

IDEAS FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL E-LEARNING COURSES IN FOREST OPERATIONS AND WORK SCIENCE

Siegfried Lewark

Institute of Forest Utilisation and Work Science, University of Freiburg
Werthmannstr. 6
D 79085, Freiburg, Germany
e-mail: siegfried.lewark@fobawi.uni-freiburg.de

Keywords: e-learning, forest operations, work science, competence development

Abstract: *There is a continuing or even growing need of competences of professionals for Forest Operations and Work Science under different regional conditions, in industrialized as well as in small scale forestry. At the same time in these fields teaching capacity is reduced and relevant courses are taken from the obligatory core of forestry curricula in many places. These leads to the need of exploring the possible contribution of international e-learning courses, open for students as well as for professionals. They could help making better and joint use of scattered expertise and teaching resources.*

As time and money needed for e-learning courses may be a limiting factor for successful development and running them sustainably options of courses must be examined for which input is lower or at least not higher than for traditional face-to-face courses. This could include using share-ware e-learning platforms as well as technological minimalism (Fillip, after GTZ 2005). Learner oriented and activating didactical concepts will make the courses attractive and work against early drop-out. Some ideas about organisation, didactical aspects as well as contents will be presented, along with experiences from e-learning courses in the field of ergonomics and forest operations held at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Stimulation and organisational frame for such courses, bundled in a course package on Forest Operations and Work Science could come from WELAN (World-Wide E-Learning Academy for Natural Resources, Forestry & Wood Science), which has been developed by higher education specialists from IUFRO, IPFE and forestry faculties of six universities. WELAN will promote, facilitate and organize e-learning courses in scientific education and further education in the fields of forestry and wood sciences as well as management of natural resources. WELAN will also explore approaches of open learning resources, i.e. courses available without tuition fees.