



PhD Course

Resilience in Academia: Understanding and Managing Mental Health during the Doctorate and Beyond

27 November 2026, 9 am to 4 pm, Room 4030/31 (Esplanade 36)

Course Instructor: Dr. Taiya Mikisch

Course participation: for female students only, as “gender financed” by DFG

Course Value: 1 credit point (Ergänzungsbereich/supplementary course)

Course Language: German or English (depending on participants)

Software: no

Prerequisites: no

Registration: Via STINE or send an email to andrea.buekow@uni-hamburg.de

Initial situation

The doctoral phase can be rewarding, but also involves significant challenges to mental health. High workloads, uncertain career prospects, supervisory relationships, imposter feelings, procrastination, and care responsibilities can create considerable stress and pressure. Similar challenges may continue after graduation when navigating career decisions, the job market, or uncertainty about an academic career.

Objective

In this interactive workshop, you will explore research on mental health, resilience, mindfulness, and body awareness in academia. Through practical exercises, reflection, and peer exchange, you will develop strategies for strengthening resilience, regulating stress, and supporting your well-being during and beyond the doctorate.

Contents

- Mental health in academia
- Resilience and mindfulness

- Self-leadership strategies
- Body-based practices for stress regulation
- Individual reflection
- Peer exchange and supportive networks
- Practical tools for everyday academic life
- Structural conditions and mental health

Methodology

The workshop combines concise theoretical input with practical exercises, body-oriented practices, individual reflection, and peer exchange. The focus is on experience-based learning and practical transfer. Participants will also reflect critically on how academic structures shape individual experiences.

Agenda

09:00 -10:30 Introduction and discussion of Mental Health in academia
 10:45 – 12:30 Resilience and Self-leadership
 13:30 – 15:00 Practicing tools for productivity and self-regulation
 15:15 – 16:00 Transfer to participant's schedules and goals & check-out

About the Trainer:

Taiya Mikisch, PhD, is a freelance trainer and facilitator specializing in mindfulness and embodiment in higher education. She is a trained dance scholar and cultural anthropologist (M.A.), mindfulness trainer, and certified generative facilitator.

She has extensive experience in academia and in the fields of meditation, mindfulness, resilience, self-regulation, dance, bodywork, and somatic practices. She is certified in MBST 1.0 and MBET 1.0 and in generative facilitation based on Theory U. She also has training in Social Presencing Theater and experience in diversity-sensitive communication.

She has worked with numerous universities and research institutions, including Berlin University Alliance, Universitätsmedizin Göttingen, Technische Universität Berlin, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, University of Bremen, University of Bonn, RWTH Aachen, and University of Cologne. She is a mother of two.