UNIVIE Teaching Award 2020
Category “Successful Introductory Courses”

The award recognises outstanding teachers of large introductory classes that foster engaged and active study habits among students (through continuous learning, communicating learning strategies, peer learning, stimulating assignments, teaching/learning materials, etc.).

Description of category
Beginning students bring different prerequisites to their studies, making introductory courses particularly challenging to design and teach. Interactive teaching/learning methods allow for in-depth learning through trial and error, practice, and discussions. Flipped classroom concepts, for example, are especially useful for large groups sizes, as they use online phases for preparations before class sessions and for revisions afterwards. Introductory courses often employ digital components such as lecture streaming and teaching/learning materials such as e-scripts, instructional videos, learning paths, as well as discussion forums, self-assessment activities, or student response systems (e.g. ARSnova). Continuous assignments encourage steady learning.

Independent and self-driven learning outside the lecture hall is an important precondition for students to complete a degree program successfully. Teachers have various options for instructing individual study phases and learning strategies in order to support students in systematic knowledge building, especially in the beginning phase of a program. In doing so, the individual study phases (including required assignments) should be appropriately linked to the in-class sessions. Furthermore, teachers can actively promote group learning. Groups foster peer learning, mutual support, and a sense of belonging to a discipline. Tutoring and mentoring programmes play a central role, which require good communication and feedback loops among all participants (teachers, student tutors/mentors and program directors) in order to be successful.

Courses at the beginning of a degree program (1st-3rd semester) will be considered for nomination if they are:
• courses with non-continuous-assessment with a large number of students and
• courses with continuous-assessment with large groups (100 students or more).

Criteria
The following criteria will be considered in the selection process for the award category “Successful Introductory Courses”:
• Continuous learning is supported by interactive teaching/learning methods (analogue and/or digital) that are suitable for large classes.
• Sound teaching/learning materials allow students to work independently.
• The course deliberately uses learning strategies that are relevant to the discipline.
• The instructor supports group learning and the integration of students into the discipline;
• and in doing so deliberately shapes the cooperation between students and their tutors/mentors.