



Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gien

- since 2016 **President of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt**
- **German philologist** (Didactics of German Language and Literature)
- Award as **“University Manager of the Year 2024”** by the Center for Higher Education Development and “Die Zeit“



Contact

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Tasks

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gien has been President of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt since October 1, 2016, and was unanimously confirmed in office in 2021. She has already been interim President of the KU from 2014 to 2016. As the University's President, she chairs the Presidium, is the superior of the academic staff and represents the KU externally. She shapes its strategic development with a clear focus on scientific excellence, sustainability and international networking. She stands for a responsible, value-oriented university management that strengthens research, teaching and social dialog in equal measure and positions the KU as a shaping force in transformation processes.

Résumé

Gabriele Gien, born on January 11, 1962 in Munich, studied German language and literature, art history and education at the Ludwig Maximilian University (LMU) after graduating from St. Anna Gymnasium in Munich. Following her state examination, she worked in the teaching profession from 1986 onwards. During this time, she was a representative at the State Institute for School Pedagogy and Educational Research, Diversity Manager for the Munich East school region and a representative for the promotion of highly gifted children. At the same time, she worked as a lecturer at the LMU and worked on her doctorate in German studies, which she completed in 1995 (title of dissertation: “Holistic learning with art images – today. The significance of art images in children's lives as an impulse for a holistic, multidimensional approach to images at elementary school age”). From 1996 to 2007, Gabriele Gien was Akademische Rätin at the Chair of Didactics of German Language and Literature at the University of Augsburg. In 2007 and 2008 she took on a professorship at the Catholic University in Eichstätt. In 2008, she was appointed to a W3 professorship for German literature and its didactics at the Freiburg University of Education. On October 1, 2009, she accepted the appointment to the Chair (W3) of Didactics of German Language and Literature at the KU. In the same year, she became Vice President for Studies and Teaching, and in 2013 she took over as Chair of the KU Senate. Gabriele Gien has been married to the opera singer Laurence Gien since 1989 and they have two children.

Most important projects

During Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gien's time as President, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt has undergone a comprehensive profiling process that has strengthened the KU's visibility and positioning as an academic institution that is strong in research and excellent in teaching. The development and implementation of a comprehensive transfer strategy has undergone a significant re-accentuation with the adoption of the "KU 2030" University Development Plan, in which the KU is being consistently developed into a nationally visible university with an unmistakable profile as an 'Engaged University'. Gabriele Gien's most important projects and successes since 2014 include:

Research: Establishing a focused research strategy, developing structures for research funding and a targeted appointment policy that led to a continuous increase in third-party funded research. Today, the KU is successful in all relevant funding programs (e.g. research groups and research training groups funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), tenure-track program, high-tech agenda, EU programs) and was the first non-state university to be accepted into the German Research Foundation in 2023. Three interdisciplinary research fields address the major challenges of our time and pool the knowledge and expertise of KU researchers: "Ethics, Culture and Society", "Digitalization and Data Science" and "Environment and Sustainability".

Studies and teaching: The KU has consistently expanded its high quality teaching and excellent framework conditions for students. In rankings and graduate surveys (e.g. CHE Ranking, Bavarian Graduate Study, Study Quality Monitor), the KU has received above-average ratings and has been awarded the title of most popular university in Germany three times by the online portal Studycheck due to its high recommendation rate. In addition to good student support, the integration of social commitment and personal development have created unique selling points in the University's teaching practice. These include Service Learning formats (learning through engagement) – the KU contributes its extensive expertise in this area to the global Uniservitate network.

Transfer: The KU was the only university in Bavaria to receive funding twice as part of the "Innovative University" initiative, together with Ingolstadt University of Applied Sciences (THI). This was accompanied by the development of transfer structures and models of participatory science. These include formats to promote dialog between science and society, the opening of a "Civic Engagement Office" and networking with partners from politics, business and civil society organizations. At the Future Campus, which will be established in the Georgianum and the Hohe Schule in Ingolstadt and thus at the historic site of the first Bavarian state university, the KU is profiling its further development as an "Engaged University". The transformation of the Faculty of Religious Education into the School of Transformation & Sustainability not only introduced profile-building study programs, but also implemented new structures for transdisciplinary collaboration between academic and non-academic stakeholders.

Global education and teacher training: Already before her time as President of the KU, Gabriele Gien was already highly committed to global educational justice. She engaged, in particular, in initiatives to promote school development and the training and professional development of teachers in Africa (e.g. KUGanda project, building schools in the slum regions of Tanzania). The KU has been involved in the "Jesuit Worldwide Learning" educational program from the outset and, true to the mission "Higher Education at the margins", offers further education courses in crisis regions and poverty-stricken areas worldwide. The KU thus makes an important contribution in the context of interculturality and global responsibility. During Gabriele Gien's term of office, teacher education as a central profile of the KU was consistently developed further with a view to social and educational policy challenges, among other things by testing new concepts and formats that prepare teachers for the requirements of modern schools in a practical, interdisciplinary and future-oriented manner.

Committee activities

KU committees

- Member of the Senate
- Member of the University Council
- Member of the Foundation Council
- Chairwoman of the Extended University Management

External committees

- Artificial Intelligence Network Ingolstadt gGmbH (AININ):
Shareholder representative of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt Foundation
- Digital start-up center (Digitales Gründerzentrum Region Ingolstadt GmbH, brigk):
Member of the Supervisory Board
- University Network Education through Responsibility (HBdV):
Member of the Advisory Board
- German Rectors' Conference (HRK):
Member
- Catholic Academy in Bavaria:
Member of the General Council
- Cultural Advisory Board of City of Ingolstadt:
Member
- Jesuiten World Wide Learning (JWL):
Member of the Advisory Board
- International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU):
Member
- Institute for Applied Sustainability (INAS):
Member of the Advisory Board
- Initiative Regionalmanagement Region Ingolstadt e.V. (IRMA):
Member of the Supervisory Board
- Danube Natural Heritage Foundation:
Member of the Supervisory Board

Involvement in the science system

Activities in committees, in the scientific self-administration, in the organization of scientific events and in teaching:

- since 2024: Auditor at the Stifterverband in the field of transfer
- since 2025: Coach at the President Coaching for newly elected university leaders
at the Wübben Science Foundation
- since 2015: Active advisory board member and co-initiator of the university network 'Education through Responsibility'; Development of campus-community partnerships
- 2014 – 2016: Chairwoman of the Bavarian German Didactics Association
- 2013 – 2014: Chairwoman of the Senate of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
- 2009 – 2011: Vice President for Studies and Teaching at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
- 1999 – 2013: Head of the KinderKultur project, Kinder- & Jugendstiftung Aufwind/University of Augsburg

Collaborations

- Representation of the KU at **University of Bavaria e.V.** for close coordination and joint development of strategic university framework conditions
- Long-term participation and coordination of a sub-network in the global hub of the **Uniservitate Network** for the dissemination and promotion of Service Learning at Catholic universities
- Long-term leadership of the **education project KUGanda** (funded by the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD)
- Membership and advisory board in the university network **Education through Sustainability** for the active shaping of social responsibility by universities

In addition, she has extensive experience in leading positions, speaker activities and active membership in associations, societies and networks in the field of educational research and the third mission of universities. This includes her work as Chair of the Bavarian German Didactics Association, her involvement in the “Campus vor Ort” network and the “Mission Gesellschaft” network of the Stifterverband as well as her work in the Bavarian Excellence in Teaching Working Group and the Elementary School Association.

Selected publications

- Gien, G./ Metten, T. (in publication): Partizipation, Werteorientierung und Nachhaltigkeit – Perspektiven auf eine engagierte Wissenschaft. In: Maluga, A. (ed.). Hochschule und Weltinnenpolitik, p. 214-233.
- Gien, G. et al. (2019 et seq.): Editor of the series “K'Universale Interdisziplinäre Diskurse zu Fragen der Zeit” (together with Kropac, U.; Sill, B.; Treiber, A.). Transcript-Verlag: <https://www.transcript-verlag.de/reihen/kulturwissenschaft/k-universale-interdisziplinare-diskurse-zu-fragen-der-zeit/>
- Gien, G./Payrhuber, F.J. (2017): Handbuch Kinderlyrik. Schneider, Baltmannsweiler.
- Gien, G. (2015): Perspektiven und Profilentwicklung der Katholischen Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. Academia 3/2015.
- Böttger, H. & Gien, G. (2014): The Multilingual Brain: zum neurodidaktischen Umgang mit Mehrsprachigkeit. epubli GmbH, Eichstätt.
- Gien, G. & Holder, F. (2013): Bausteine für kreatives Schreiben und andere Schreibformen. Domino Verlag, Munich.
- Gien, G. & Sill, B. (2013): Scheitern. Eos Verlag, St. Ottilien.
- Gien, G. & Böttger, H. (2011): Aspekte einer exzellenten universitären Lehre. Klinkhardt, Kempten.
- Gien, G. (2002): “Gelb-Rot-Blau”: differenzierte Schreib Anregungen zu einem Bild von Wassily Kandinsky. In: Spinner, K.H. (ed.). Synästhetische Bildung in der Grundschule: eine Handreichung für den Unterricht (p. 28-34). Auer, Donauwörth.
- Gien, G. (1996): Ganzheitliches Lernen mit Kunstbildern – heute. Die Bedeutung von Kunstbildern in der kindlichen Lebenswelt als Impuls für einen ganzheitlich-mehrdimensionalen Umgang mit Bildern im Grundschulalter. Roderer Verlag, Regensburg 1996 (543 S., Dissertation).

Awards

- 2024: Award as “University Manager of the Year” by the Center for Higher Education Development (CHE) and weekly newspaper “Die Zeit”
- 2020: Peter Apian Medal of the City of Ingolstadt for scientific achievements in Ingolstadt
- 2019: Inclusion in the AcademiaNet Expert Database of Outstanding Female Academics