

DIVERSITY-ORIENTED TEACHING of ACADEMIC WRITING

(Rosita Frei, Diversity-Oriented Writing Center)

Diversity has long become a reality in education, especially in universities. Coming from different socio-cultural, ethnical, linguistic and disciplinary backgrounds, both students and lecturers bring along different experiences, values and attitudes. On the one hand, different backgrounds provide a tremendous potential to enrich university culture, they may also lead to misunderstandings and prejudices in dealing with the new environment, on the other. The latter applies when neither students nor lecturers are aware of how their individual backgrounds influence many aspects of their academic lives. This includes their oral and written communication, their judgment of their own academic writing and of others'. This evokes the question: How can diversity-oriented teaching of Academic Writing be best provided? In dealing with this question, participants will be given examples taken from "every-day-work" at the University of Tübingen's Diversity-Oriented Writing Center. The aim of this workshop is to raise awareness concerning the influence of individual backgrounds on Academic Writing, and to engage actively with this notion in order to learn how to deal with it consciously. To achieve this aim, the workshop combines theory and practice. It employs an interactive method, in which writing activities, self-reflection, group discussion and exchange of individual experience among participants form the core of the workshop. In conclusion, the expected outcome is to win a broader perspective on Academic Writing which encourages participants to see individuality as an asset in the writing process, and to apply this notion in their teaching strategy.