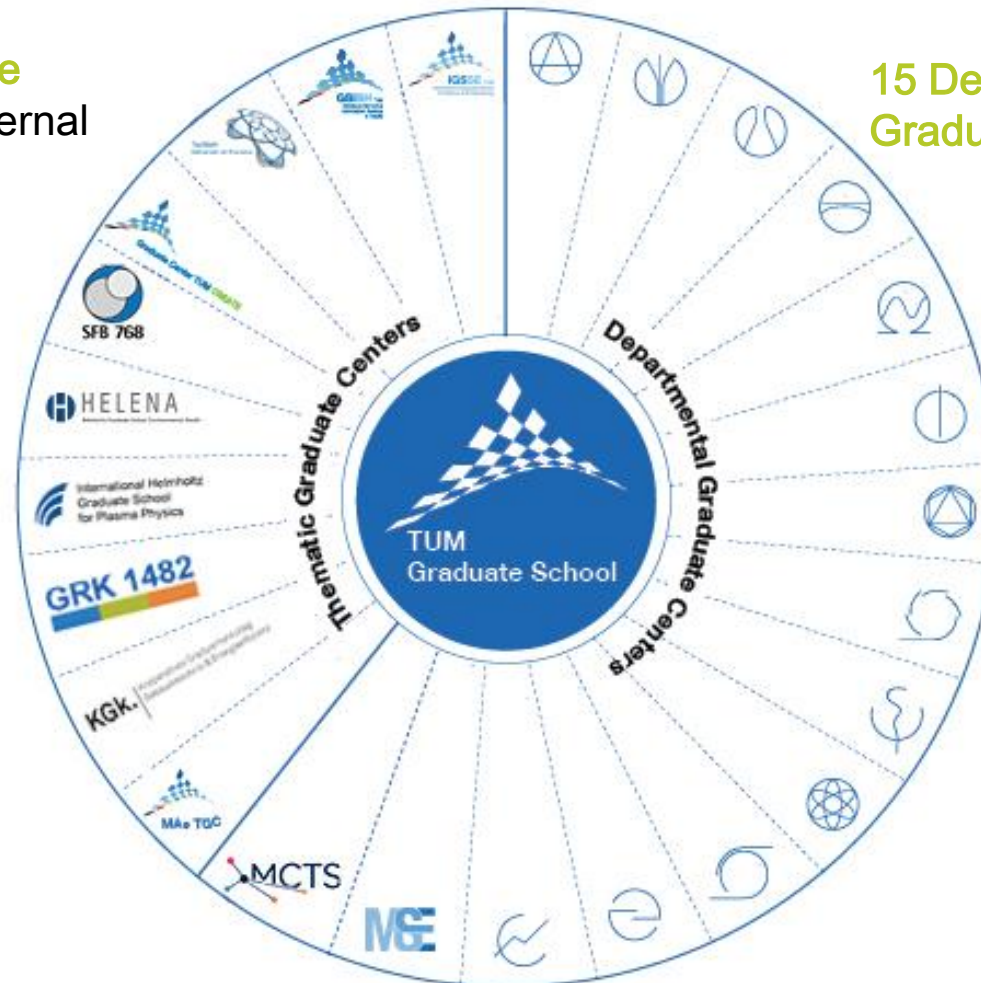


TUM Graduate School Structure

10 Thematic Graduate Centers, incl. 4 in external cooperation with

- Helmholtz Zentrum
- Max Planck
- Munich University of Applied Sciences
- NTU Singapore

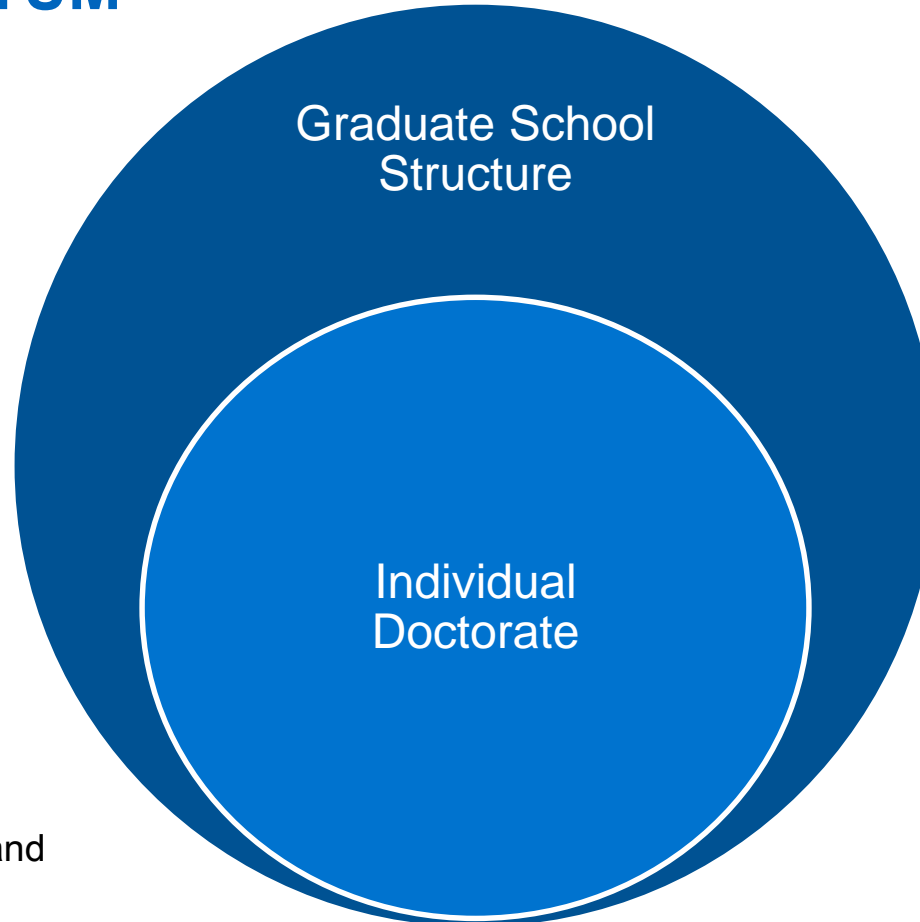
15 Departmental Graduate Centers





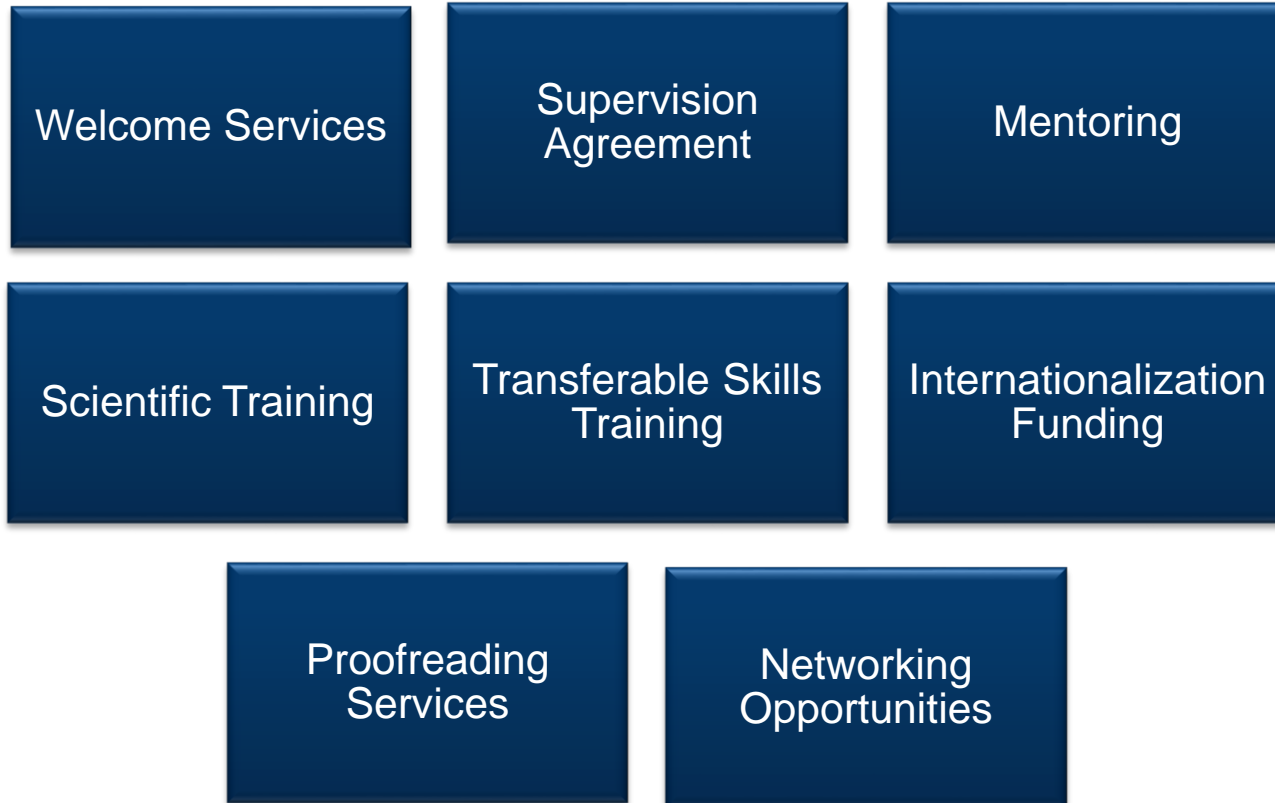
Doctorate at TUM

- Individual doctoral thesis remains in the center of doctoral education
- Key responsibility stays with doctoral candidate, advisor and faculty/department

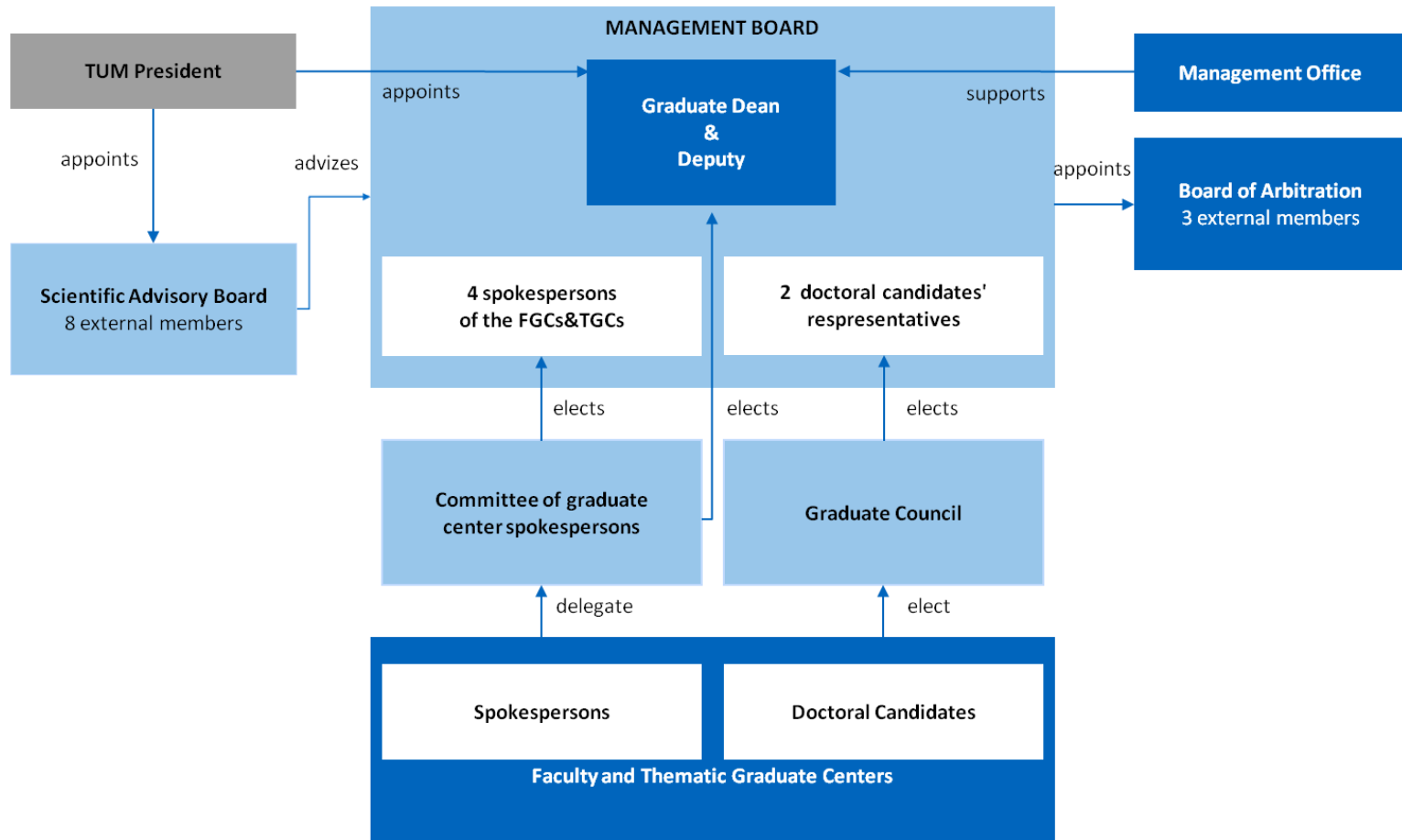


- TUM Graduate School creates a corporate environment with optimum conditions for outstanding research

TUM GS – Programs and Services

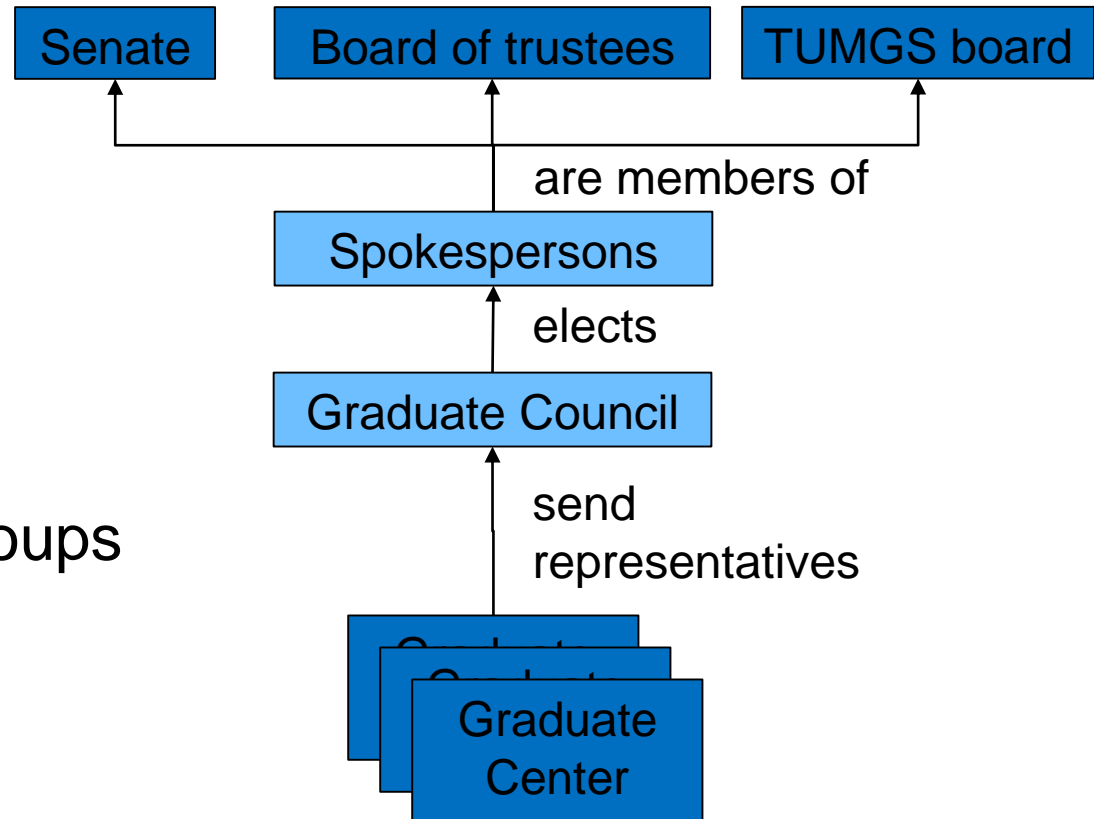


TUM GS – Management Structures



TUM Graduate Council

Structure



Numbers

- Exists since around 2010
- 2 representatives from each of 26 graduate centers

Topics and working groups

- Finances and career paths
- Good scientific practice
- Supervision
- Diversity

Survey of PhD Candidates: Organization and Results

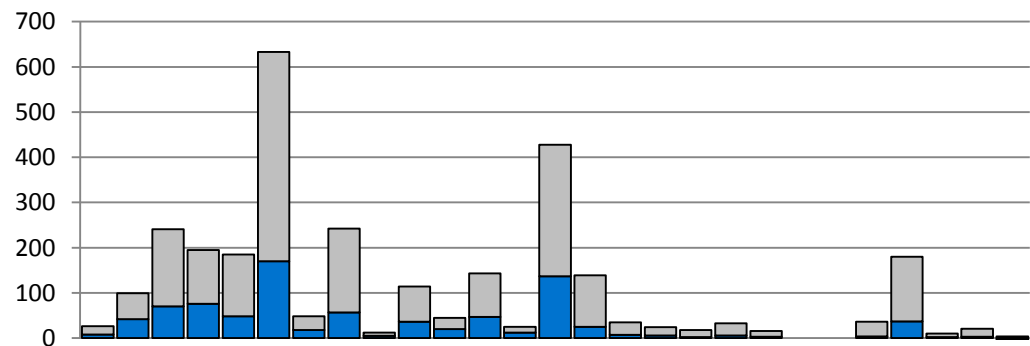
Organization

- 2014, Graduate Council representatives
- Invitations to all PhD candidates at TUM, ~1000 participants (25%)
- More than 20 pages of questions
- Evaluation 2015

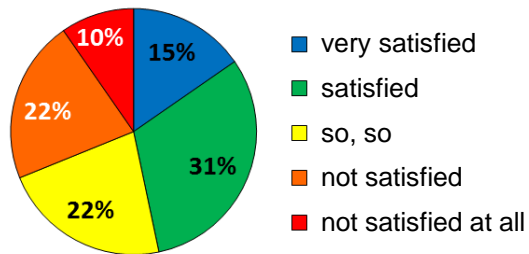
Subject Areas

- Finances and job situation
- Supervision
- Diversity
- ... and more

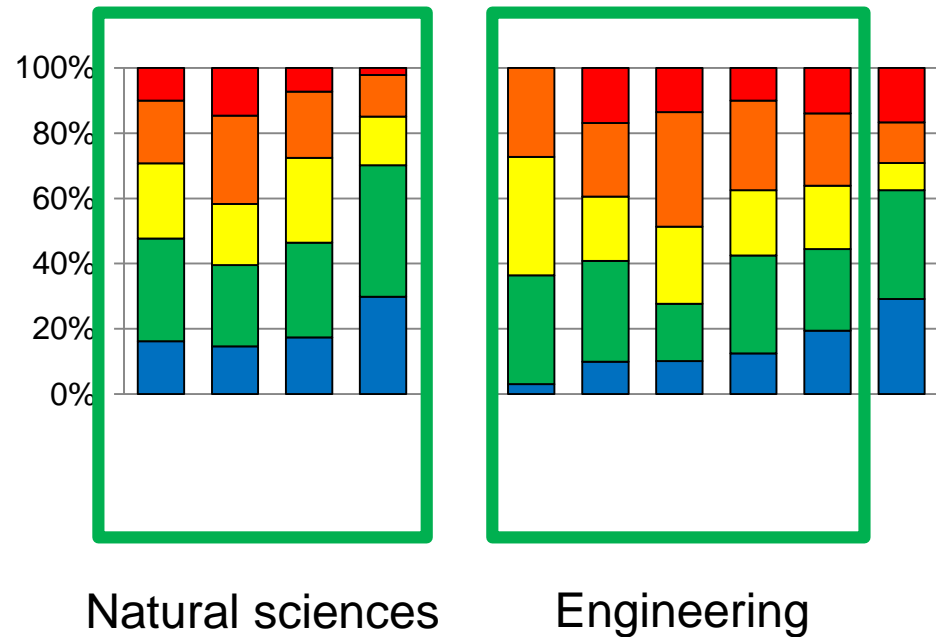
Participation in different graduate centers



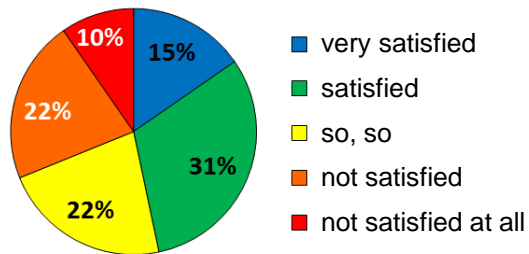
Graduate Council: Evaluation of Supervision



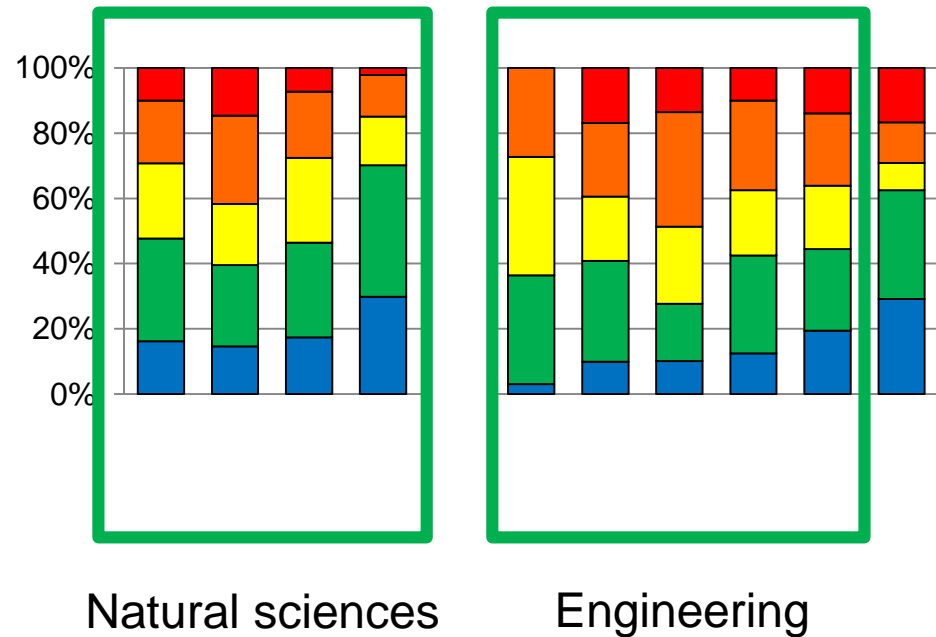
- very satisfied
- satisfied
- so, so
- not satisfied
- not satisfied at all



Graduate Council: Evaluation of Supervision



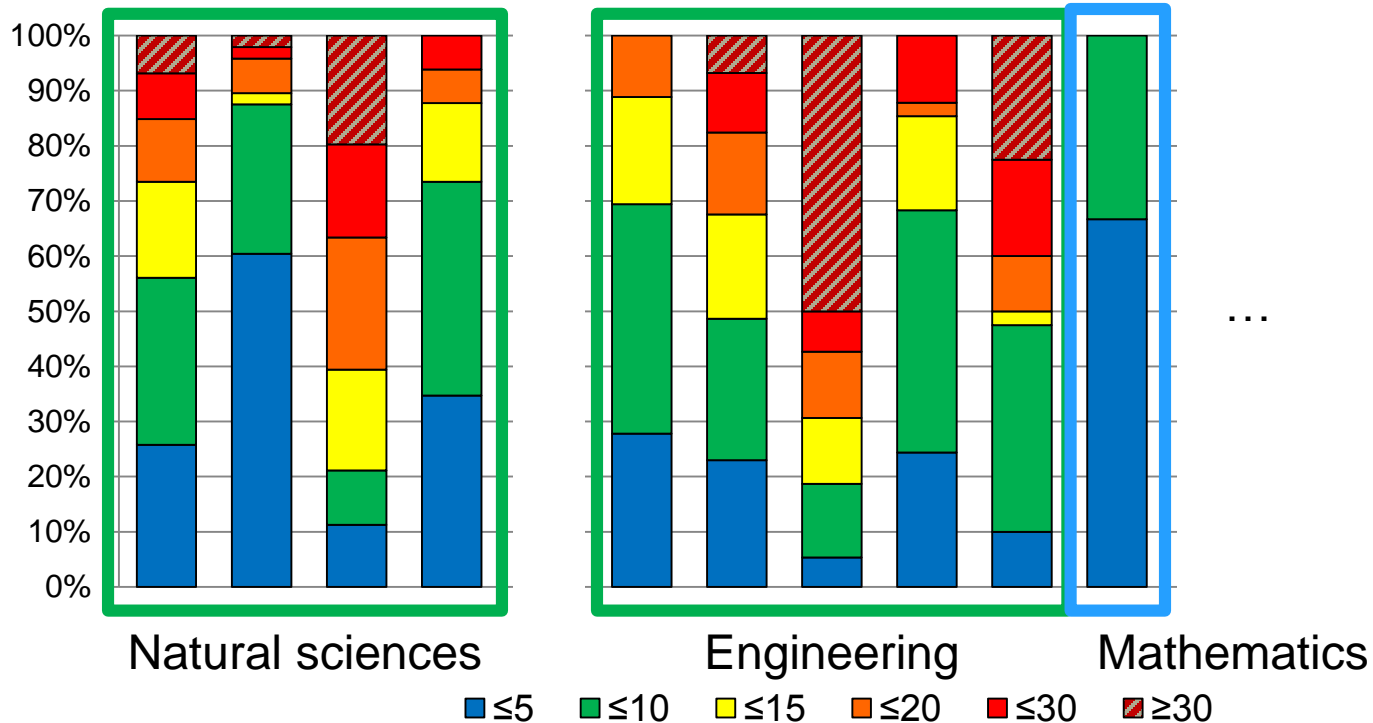
- very satisfied
- satisfied
- so, so
- not satisfied
- not satisfied at all



(Satisfaction with) supervision can still be improved!

Graduate Council: Evaluation of Supervision

How many PhD candidates does your primary supervisor have?



Very different situation between faculties!

Consequences for Supervision

Graduate Center A (large faculty, > 200 members)

- Additional internal survey, > 40% participation
- Chair-specific
- Several workshops, meetings, and counselling sessions initiated

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Graduate Center A (large faculty, > 200 members)

- Additional internal survey, > 40% participation
- Chair-specific
- Several workshops, meetings, and counselling sessions initiated

Graduate Center B (small center, < 50 members)

- Additional internal survey, > 30% participation
- Text input possible
- Resulting ideas are now implemented in the center, together with the faculty

Conclusion

A serious involvement of PhD candidates in the decision processes at a university can have many positive effects.

Establishing the Graduate Council served as the frame in which PhD candidates contribute.

At TUM, it triggered problem awareness, broad discussion processes and resulted in actual changes in the supervision process, which are beneficial for all parties involved.