Abstract to workshop theme: Science and Technology Studies and Feminism

*Isolated Event or Work-in-process; implementing gender perspectives in engineering programs.*

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Four years ago, a one week course in gender studies was introduced as part of the altogether ten week introduction course in an engineering program at Karlstad university. The idea of implementing gender studies in this way originated from a special project which aimed to encourage young woman to study engineering.

The gender studies course was performed by teachers from the gender science research center. The intention was to give the students, both male and female, a basic understanding of the implications of gender for their future profession as engineers. The students first reactions were rejection and strong denial to the facts and theories that was presented. Those reactions were the starting point of a continuous focus on the didactics of gender studies.

2002, four years later, this course in gender studies is part of nine programs of engineering at Karlstad university. The intentions of this paper is to question to which extent this gender course has introduced a gender perspective to the engineering programs as such. Do the students find the gender perspective necessary and important for their future profession? Has the gender perspective become part of planning and teaching of other courses in the engineering programs? We know the students reactions - how much are we familiar with the teachers reactions? Is the gender study course an isolated event or has the implementation of a gender perspective become a work-in-process in the programs? The discussion will be based on theories from the field of feminist pedagogy, which are used to analyse classroom observations and the results of questionnaires to students and teachers.