

Research-oriented Teaching: Expert Conference at KIT

International Conference Focuses on Knowledge and Learning Cultures at Universities / Online Study on Research-based Education at KIT



Research-oriented teaching: Students conduct experiments at the laboratory. (Photo: Martin Lober, KIT)

Illustrating the importance of study contents, enthusing students for research, and familiarizing them with research contexts – these are the reasons given in favor of research-oriented teaching at KIT. This is the result of an online survey of teachers and lecturers at KIT organized by the Chair for Teaching and Learning Research. Education strategies in the national and international context and their relevance to universities will also be covered by the international conference “Epistemic and Learning Cultures at the Universities of the 21st Century” that will take place at KIT on December 5 and 6, 2013. Representatives of the media are cordially invited.

What does research-oriented teaching mean, how do teachers assess certain measures, and how can these be integrated into the university life? Compiling first data and identifying general tendencies were the objectives of an online survey organized by the Chair for Teaching and Learning Research, in which 265 teachers and lecturers of KIT took part. The study is embedded in the project “KIT - Lehre^{Forschung}” (KIT – Research-based Education) that is funded by

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the Federal Ministry of Education and Research under the Program for More Quality in Teaching. Research-based does not only refer to laboratory experiments and scientific project work, but also to lectures covering current research issues or independent work on research relationships for presentations.

About three quarters of the persons asked answered that references to research illustrate the significance of education contents to the students. For more than 65%, research-based education is suited for enthusing students for scientific issues and imparting detailed contexts to them. About 60% of the persons asked are in favor of integrating research components into lectures, such that students can better understand the contents and are better motivated.

Still, the answers given with respect to the use of research-oriented elements in education varied considerably. One reason is due to the nature of the disciplines, says Ines Rohrdantz-Herrmann from the Chair for Teaching and Learning Research of the KIT Institute of Vocational Education and Training and General Pedagogics. Together with Professor Ines Langemeyer, who is now teaching at Tübingen University, she organized the online survey. Students of chemistry and biosciences, for instance, independently conduct laboratory experiments and field tests. In social sciences, field studies and surveys are the rule. Mathematics, by contrast, is based on observable or measurable facts to a limited extent only. Hence, practical experiments often are impossible and research issues mostly are even more theoretical than the teaching contents. "This also shows that good education does not necessarily have to be strongly research-oriented," says the vocational education expert.

Education strategies in the national and international contexts and their relevance to university as a place of knowledge transfer will be discussed by experts in pedagogics, sociology, psychology, university didactics, and quality management at the conference "Epistemic and Learning Cultures at the University of the 21st Century". The conference will be held in the English language.

Selected program items:

Thursday, December 5

13.45 hrs: **Anthropology of practice-oriented learning**

Prof. Cathrine Hasse (University of Aarhus in Copenhagen)

14.45 hrs: **Learning cultures under conditions of Big Science**

Prof. Michaela Pfadenhauer (KIT)

Friday, December 6

8.30 hrs: **Keynote: Epistemic and knowledge cultures**

Prof. Karin Knorr Cetina (University of Chicago)

14.30 hrs: **Job-oriented university courses for educating vocational teachers: Academic discipline versus vocational science**

Prof. Martin Fischer (KIT)

15.00 hrs **The scientification of work as a challenge to university education**

Prof. Ines Langemeyer (Universität Tübingen)

For the complete program, click

http://lehr-lernforschung.org/?page_id=227

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation according to the legislation of the state of Baden-Württemberg. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. Research activities focus on energy, the natural and built environment as well as on society and technology and cover the whole range extending from fundamental aspects to application. With about 9000 employees, including nearly 6000 staff members in the science and education sector, and 24000 students, KIT is one of the biggest research and education institutions in Europe. Work of KIT is based on the knowledge triangle of research, teaching, and innovation.

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