

Dear laureate,

dear members of senate, dear guests,

in view of the occasion I would like to cordially welcome our guests from Ochanomizu-University in Tokyo and I am very glad that Professor Keiko Takano (prorector for young academics) and Mrs. Yumi Gushima (research assistant) have taken on the efforts of a long journey, in order to attend this award ceremony.

With this year's award we draw closer to gender equality in the allocating policy and we perform an important bridging between women's advancement in STEM-subjects and our university's successful strategies of internationalization, which generates an intensifying effect.

The laureate Professor Dr. Per Jensen (Department of Theoretical Chemistry) has in an extraordinary manner rendered outstanding services to the initiation, set-up, and advancement of the partnership to Ochanomizu-University in Japan.

Ochanomizu-University is one of the two state-owned women's universities in Japan and enjoys the status of an elite university, which educates female chief executives of a new generation. Since 2001 more than 75 Japanese Students have studied at least for one semester at our university and have been evaluated by a top-class brain trust. Simultaneously, the cooperation opened up the chance for our students to take research periods in Tokyo and to gain valuable experience abroad resulting in an increase of the international mobility quota of women.

In his role as a "Gender-Ambassador" Mr. Jensen encourages the intercultural gender-dialogue and he is a central contact person in coordinating the activities, which the equal opportunities office and the prorectorate of young academics at the women's university are involved in.

I want to address the emergence of the cooperation, the thematic orientation and development of mobility data, which the additional benefit and success can be deduced from:

Since 2001 the laureate is leading and coordinating the highly active collaboration of Wuppertal University and Ochanomizu-University.

The partnership resulted from a guest professorship of the Japanese Ministry for education, Science and Culture, held by Mr. Jensen at the Ibaraki-University in Mito. During his stay he established a first contact to Ochanomizu-University which resulted in a multidisciplinary cooperation treaty that ensures a regular student exchange.

Typically, the Japanese (one or two p.a.) students spend an academic year in Wuppertal and study in the field of humanities with thematic reference to Germany. Due to the fewer English-speaking classes in the syllabus of Tokyo the Numbers of

students outgoing are smaller but are showing a growing tendency, not at least because of the promotional “Japan-Days” at our university.

Binational dissertations have been enabled through the cooperation treaty. Thus Mr. Jensen succeeded in winning a Japanese student to do her doctoral studies at Wuppertal University, who received her PhD in a cotutelle process of Mrs. Takano and Mr. Jensen, while the degree is also awarded from both universities. Since 2010 another doctorate student is working on her PhD supervised by Prof. Francesco Knechtli from the Department of Theoretical Physics. In exchange two doctorate students went to the women’s university on research projects.

In the year 2008 the student’s exchange with Ochanomizu-University was considerably intensified through the Japanese ITP (International Training Program). This measure of internationalization of the women’s university initiated by Mrs. Takano had a duration of five years and was financially supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

The application’s success is owed to a high degree to the awardee: He fathomed the willingness of the university’s departments to offer lectures in the English language and worked out a detailed description of the master degree programs, which was incorporated into the planning of the curriculum. The Wuppertal University became an important partner-institution and was able to increase its share of women in STEM-subjects temporarily. During the period of sponsorship between 2008 and 2013 sixty-one Japanese students spent a semester in Wuppertal studying the subjects chemistry, physics, mathematics, computer simulation science, and they visited elected classes of the corresponding Master-of-Science-Program.

By the end of their stay the students were examined by a top-class international commission. The evaluations show a continuously high proficiency level of the Japanese exchange-students.

The course of studies was accompanied by a Wuppertal “Supporting-Consortium” which supported and assisted the Japanese students. The prorectorate of transfer and internationalization has continuously supported those activities, the international office especially organized living space for the students. The Language Learning Institute conducted English classes for the incoming Japanese students and classes in Japanese for the German outgoing students. The equal opportunities office was engaged in the organization of further side-events. The professional support in the department of mathematics and natural sciences was, besides Mr. Jensen, ensured and coordinated by Prof. Andreas Klümper (Physics), PD Dr. Frank Göhmann (Physics), Prof. Francesco Knechtli (Physics, Computer Simulation in Science) and Prof. Dr. Barbara Rüdiger-Mastandrea (Mathematics) who all very much helped in solving organizational problems and also assisted in extracurricular questions.

By the end of the ITP-Program Mr. Jensen and his Japanese Colleagues have found a possibility to proceed the project within a smaller frame. The Japanese organization JASSO (Japan Student Services Organization) has financially supported the program

since last year by giving grants to five Japanese students of computer sciences and physics so far.

For several years the Ochanomizu-University has been hosting English-speaking summer schools, which also debated the compatibility of family and work in today's Japan. In 2011 it was the first time that two Wuppertal PhD students could participate, in 2013 it was already four, who were assisted in a thankworthy way by Mrs. Gushima.

A progress and expansion of the existing partnership with the women's university will be carried out in the frame of the project „Program for Leading Graduate Schools“, which was approved by the Japanese ministry of education, culture, sports, science, and technology in 2013. It will enable PhD students of the women's university to do research in the field of natural sciences and mathematics over a period of time from 6 to 12 months within the next 7 years. Central addressee for the implementation of the project will be Mr. Jensen who obtained a further mandate by becoming the university's appointee for Japan.

A special component of this cooperation is the alignment to gender related topics and the inclusion of the equal opportunities office into the dialogue between genders. Here we represent a unique feature, which is owed to the fact that the exclusively female students of the elite university have a special interest in equal opportunities and compatibility issues, which are reflected and compared from an international perspective in various formats. Among those to be named is the widely noted lecture by Mr. Jensen in Japan on gender equality politics in German universities.

In the „Japan-Days in German Universities“ in 2011, which were promoted by the German rector's conference (HRK) gender issues und the collaboration of the Wuppertal University and the women's university in Japan played a major role. The application was mainly effected by Mr. Jensen, assisted by Gabriele Hillebrand-Knopff (vice equal opportunity commissioner), Andrea Bieck (director international office), and Anja Kluge (consultant international issues). The program was added to by a lecture by Mrs. Takano on gender relations in Japan and a university owned career program for women presented to an international audience.

Mr. Jensen has announced to appropriate the award amounting to 5000 € for the further development of the cooperation with Japan.

I want to give the start signal for this and ask our rector to hand over the equal opportunities award.