

The only institutional prize for excellent teaching in Germany will be awarded for the second time.

Thinking about studying in another way – in 2012 the SRH University Heidelberg revolutionized teaching and created with the CORE-principle (Competence Oriented Research and Education) a unique teaching and learning model throughout Germany. CORE stands for a completely new study structure: in five-week blocks the students acquire competences that respond to job-market needs, coached by their lecturers. For this approach the Stifterverband and the Volkswagen Stiftung honoured the SRH University Heidelberg with the Genius Loci-Award.

“We are honoured and pleased by this award which first and foremost will be for the benefit of all our students. It highlights the quality of our teaching methods and signals that the university yields excellently trained graduates” emphasized Prof. Dr. Katja Rade, Rector of SRH University Heidelberg.

Apart from SRH University Heidelberg, the University of Mainz also received this Genius Loci-Award. “To assure quality of teaching also means to drive teaching development strategically and to create institutional guiding principles towards that. This worked out perfectly for the University of Mainz as well as for the SRH University Heidelberg“, said the Deputy General Secretary of the Stifterverband, Dr. Volker Meyer-Guckel.

Since 1999 the Bologna-Process demands that all universities in Europe prepare their students for the challenges of the modern labour market. “We have thought the Bologna-Process through to the end by consequently putting the students in the centre: with us they train exactly those competences that they need for their future profession“, said Prof. Dr. Carolin Sutter, Vice-rector for studies and further education. “In this context it is important that the students build on their prior knowledge and learn to connect it with their own experiences“, emphasized Prof. Dr. Julia Rózsa, Director of SRH Academy of Higher Education, which developed the CORE-principle. “We give students the space to process the study matter with stimulating learning methods in an optimal fashion“.

The CORE-principle is based on scientific findings of learning and brain research. The students work out a topic for five weeks – independently and in small groups. At the end of this period an assessment will check whether they can use their acquired

competences: for example in the form of fictive company meetings, presentations or exhibition concepts. The CORE-principle is also used in research: The students can actively co-design research projects or initiate their own projects all of which promotes individual and scientific work as well as first contacts to potential future employers.

Apart from SRH University Heidelberg, the other eight SRH Universities also implemented the innovative learning concept in their range of courses. Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Jörg Winterberg, managing Director of the SRH Higher Education and former rector of SRH University Heidelberg, who introduced the CORE-principle in 2012 explained, "The SRH Universities benefit a lot from this teaching and learning model, which makes them unique in the academic landscape. The acknowledgement through the Genius Loci-Award gives this development an enormous push and means great appreciation of our work of the last few years."

With the Genius Loci-Award for teaching excellence the Stifterverband and the Volkswagen Stiftung honour each year one university and one University of Applied Sciences that have an exemplary teaching environment or teaching strategy. The prize-money of 20,000 euros will be used by the SRH University Heidelberg to invite a visiting scholar of teaching and learning in the field of digital teaching. "We continuously develop the CORE-principle and are convinced that through the targeted use of new media the added value of attendance phases will be further increased", explains Prof. Sutter.

The Award Ceremony

All about your studies

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