Dr. Comrie will review his experiences with the Excellence Initiative based on visits to numerous universities in Germany. The Excellence Initiative is a wide-ranging effort across German graduate research institutions to transform the graduate enterprise and strengthen research. Over 2 Billion euros are being invested over a decade by Federal and State governments via the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation, DFG) and the Wissenschaftsrat (German Council of Science and Humanities). Three funding lines have seeded a range of innovative new programs and approaches that, in addition to scholarly excellence, also promote interdisciplinarity, gender diversity, and integration with independent research institutes. These programs are challenging the traditional German model of doctoral education and are changing the greater academic landscape.