

Students' Protest at KIT

Presiding Committee Explains Its Attitude



The Acting Division Director for Teaching, Professor Jürgen Becker, in the seized lecture hall. (Photo by: Michael Kaufmann)

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Yesterday evening, students addressed several requests to Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) within the framework of their protest actions. In its meeting today, the Presiding Committee discussed these requests and was largely sympathetic to them.

During their protest assembly yesterday evening, students of KIT formulated their requests and asked the KIT Presiding Committee for comments. In today's meeting of the Presiding Committee, the topics were discussed with the following results.

Studies Fees:

KIT wants and will have to do much more for teaching. Due to the general financial situation and the short budget allocated by the state, studies fees presently are the most effective means to considerably improve teaching. Abolition of studies fees would stop or cancel the just started improvement process and therefore is not approved of by the Presiding Committee. To mitigate social disadvantages, however, an adequate scholarship system has to be

established and extended, which does not only have to consider performance aspects, but also social criteria. “We expressly welcome the considerations of the Federal Republic of Germany to increase BAföG (student loan)”, says KIT President Professor Eberhard Umbach.

Reintroduction of the Stipulated Co-determination of Students:

Students request the reintroduction of stipulated co-determination. The senate of the former university commented on this request in February 2008 already and supported it. The KIT Presiding Committee does not see any reason for modifying the senate decision taken at that time.

Bachelor/Master Education:

The KIT Presiding Committee expressly supports the adaptation of the BA/MA system to the original objectives of its introduction, while maintaining the quality standards of the German diploma. The Acting Division Director for Teaching, Professor Jürgen Becker, pleads for “a maximum flexibilization and relaxation of the small-sized, modular setup of the Bachelor/Master studies courses”. Transition from the bachelor degree to the master studies course will not be associated with a fixed rate. The KIT will undertake all efforts to improve the BA/MA studies courses for the students.

Situation of Humanities and Social Sciences:

Humanities and social sciences are of crucial importance to KIT. This was underlined by President Professor Horst Hippler in his speech at the Academic Anniversary Celebration on November 7, 2009: “KIT is characterized by a strong orientation to technology and engineering. Humanities and social sciences have always assumed a major position in Karlsruhe and will continue to do so.” In the recent past, KIT strengthened the faculty and intensified the relations between humanities/social sciences and engineering / natural sciences. In the meantime, the “Man and Technology” Focus has been established, and the topic of energy acceptance under this aspect is also studied by the KIT Energy Center.

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation and state institution of Baden-Württemberg. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. KIT focuses on a knowledge triangle that links the tasks of research, teaching, and innovation.

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