

universität freiburg

M.Sc. Microsystems Engineering-Introduction

Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Bastian E. Rapp

Freiburg, 09/10/2025



About me

Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Bastian E. Rapp

- 2005, mechanical engineering
University of Karlsruhe
- 2008, PhD in Microfluidics and Biosensors
University of Karlsruhe
- 2017, Habilitation on fluid mechanics and microfluidics
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)
- 2018, Full Professor Process Technology
IMTEK, University of Freiburg
- 2018, Founding CEO and current CTO of Glassomer GmbH
- several industry/academic awards (selection):
GMM, Edison Award, Südwestmetallförderpreis, 2 of my former PhD students won the *Deutsche Studienpreis*
- since WS 2023/2024: Dean of Studies of IMTEK

Full Professor,
Laboratory of Process Technology
Department of Microsystem Technology (IMTEK)
University of Freiburg

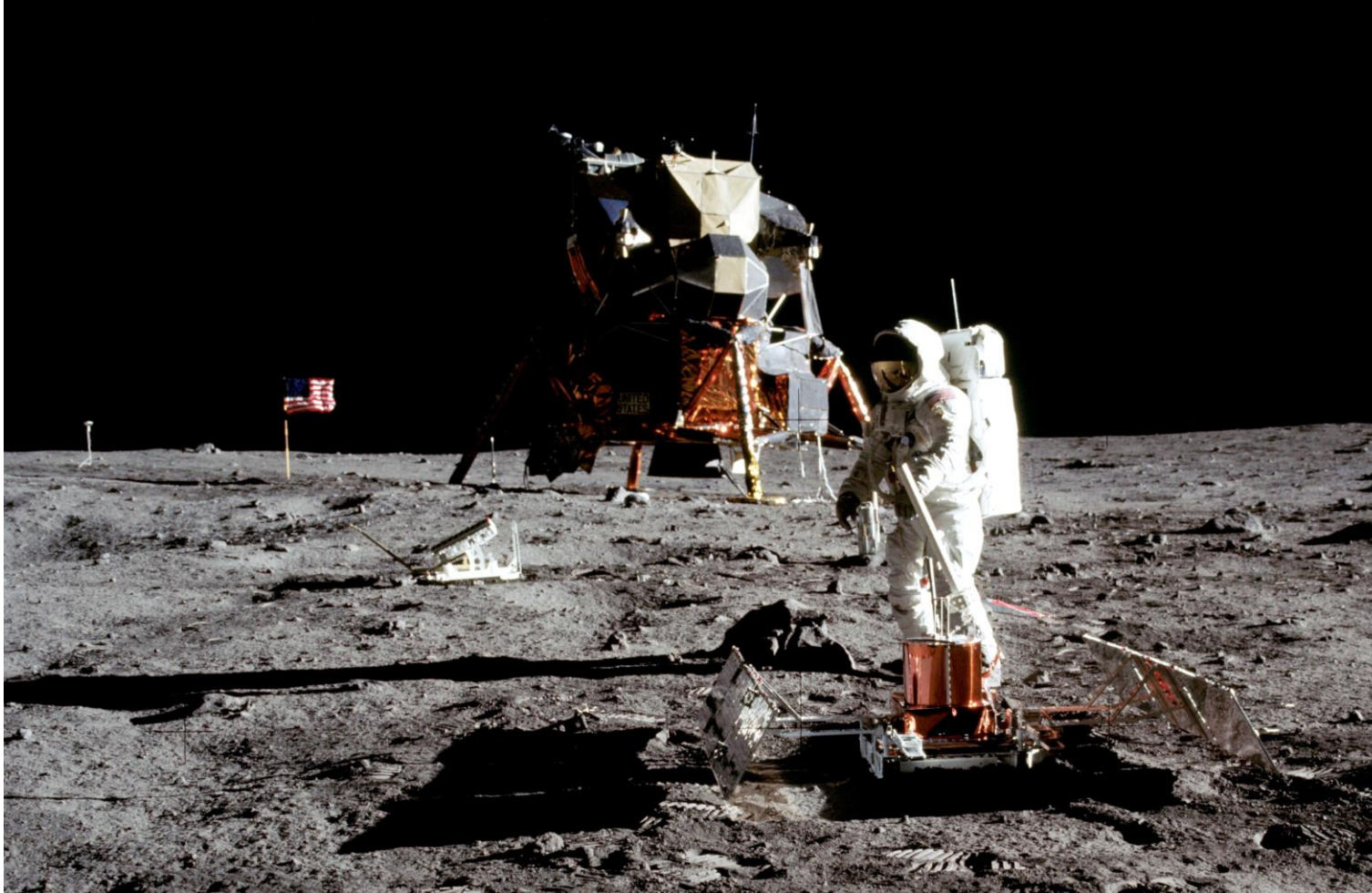


bastian.rapp@neptunlab.org
bastian.rapp@imtek.de
www.NeptunLab.org

The Technology



One of the greatest achievements of mankind

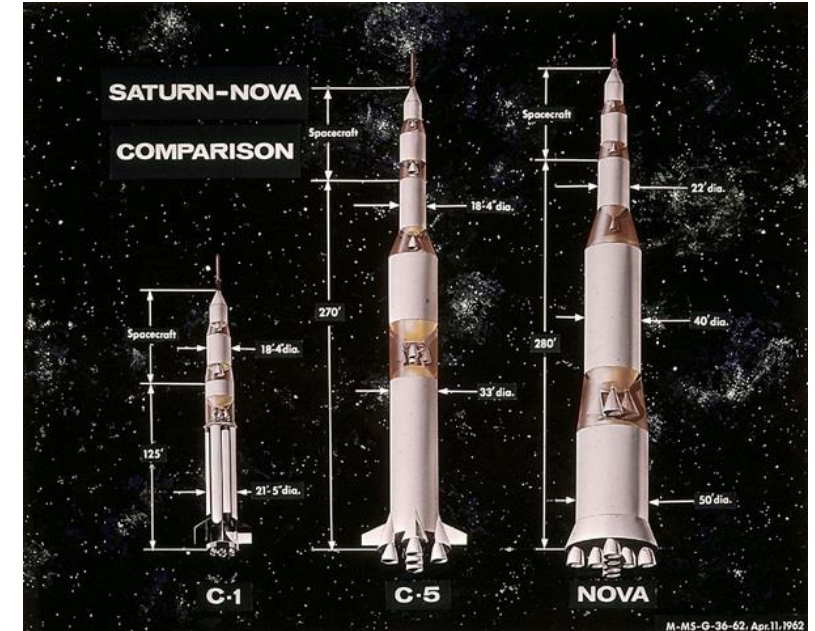
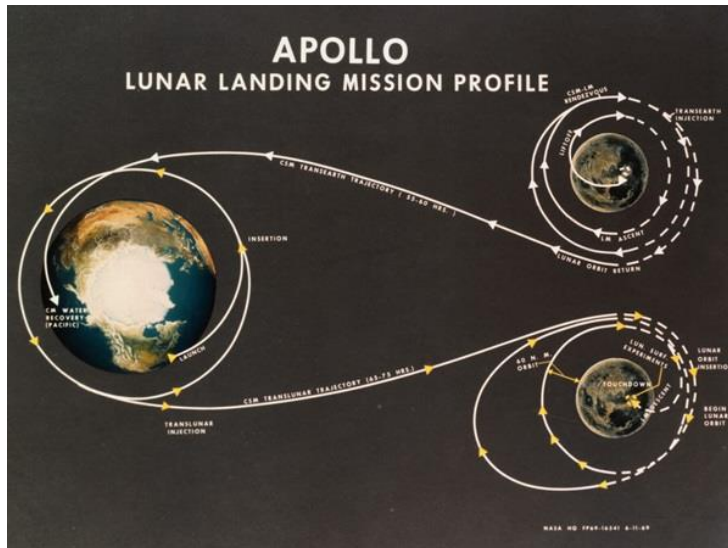


- the lunar landing of *Apollo 11* on July 20th, 1969
- you all know the story but how much do you know about the technology behind *Apollo*?



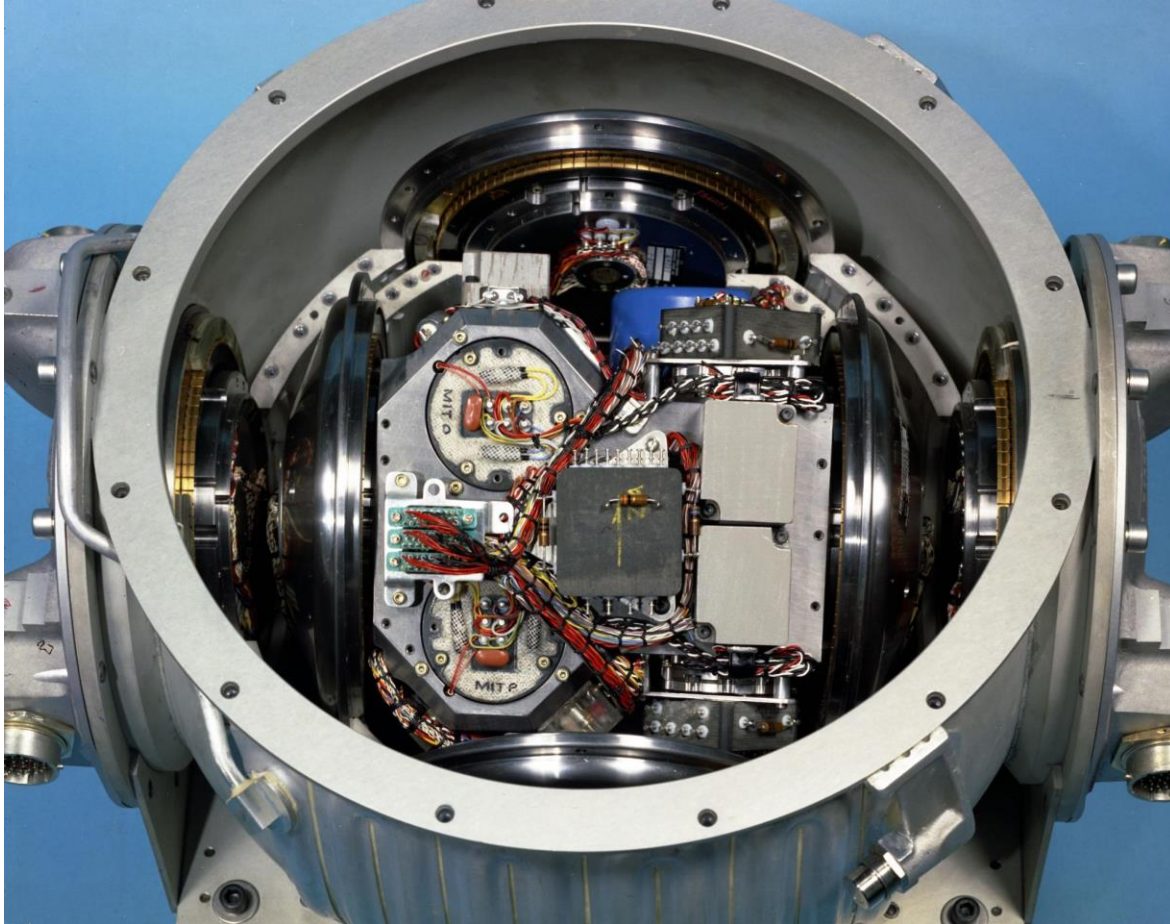
How do you actually get to the moon? In 1969?

- in order to reduce the rocket size NASA chose the so-called *Lunar orbit rendezvous* configuration instead of building a *Nova* rocket
- this meant that the Apollo 11 not only had to get to the moon (a 3-day = 300,000 miles journey) but also dis-engage (and later re-engage) the landing module

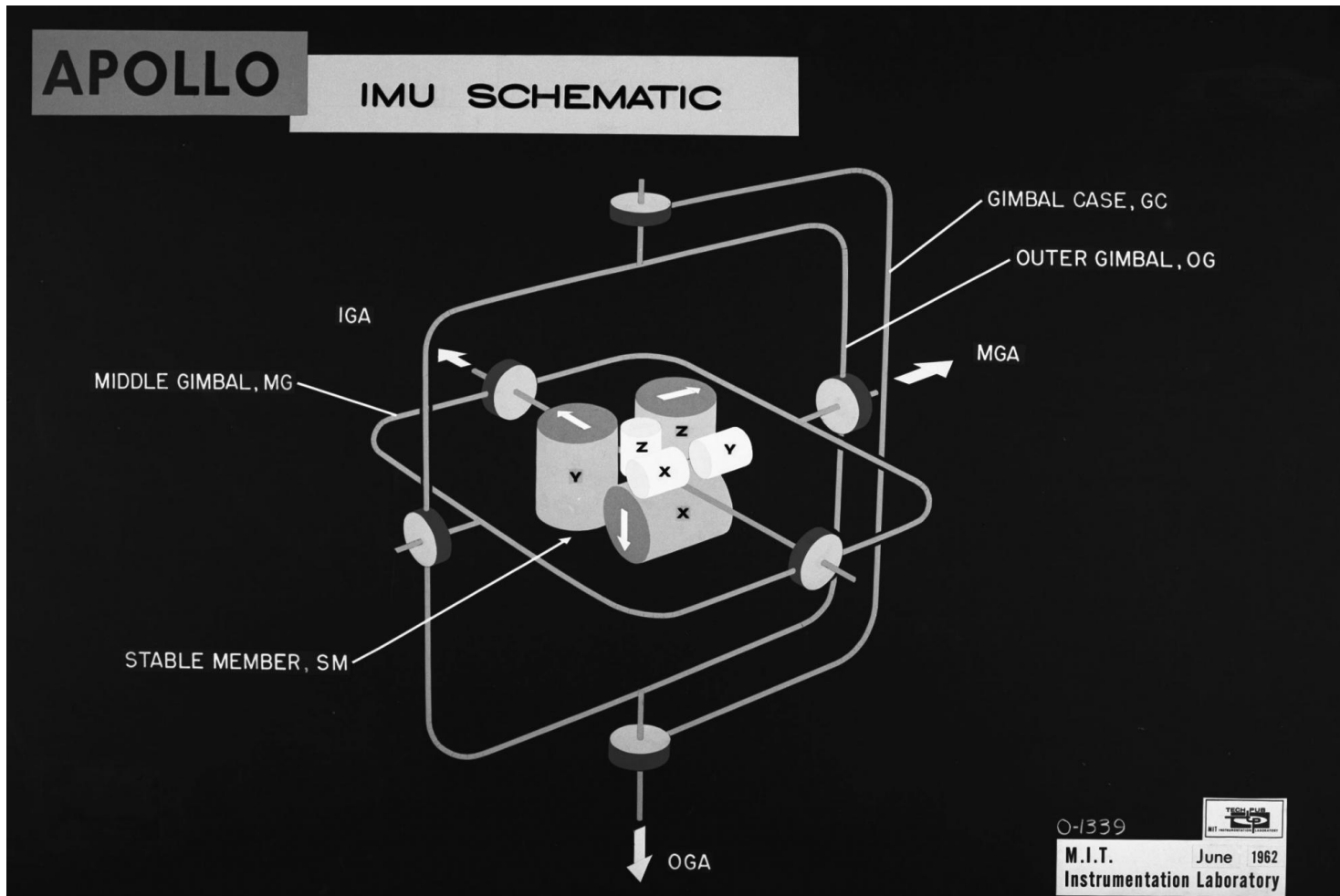


- how to you navigate that precisely, so far away from earth in 1969?
- satellites → out of range
- GPS → not invented yet
- the stars → way to imprecise

This is how you do this: But what exactly is this?

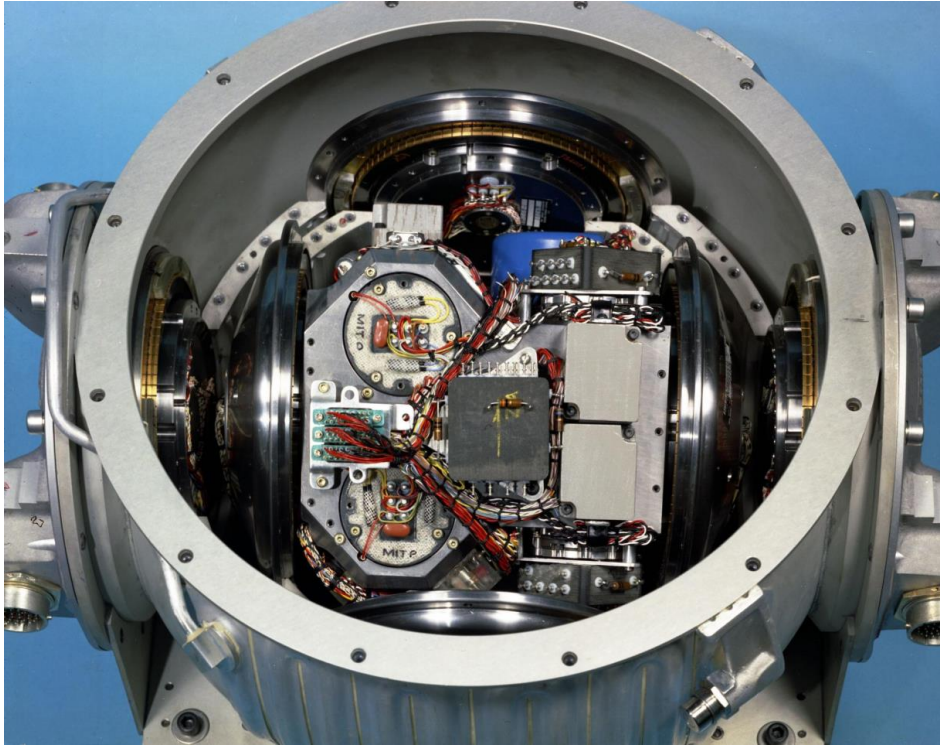


The Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) via a sketch by Draper himself



- by precisely measuring the orientation (with a gyroscope) and the acceleration (using an accelerometer) you can precisely calculate your position
- this is because
$$\vec{a} = \frac{d\vec{v}}{dt} = \frac{d^2\vec{s}}{dt^2}$$
- if you integrate the acceleration you will always know your position
- you need two integration constants:
 - $\vec{s}_0$ = location of Cape Canaveral
 - $\vec{v}_0 = 0$

How do we navigate today? IMUs to the rescue again! However



Ultra-low-power
6-axis industrial-grade IMU



- 50 years later, the fridge-sized instruments is about the size of your pinky's nail
- accelerometers can be shrunk to the size of needle pin

Need proof? Phones out!

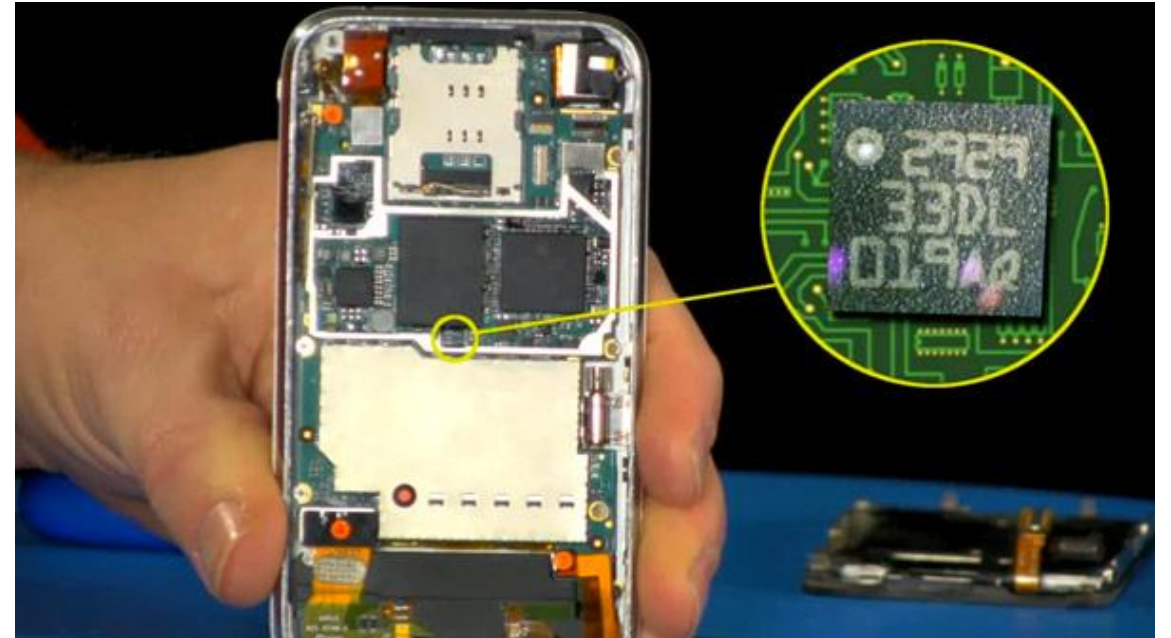
- this is an IMU which outperforms Apollo's on-board IMU by two orders of magnitude!
- and this image is from 2012!
- costs? 0.08 Euro 😊

So how did we get from a fridge-sized devices to something which we all carry in our pockets?

Ladies and Gentlemen: Microsystems Technology

Next time somebody asks you what exactly you study, you could tell them:

We put space science in your pocket – and help return mankind to the moon (and beyond) – among many, many, many other things.



A macrosystem

The Airbus A380

- Approximately 1 Million single parts!
 - One Wing: 32,000 parts
- Costs: \$ 275 Millions
 - Average per single part \$ 275
- High effort for single part fabrication



Can you imagine
such a system
with
2 Million parts?



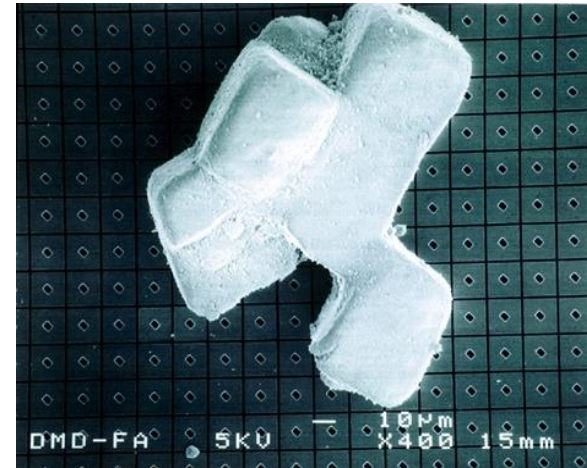
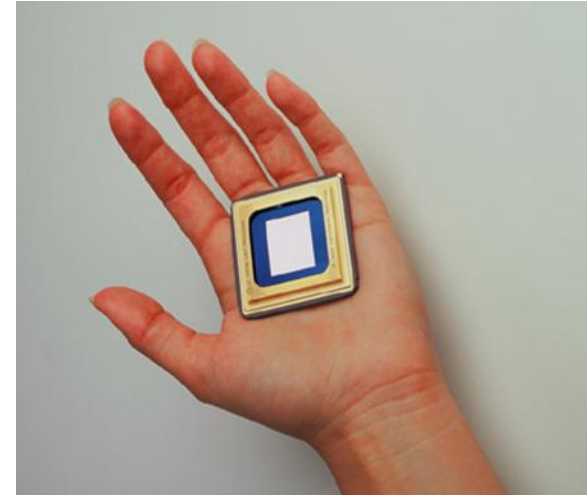
A microsystem

The DMD

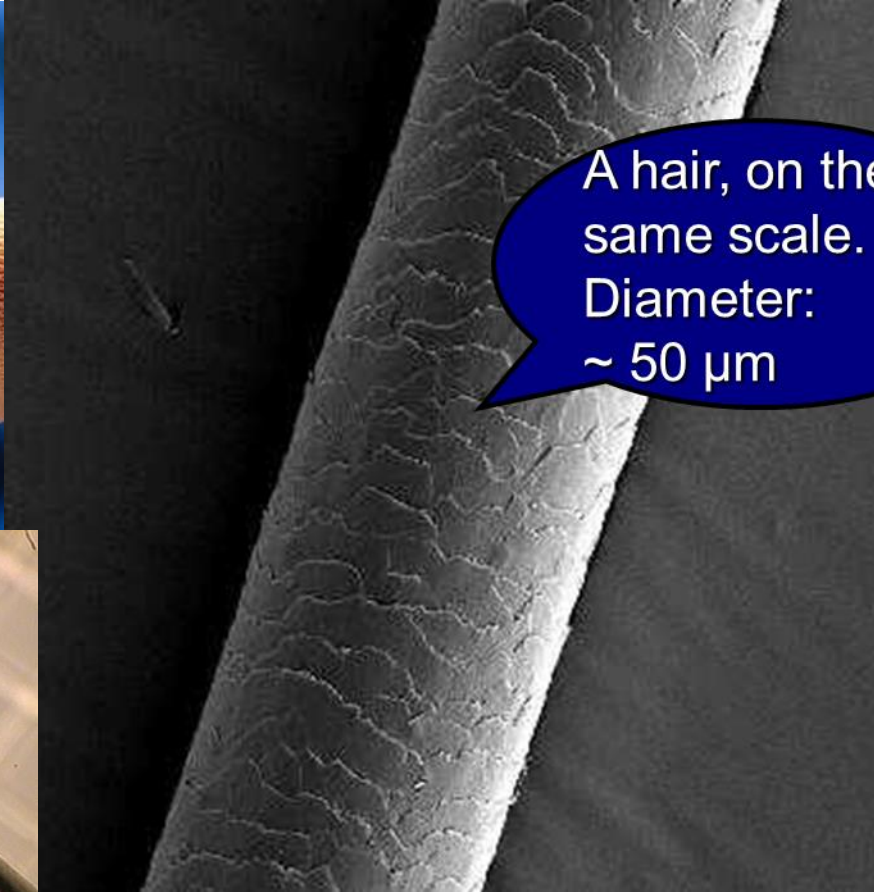
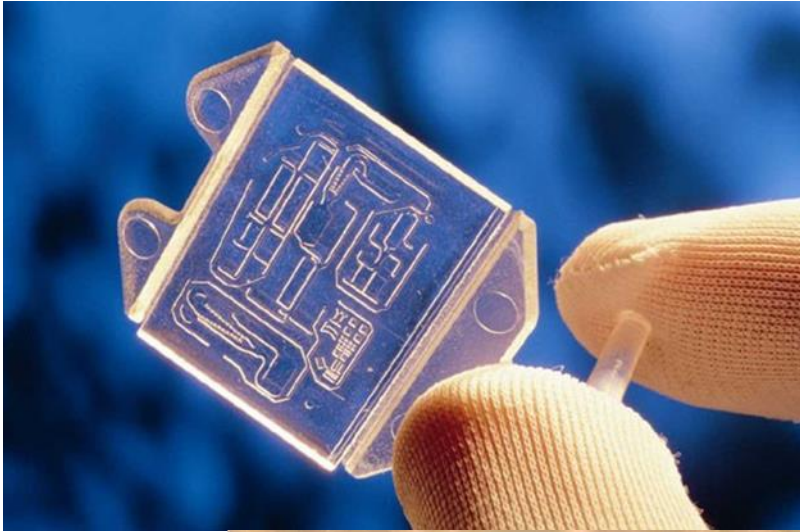
- Digital Micro-mirror Device
- 1.6 cm x 1.6 cm
- 508,800 mirrors $17\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ x $24\text{ }\mu\text{m}$
- ~ 2.2 million parts
- Price: ~ € 2 000
- Price / part: < 0.1 Cent
- Mass fabrications

Microsystems

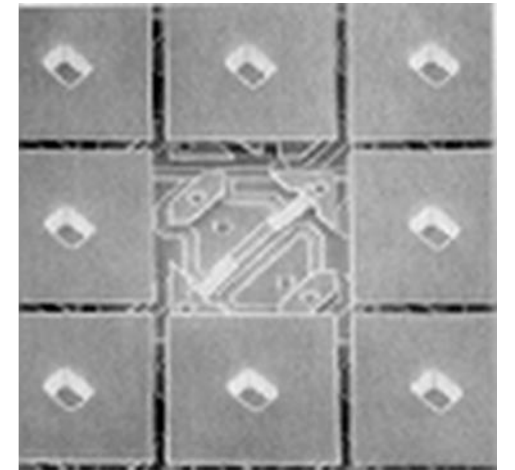
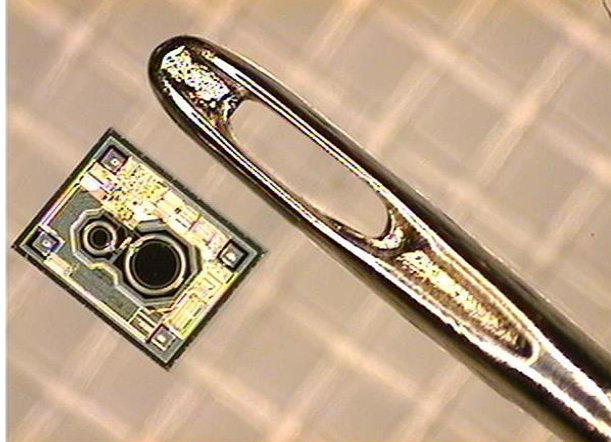
- Many functions
- Small volume



Microsystems are small



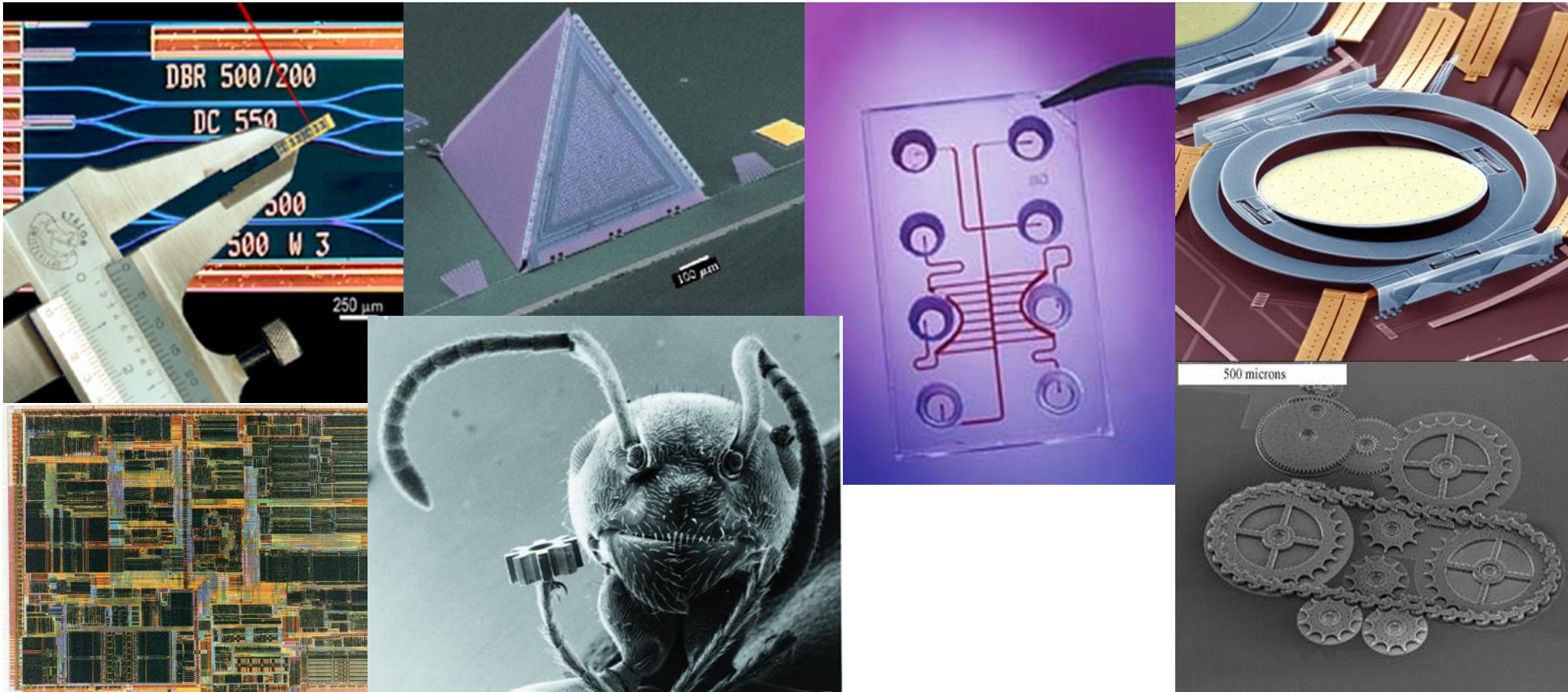
Small



Tiny

Smaller

A huge variety in microsystems



Microsystems are everywhere

Medicine

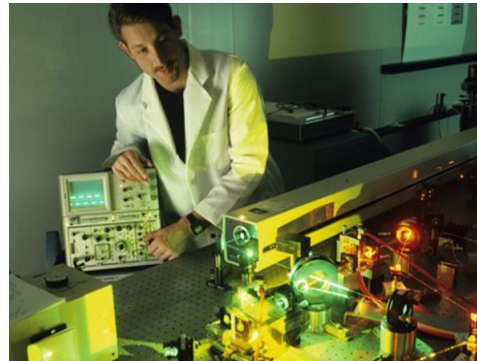
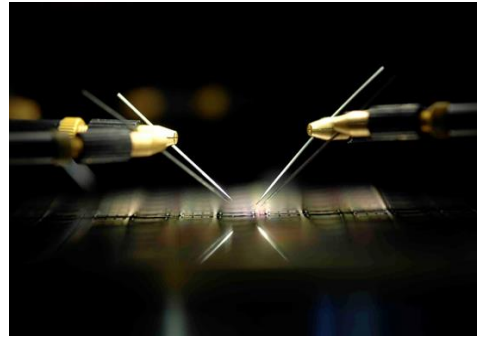
- Minimally-invasive surgery
- Diagnostics

Communications

- Fiber optics
- Mobile phones

Consumer

- Autonomous networks
- Sensors

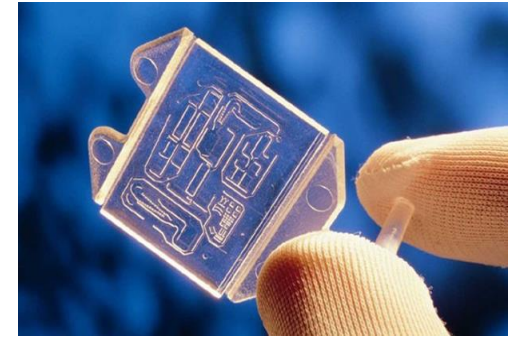


Industry

- Process management
- Instrumentation

Automobile

- Gyroscope
- Airbags



The Career



Studies: technical skills

Educational goal:

- To graduate students who can go from idea to product

The required skills:

- Problem definition
- Solutions & evaluation

The challenge
starts now



Design & development

- Fabrication
- Characterization & optimization
- Packaging
- System testing & qualification
- Transfer to production
- Marketing



Studies: Non-technical skills

Technical know-how is a given...

... but graduates also need:

- Ability to work in a team
- Social competence
- Creativity
- Openness to new ideas
- Self-confidence
- Communication skills
- Entrepreneurial thinking
- Ability to motivate, oneself and others
- Leadership capabilities



Where can I go with my degree?

Microsystems engineers become:

- Entrepreneurs, technicians, engineers, group leaders, managers, CEOs, astronauts,...

Potential employers:

- Large & small companies of all types
- Startups and spin-offs

What do employers want?

- Potential for development
- Ability to learn
- Communications ability
(in English and German!)
- Experience, experience, experience
- Particular skills? Not so much...



The Department



Aktuelle Zahlen | WS 2024/25

WS 2024/25

2.620

Studierende gesamt

▲ 1,91% zum WS 2023/24



weiblich

– **22%** | 581

2.033 |

78% –

6 Stud. unbekannt/divers



männlich



38%

Internationale Studierende

WS 2024/25

538

Studienanfänger*innen

▼ -6,11% zum WS 2023/24

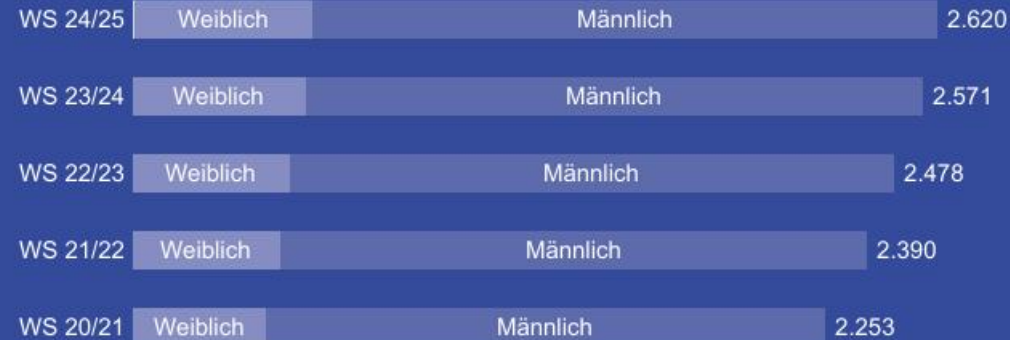
Polyv. 2 HF BA
30

Bachelor
1.172

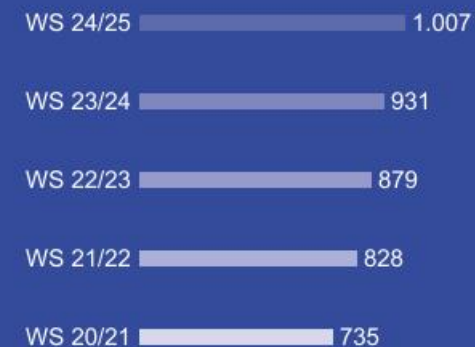
**WS
2024/25**

Master
1.184

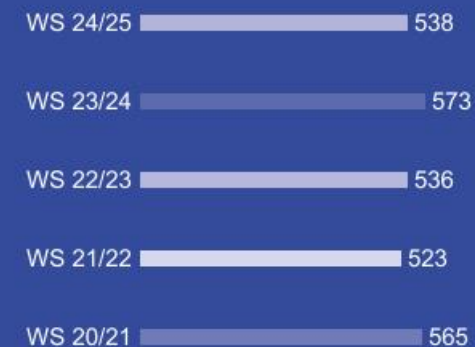
Entwicklung der Studierendenzahlen



Internationale Studierende



Studienanfänger*innen



Studierende nach Staatsangehörigkeit



Faculty of Engineering

- Faculty in operation since 1995
- Department of Computer Science (IIF)
- 18 professors / ca. 100 scientific staff/~ 950 students
- Department of Microsystems Engineering (IMTEK)
- 23 professors /ca. 300 scientific staff/ ~ 780 students
- Department of Sustainable Systems Engineering (INATECH)
- 14 professors / ~ 380 students



IMTEK professors



Microsystems for
Biomedical
Imaging
Ç. Ataman



Optical
Systems
K. Buse



G. H. Endress
Chair for Smart
Sys. Integration
A. Dehé



Systems
Theory
M. Diehl



Micro-&
Materials
Mechanics
Ch. Eberl



Biomicro-
technology
U. Egert



Material
Process
Technology
T. Hanemann



Micro-
electronics
M. Kuhl



Soft Machines
E. Milana



Simulation
L. Pastewka



MEMS
Materials
O. Paul



Process
Technology
B. Rapp



Bio- & Nano-
photonics
A. Rohrbach



Electrical
Instrumentation and
Embedded Systems
S. Rupitsch



Chemistry &
Physics of
Interfaces
J. Rühe



Biomedical
Microtechnology
T. Stieglitz



Molecular
Diagnostic
Systems
F. von Stetten



Micro-
Acutators
U. Wallrabe



Engineering
Design of MEMS
P. Woias



Gas Sensors
J. Wöllenstein



Micro-optics
H. Zappe



MEMS
Applications
R. Zengerle

IMTEK Laboratories

MEMS Applications

Prof. Dr. Roland Zengerle

Bio- and Nano-Photonics

Prof. Dr. Alexander Rohrbach

Biomedical Microtechnology

Prof. Dr. Thomas Stieglitz

Biomicrotechnology

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Egert

Chemistry and Physics of Interfaces

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Rühle

Design of Microsystems

Prof. Dr. Peter Woias

Electr. Instrumentation & Embedded Sys.

Prof. Dr. Stefan Rupitsch

Gas Sensors

Prof. Dr. Juergen Woellenstein

Hahn-Schickard-Institute of Microanalysis Systems

Prof. Dr. Felix von Stetten

Materials Processing

Prof. Dr. Thomas Hanemann

Micro- and Material Mechanics

Prof. Dr. Christoph Eberl

Microactuators

Prof. Dr. Ulrike Wallrabe

Microelectronics

Prof. Dr. Matthias Kuhl

Micro-optics

Prof. Dr. Hans Zappe

Microsystems for Biomedical Imaging

Jun.Prof. Dr. Caglar Ataman

Microsystems Materials

Prof. Dr. Oliver Paul

Optical Systems

Prof. Dr. Karsten Buse

Process Technology

Prof. Dr. Bastian E. Rapp

Sensors

n.n.

Simulation

Prof. Dr. Lars Pastewka

Smart Systems Integration

Prof. Dr. Alfons Dehé

Soft Machines

Jun.Prof. Dr. Edoardo Milana

Systems Control and Optimization

Prof. Dr. Moritz Diehl

The Curriculum



Structural principles

- M.Sc. Programme = 120 ECTS
- ~ 30 ECTS per semester
- 1 ECTS = 30 hours work load
- Mandatory courses are offered every other semester
- Exams are offered every semester
- The exam regulations stipulate which courses are to be completed to get the degree, but you can decide when you want to take the respective course and exam
- It is allowed to study more than 4 semesters



Mandatory modules

Module	Type	Exam	ECTS	Semester
Micro-electronics	Le-E	Written exam	6	1
Micro-mechanics	Le+E	Written exam	6	1
MST Design Laboratory I for Microsystems Engineering	La	Pass/Fail assessment (Studienleistung)	6	1
MST Technologies and Processes	L+E	Pass/Fail assessment (Studienleistung) Written exam	6	1
Signal Processing	L+La	Written exam	6	2
Master's module (6 months)		Thesis and presentation	27+3	4

Compulsory elective modules

Module	Type	Exam	ECTS	Semester
Assembly and Packaging Technology	Le+E	Written exam	6	1, 2 or 3
Mirco-optics	Le+E	Written exam	6	1 or 3
Modelling and Sytstem Identification	Le-E	Written exam	6	1 or 3
Probability and Statistics	Le-E	Written exam	6	1 or 3
Sensors	Le+La	Pass/fail assessment Written exam	6	1 or 3
Biomedical Microsystems	Le+E	Written exam	6	2
Micro-actuators	Le+E	Pass/fail assessment Written exam	6	2
Micro-fuidics	Le+E	Written exam	6	2
Total to be selected			30	

Concentration Areas and Customized Course Selection

Concentration Areas (21-30 ECTS)	ECTS
Circuits and Systems	Students have to choose ONE concentration area
Materials and Fabrication	
Biomedical Engineering	
Photonics	
Total	21-30
Customized Course Selection	ECTS
Courses from the MSE concentrations, other faculties at the University of Freiburg, also courses on German language, scientific writing, project management	Students can choose either 30 concentration or 21 concentration+9 CCS
Total	9

More details on course structure, exam regulations etc.

- ... will be provided directly after I'm done here.
- Will afterwards be available through video tutorials at:
<https://www.tf.uni-freiburg.de/en/studies-and-teaching/a-to-z-study-faq/freshers-info>
- Topics handled there:
 - Understanding the regulations for the curriculum and designing your personal study plan
 - Administrative matters
 - Quick introduction to rules for examinations
 - Finding information and help
 - Using HISinOne to book your courses and exams

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is:

- Using someone else's texts, pictures, reports, data, solutions, whatever....
- ... without giving the source

Sources include:

- Books, the internet, colleagues, ...

To make it clear:

- Plagiarism is illegal

The simple „if...then“ loops:

- If you plagiarize...(once)
- ... then you fail
- If you plagiarize repeatedly (=twice)
- ... then your academic career is over



Mentoring

Every student has a faculty mentor

- A professor as a contact person
- Assigned by the Programme Coordinator

Student's contact for:

- Problems, questions, clarifications, job searches, recommendations, or just general advising



After graduation



Apply for a job

In Industry

- Find out what you like during your MSc programme
- Use job portals and company websites to monitor the market
- Visit career workshops to gather tips how to apply
- Go to recruiting fairs



Company visit Bosch Research Nov. 2024

Ph.D. as research assistant

At the university

- Perform a research project (on your own)
- Look for an open position
- Apply
- Get paid for the PhD project
- Overtake responsibility as project assistant
- Support your professor with respect to educational tasks
- Duration: 3-5 years

Problems with your studies? Or other issues?

- If you have any questions or problems:

Act immediately and do not procrastinate!

- Contacts & info sources:
 - Official information sources by university, faculty and study programme
 - Academic advising
 - Lecturers / assistants / mentors
 - Fachschaft (faculty's student committee)
 - Information centers like the Student Service Center, Office of Student Services etc.
 - Fellow students

Gegen sexuelle Belästigung, Gewalt und Stalking Against Sexual Harassment, Violence, and Stalking



Beratung? Counselling?

+49 761 203-4222

+49 152 22928696

www.gleichstellungsbuero.uni-freiburg.de

universität freiburg

Some thoughts to share...

- **A Master's programme in Germany: A University is NOT a school!**
 - You have to organize your courses ... and your life
 - You have to register for your courses on your own
 - We challenge you from the first day on to assess given knowledge...
 - ...and to transfer given knowledge from one course to another
 - We will show you many aspects of MSE and their applications to broaden your knowledge and increase the opportunities for an exciting career.
- **That means for you...**
 - YOU have to take the initiative to ASK, ASK and read until you understand!
 - WE give you the overview, YOU have to learn the details.

Contact persons I

■ Dean of studies

- Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Bastian E. Rapp
 - 203 7350
 - bastian.rapp@imtek.uni-freiburg.de



■ Programme coordination

- Svenja Andresen
 - studiengangkoordination.mst@imtek.uni-freiburg.de
 - 203 97940



■ Study advisors

- Dr. Jochen Kieninger (on sabbatical in WS 25/26)
 - 203 7265
- Dr. Oswald Prucker
 - 203 7164
- studienberatung@imtek.de



Contact persons II-Examination Office

Susanne Stork

pruefungsamt@tf.uni-freiburg.de

203 8087

Isabela Buchholzer

pruefungsamt@tf.uni-freiburg.de

203 8083

Ilka Muckle

pruefungsamt@tf.uni-freiburg.de

203 97530



Student Council

- Representation of students' interests in various committees
- Shaping campus life
- Open ear for students with questions and problems
- Exam database
- More info under <https://fachschaft.tf.uni-freiburg.de/>



Thank you very much for your attention!

