

Training of Ethical Competencies in Bsc Degree Programs – a Digital, Multi-Perspective, and Student-Centered Approach

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SUMMARY

Degree programs at universities prepare graduates for successful professional activities in society, science and economy (KIT 2021). Therefore, degree programs are well-designed and offer students opportunities for the acquisition of subject-specific and interdisciplinary competencies. Competencies integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes that are applied in order to act successfully (Weinert 2001). Whereby interdisciplinary competencies are subdivided into methodological, social and personal competencies. The latter comprise abilities and attitudes; this also includes the individual ethical awareness. Therefore, universities have to ensure that graduates are offered sufficient opportunities to train, realize, reflect and further develop students' individual ethical awareness.

Caused by the COVID-19 pandemic the digital transformation of higher education competency acquisition processes was accelerated disruptively and externally motivated. This handling of COVID-19-related consequences of the megatrend 'digitalization' is partly evaluated as a temporary phenomenon (e.g., Emergency Remote Teaching; Hodges et al. 2020). In this context, the German-language BSc degree program 'Geodesy and Geoinformatics' at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (Karlsruhe, Germany) uses the resulting opportunities to create an innovative, digital, multi-perspective, and student-centered teaching/learning concept focusing on ethical awareness (see, e.g. FIG's Working Group 1.1 'International Ethics Standards'). This concept was developed and applied jointly with the professional German association DVW (<https://dvw.de/e-v/dvw-introduction>). In contrast to the pre-COVID-19-era, where competencies related to ethical awareness were trained implicitly within the degree program under research, the recent digital concept ensures individual training in an explicit way.

In the paper, the digital teaching/learning concept as well as the embedding in the curriculum are

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described and discussed in detail. A special focus is on the fruitful cooperation between university and professional association, enabling the students to get in contact with professionals in the introductory phase of their studies. This sharpens the professional profile, supports networking of young professionals and increases the motivation in the challenging onboarding phase of the degree program.

References

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