

“Navigating Academia” Winter term 25/26

In this four-part series for early career researchers (master’s students, doctoral candidates and postdocs), we engage practically and theoretically with questions of equal opportunity within academia. In accordance with the principles of the UzK’s Equal Opportunities Unit, the series aims to address intersectional dimensions of social inequality in practical and theoretical research and to promote the participation and involvement of actors with different social positions.

Over the course of the semester, the workshops will explore intersectional research, research and care work, writing strategies, and social dynamics in supervisory relationships. Each session will be combined with a joint lunch or dinner in order to continue informal networking between different qualification levels.

The series is particularly aimed at FLINTA*, BPoC, researchers with disabilities, first-generation academics as well as researchers with care-responsibilities.

Dates

- 1) 12.11.2025 4PM–6:30PM + subsequent dinner: “**Doing Intersectional Research**” with Prof. Dr. **Julia Bee** (Professor for Gender Media Studies, Ruhr University Bochum), room 3.03, GSSC (Classen-Kappellmann-Str. 24, third floor)

Julia Bee has held the Chair of Gender Media Studies with a special focus on diversity at Ruhr University Bochum since 2024. Her research focuses both theoretically and practically on various forms of intersectional discrimination and inequality of opportunity. Her ongoing work on method development and experimental-creative research processes plays a special role in this. She is currently researching forms of anti-fascist protest and forms of digital political education, as well as climate justice. In her workshop on “Doing Intersectional Research,” she will work with participants on her perspective on academic knowledge production and collaboration against the backdrop of her extraordinary commitment to equal opportunities at universities.

- 2) 09.12.2025 10AM–12:30PM + subsequent lunch: “**Research work and care work**” with Prof. Dr. **Sandra Kurfürst** (Professor for Cross-Cultural and Urban Communication, University of Cologne), room S252, GSSC (Classen-Kappellmann-Str. 24, ground floor)

Sandra Kurfürst has been Professor of Cross-Cultural and Urban Communication at the University of Cologne since 2021. In addition to her diverse research expertise on Southeast Asia and the Pearl River Delta, urbanity, hip hop, and media, Sandra Kurfürst’s research focuses on bodily practices in relation to gender configurations. Based on her career as a university professor and researcher with extensive international experience, she will work with us on the connection between research work and care work, both in practical and conceptual terms, focusing on concepts of “care” in the humanities and social sciences.

- 3) 14.01.2026 3PM–6:30PM + subsequent dinner: “**Focused writing despite care obligations**” with Dr. **Wiebke Vogelaar**, room 3.03, GSSC (Classen-Kappelman-Str. 24, third floor)

People in academia with care responsibilities often face the double burden of research and caregiving. Care responsibilities include all activities that ensure the well-being of others—both direct care (e.g., children, relatives in need of care) and organizational activities (household management, scheduling, logistics) and emotional support (listening, conflict management, promoting emotional well-being). These tasks often create a heavy double burden alongside academic work and can lead to writer's block and loss of concentration.

Dr. Vogelaar has systematically investigated this problem and developed practical strategies that view care obligations not as an obstacle, but as a reality of life that needs to be integrated. The program promotes both productivity and mental relief and strengthens individual resilience.

Contents:

- Writing strategies and methods for concentration despite interruptions
- Dealing with mental load and structural stress
- Practical exercises for self-organization (e.g., Deep Work, Pomodoro, Kanban)
- Reflection on role models and care obligations in everyday academic life

Goals: Increasing writing productivity, promoting self-confidence, building a supportive network among participants

- 4) 04.02.2026 4PM–6:30PM + subsequent dinner: “**Allyship in supervision**” with Prof. Dr. **Nicolas Pethes** (Professor for Modern German literature, University of Cologne) and Prof. Dr. **Stephan Packard** (Professor for Popular Culture and Its Theories, University of Cologne), room 3.03, GSSC (Classen-Kappelman-Str. 24, third floor)

The ongoing work for equal opportunities in the academic system requires recognition and empathy for social positions that do not correspond to one's own. Especially within long-standing supervisory relationships during doctoral studies, multiple forms of inequality can arise in structurally hierarchical relationships between supervisors and supervisees, which always include a personal dimension in addition to the professional and content-related qualification level. Based on these observations, Nicolas Pethes and Stephan Packard will share with us their understanding of supervisory work and supervisory relationships.

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