

**Abstract for a workshop at EASSW-UNAFORIS 2017 European Conference****Social Work Education in Europe: Challenging Boundaries, Promoting a Sustainable Future. JUNE 27, 28 and 29, 2017****Theme: Research-based Learning****Title: Research-based Learning in Research-based Teaching/Learning Projects in Social Work:**

The aim of this workshop is to present experiences gained through research-based learning within the study program of Social Work and Childhood Pedagogy at Saarland University of Applied Sciences (*Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft des Saarlandes*) in Germany. It will be shown how our students, using scientific procedures, become familiar with internal logics of professional practice with respect to life transitions, how they transfer them to their own educational process, and how they render them transparent for themselves and others. The innovative model to be presented, implemented in the curricula of our research-based teaching/learning projects, makes research-based learning possible, strengthening the professionalism of social work in Europe. Its practical relevance is being established through the international Summer Schools which take place at Saarland UAS.

The workshop will include **three areas of focus**:

- (1) **The central requirements and options for research-based learning within researched-based teaching/learning projects**, where the formation of a professional habitus as a whole is shaped. Ideally, instructors and learners jointly and actively conduct a scientific study, from the beginning of a research-based teaching project to the end. The instructor's task is to structure the research process, and, of equal fundamental importance, to accompany the students in their learning and formative processes. The student's autonomous research remains at the forefront. The linking of research and instruction serves as the guiding principle in the process of fleshing out the specifics of the study program. The central didactic principle is the transformation of experiential knowledge into educational knowledge.
- (2) The **interconnections** that emerge in designing such research-based teaching and learning projects in combination with the idea and/or tradition of a research workshop. In a research workshop, students, novices, and professional practitioners have the opportunity to work on cases as an

interpretive community, according to the rules of case reconstruction in social work, under scientifically expert guidance. The characteristic feature of a research workshop is the principle- and rule-guided reconstruction of case material (e.g. files, observation or interaction reports, documents, photographs, interviews, or group discussions) from the full spectrum of social work activities or pedagogical interventions in life processes that are in crisis.

- (3) A **discussion** of prior theories of modularization which have emerged in the reconstruction of proposals made thus far for implementing research-based learning within the structures of bachelor and master programs, theories which can contribute to complementing the existing curricular landscape. The didactic concepts at Saarland UAS lead the way for our methodical orientation and are theoretically aligned with the principle of genetic learning. In accordance with the constructively critical didactics of Klafki and his idea of pedagogically responsible instruction, the cultivation of self-determination, solidarity with others, and co-determination is central to learning which is, in turn, oriented to life transitions as a challenge to think for oneself. This is made possible through the principles of “discovery”, “rediscovery” and “comprehension”, which are given due consideration in our courses and seminars. The research methods employed in our Social Work and Childhood Pedagogy program are aligned with those of reconstructive social research. Research-based learning is considered the guiding principle in our instruction, which is delivered in a manner that is disciplinary, scientific, characterized by research methodologies, and relevant to the profession but at the same time understood to be largely self-directed.

These three areas of focus will be introduced through hypothesis presentations, the hypotheses will be placed within the overall context of professional theory, and they will be discussed in the workshop. The area of international social work and childhood pedagogy within our designated study program will be highlighted – also due to our geographic location – as it is given special emphasis and is tied in with the idea of research-based learning and the importance of transitions in human life, through research-based teaching projects. Within the framework of comparative research, life transitions will be rendered visible from a culture-specific perspective, and, within an intercultural logic, examined for their meaning. Running themes

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include nation-specific internal logics of professional practice, as well as European forms of social work and childhood pedagogy. The international exchange of ideas for and with students as well as among instructors and non-academic personnel will be ongoing and further pursued at international summer schools and conventions within the study program. The design of our international summer schools as well as the course offerings in our reformed study program offered under the aegis and responsibility of Saarland UAS follows the idea of research-based learning.

**A bibliography is available upon request with the name of your institution.**