

# Panel 1: The first semester(s)' experiences

During the first semester(s), the main issue is how students' individual expectations match up to those of the institution. In particular, universities nowadays are expected to design their introductory periods to ensure that students will succeed in their studies. During the panel workshop, we will discuss the many questions resulting from this:

- Is the composition of the student body attending university today more diverse (students from disadvantaged backgrounds, immigrants, international students, students with families, students with prior work experience, etc.) than before and how should engineering departments reflect this diversity?
- Are students entering university today less educated or less well prepared than in the past? (Do secondary schools today adequately prepare a student to study engineering? Are there new skills that beginning students possess today that previous students did not?)
- How can introductory periods be successfully designed? What can teaching staff offer and what must students contribute?
- What measures go beyond typical teaching duties, and who is responsible for them?

**Input 1: Professor Dr Mats Hanson, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm**

**Input 2: Professor Dr Manfred Hampe, Technical University Darmstadt**

**Chair: Professor Dr Marco Winzker, Bonn-Rhine-Sieg University of Applied Sciences**

## Results and statements

### Universities and professors differ largely in their view on selection of students

- Selection at university entry
- Selection through exams  
(preferably during first year)
- Inform future students about university model
  - Traditional university or university of applied science
  - Role of projects in curriculum
  - Use of problem-based learning (yes/no)

➔ This influences the view on the entry to the study program

### Simple drop-out-rates do not tell the whole story

- ... when students decide early for a different subject
- ... when only selected students enroll

## Conclusion (lessons learned, final statement)

**Make students feel welcome**

**Make study programs attractive to different groups of society**

**Provide for different learning styles**

**Promote / claim independency and responsibility of students**