

German for Business Lawyers: A Practical Example of a German University of Applied Sciences

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Abstract : Writing in the disciplines plays a major role at Universities. On the one hand, lectures look at the substance of assignments and on the other hand, they expect students to meet professional standards of layout and proofreading. However, the integration of writing concepts into the range of subjects is new to German Universities of Applied Sciences, which are focused on technical and scientific contexts. The Westphalian University of Applied Sciences (WH) established a successful program Talente_schreiben (Writing_Talents) that was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to improve written language skills for first-semester students at the WH. Besides having the main focus on basic language skills on all language levels, we also concentrate on subject-specific programs such as writing in the disciplines and are pioneers in this field in Germany. Since 2013, we started to include learning-to-write programs since first-semester students of Business Law studies must complete a writing assignment in the form and writing style of a legal opinion in order to fulfill their undergraduate degree requirements. To support our students at its best, our course for business lawyers focuses not only on the writing skills per se, but also on teaching both, the content and the particular discourse of the discipline. Hence, a specialist in German studies and a faculty tutor share the experience of processing, producing and reflecting a text. Whereas the German studies specialist refers to the rhetorical context such as orthography, grammar etc., the tutor acts as a guide on the side referring to the course content itself. In our presentation, we want to give an insight of the practice of a business law discipline, the combination of rhetoric and composition and discuss the methodological and didactic approaches.

Keywords : German for business lawyers, talent development, pioneer program, Germany

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