Conservation biology
doctoral study programme, third Bologna cycle

COURSE STRUCTURE of the study programme

The study programme consists of the following components:
- compulsory courses,
- elective courses,
- seminar,
- individual research work,
- doctoral dissertation.

Upon enrolment in the first year, the student selects a supervisor in accordance with their research interests, who provides guidance throughout the study process and in the preparation of the doctoral dissertation.

To complete the programme, the student must fulfil all academic requirements defined by the programme and prepare and successfully defend a doctoral dissertation in the field of conservation biology.

Prior to the defence of the doctoral dissertation, the research results must be published (or accepted for publication) in international journals in the relevant field, specifically in at least two articles in journals indexed in the SCI database, of which one may instead be indexed in Scopus. In both publications, the student must be listed as the first or lead author. The articles must be accepted for publication or published in journals indexed in SCI, SSCI, or AHCI with an impact factor (according to ISI) and classified as scientific articles of category 1.01 or 1.02 in the COBISS database.

The content and structure of the study programme are explained in greater detail in the following section.

Table 1: Structure of the study programme

Year of study	Study obligation	ECTS-credits (ECTS)	
		ECTS	ECTS/Year of study
1.	Research methodology	10	60
	Seminar	10	
	Individual research work 1	20	
	2 internal elective courses (each 10 ECTS)	20	
2.	Preparation of doctoral dissertation topic	10	60
	Individual research work 2	30	
	2 internal elective courses (each 10 ECTS)	20	
3.	Individual research work 3	60	60
4.	Individual research work 4	30	60
	Individual research work - preparation and defense of doctoral dissertation	30	

Legend:

ECTS credits (ECTS) = credit points awarded under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The credit system facilitates student mobility and the mutual recognition of completed academic requirements.

ECTS credits represent an average estimate of the time required to complete a course and include both organized forms of instruction (lectures, seminars, seminar and laboratory exercises, fieldwork, practical training, etc.) and the student's independent work (exam preparation and other course-related obligations, etc.). One (1) ECTS credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of study workload. Credits are awarded upon the successful completion of the requirements for an individual course.

Table 2: Compulsory courses of the 1st year of study

No.	Courses	ECTS
1.	Research methodology	10

Table 3: Elective courses

No.	Courses	ECTS
CONTENT COURSES		
1.	Conservation parasitology	10
2.	Conservation ecology	10
3.	Systematics and evolution of selected taxonomic groups	10
4.	Molecular marker in genomic era	10
5.	Conservation and management of large mammals	10
6.	Conservation Biology of Large Marine Vertebrates	10
7.	Conservation science, society and decision making	10
8.	Processes, changes and protection of marine ecosystems	10
9.	Anthropogenic impacts on ecosystems – selected topics	10
METHODOLOGICAL COURSES		
10.	Bioinformatics tools in Conservation Biology	10
11.	Statistical tools in conservation biology	10
12.	Spatial tools in conservation biology	10
13.	Quantitative methods in systematics and ecology	10

Elective courses are divided in two segments: one is based on content, the other is methodological.

The methodological courses provide in depth knowledge in a specific thematic area and enable students to develop a comprehensive approach to the topics they will further explore within the framework of independent research work and the preparation of the doctoral dissertation. Methodological courses provide knowledge and contribute to the acquisition of skills required for the design and implementation of research.

During the course of study, students must obtain at least 10 ECTS credits through methodological elective courses. The selected course must be related to the student's research work.

Individual research work represents the student's scientific research on their doctoral topic, carried out under the supervision of and in collaboration with their supervisor.

The doctoral dissertation represents a significant and original scientific research contribution in the field of conservation biology. The procedure for the registration of the doctoral dissertation topic and its defence is defined in detail in the Rules on the preparation and defence of the doctoral dissertation at the University of Primorska.

For assistance and guidance, students may consult the study programme coordinator.

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