

Activity report of the Lecturers' Conference (KdL), 2018/19

One KITE Award conferred, and preparation begins for the next! After last spring's dignified awards ceremony with winners Lukas Fässler, David Sichau and Markus Dahinden (D-INFK), the Lecturers' Conference immediately began planning the next cycle. There is general agreement that the KITE Award raises the visibility of teaching and rewards committed colleagues for extra achievements in developing new teaching methods. The Lecturers' Conference has therefore decided to retain the standard two-year rhythm and to confer the next prize in 2020. The announcement has already been issued. The nomination procedure has changed slightly, and now the department conferences will decide on nominations from their respective departments. We look forward to receiving a substantial number of interesting projects!

Last year the "First year of studies" working group (Chair: Alexander Caspar) evaluated the feedback from several group interviews with first year teaching faculty, and drew up suggestions for improvement. The final report was submitted to the Rectorate, which formulated a response. A joint working group with representatives of the Rectorate was then created to discuss the implementation of concrete measures. This work is ongoing.

In Autumn Semester 2019 the "Teaching evaluation" working group (Chair: Hansruedi Maurer) organised a peer evaluation pilot where teaching faculty visited each other's courses and provided feedback. The response was very positive. In their final report the working group recommended that the instrument of peer evaluation should be further examined and deployed, for example among Assistant Professors or where teaching problems arise. Here the work of the Lecturers' Conference is at an end, and LET will continue to address the topic.

For the first time since its formation the Lecturers' Conference was tasked by the ETH President with naming members of a "committee to consider whether it is reasonable to terminate the employment [of a professor]" (as set out in Art. 13 of the Ordinance of the ETH Board for professors at the Federal Institutes of Technology (ETH Professorial Ordinance)). First the Conference had to determine a procedure. Then three persons, plus a substitute, were selected at a plenary meeting with all voices present. For reasons of confidentiality, information on the work of the commission, which is now complete, was not provided to the Lecturers' Conference.

The ongoing cases where professors have been accused of misconduct and the resulting efforts of the Executive Board to improve leadership culture and handling procedures also occupied the Lecturers' Conference. A workshop with the Secretary General, the Vice Rector for Doctoral Studies and the Head of Human Resources addressed the "Leadership" project. The Lecturers' Conference, the Vice Rector for Doctoral Studies and the Head of Human Resources also drew up the first draft of measures regarding doctoral studies. Two discussions with AVETH took place regarding their survey on doctoral supervision and the media reports on the subject. The Lecturers' Conference was able to contribute significantly to all of this. Currently it is working to organise a "contact person" to advise colleagues who are confronted with accusations. Decisions in this regard will be taken at the meeting in May.

As ever, the Lecturers' Conference stated its position in several consultation processes in the year covered by the report:

- Financial steering concept with refine 2019
- Partial revision of the directive on restrictions on study programme selection, change of degree programme, re-entry to ETH Zurich and recognition of study achievements
- Strategic planning 2021-24 of the ETH Board for the ETH domain (particularly the part on teaching)
- Strategic planning 2021-2024 of the ETH domain; chapter on personnel policy and mission statement (position in summary form)
- Postdoctoral salaries

The position statements, plus other information which includes members and meeting dates, may be viewed on the Lecturers' Conference website: www.kdl.ethz.ch.

Zurich, April 2019