



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto
TAIKOMOSIOS SOCIOLOGIJOS PROGRAMOS
(621L30005, 62605S104)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *APPLIED SOCIOLOGY* (621L30005, 62605S104)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Vytautas Magnus University

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Taikomoji sociologija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621L30005, 62605S104
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Sociologija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (2)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Sociologijos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1993; Atnaujinta registracija: 1997-05-19 Įsakymas 565; Atnaujinta registracija: 2003-11-11, Nr. 2-253; Atnaujinta registracija: 2009-08-31, Nr. 1-73

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Applied Sociology</i>
State code	621L30005, 62605S104
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Sociology
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Level of studies	second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (2)
Scope of the study programme in credits	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Sociology
Date of registration of the study programme	1993; renewed registration: 1997-05-19 Order 565; renewed registration: 2003-11-11, No. 2-253; renewed registration: 2009-08-31, No. 1-73

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I. INTRODUCTION

Vytautas Magnus University has been offering graduate (MA) programme in Applied Sociology since 1993 and re-registered in 1997-05-19 Order 565; 2003-11-11, No. 2-253; and 2009-08-31, No. 1-73

The present review follows the guidelines and procedures of the SKVC. The University provided a self-evaluation report before the expert team visited the University on October 10th 2012. This visit was carried out in conjunction with the evaluation of a master programme of sociology for which a separate report has been prepared. During the visit, the team had the opportunity to discuss the programmes with faculty administrators, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers. They also visited the library, offices, teaching space, and study centres associated with the programme.

After the visit, the expert group held a meeting in which the contents of the evaluation was discussed and amended to represent the opinion of the whole group.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

Programme aims and learning outcomes as they were stated both in the self-evaluation report and during the meetings with administration and staff need to be a more focused. Master programme has to have its own identity/specialisation. This comment is particularly true about the applied nature of the programme. During the meeting with administration evaluation committee it was asked “What is it that really makes it applied, if any? Studying social problems is a part of almost any standard master’s programme in the social sciences.” The answer was: “Focus on methods”. Any standard sociological programme would include module on research methods and the VMU’s research methods module has average number of courses on methods (and even lacking some on advanced statistics). If we compare the programme to other competing programmes from which it attempts to distinguish itself the most unique feature of the programme is its deep interconnection with Social Anthropology (and programme management in a future plans even to expand it). The academic staff had however problems in clarifying the role of Social Anthropology and Psychology, another prominent, in the study programme. Such diffuse identification of the programme leads to confusion in students’ understanding of the programmes nature and the identity of sociology. Some teachers obviously recognize the need better to integrate and clarify the social anthropological perspective compared to the sociological one. During evaluation committee meeting with students they described the main learning outcomes of the programme as following: the programme is developing a wide worldview, competencies in many different fields and subjects, critical thinking, interdisciplinary approach, but nobody was mentioning as a distinctive feature of the programme its focus on methods.

If we read programme aims and compare them to competences - certain issues mentioned in the aims are missing in the description of competences. The following competences might be added to fill the gap:

- the development of personal, professional, public, political, etc. unbiasedness; to promote the understanding of non-discrimination behaviour during research or professional activities;
- the understanding of social importance of culturally sensitive and socially responsible behaviour;

- knowledge and fulfilment of the norms of professional ethics;
- to develop the ability to continuous self-education.
-

Some stakeholders claimed that new graduates of the programme come to their working places with an intention of acting as responsible citizen. This is certainly something that should be further discussed by the staff member in particular since these are included in the explicit aims of the programme. What really are such general virtues of a good citizen and how and where should they be taught, or specifically related to academic teaching and research activities. The stakeholders (representatives from scientific research centres and various NGOs) emphasized the need for the Lithuanian sociology to promote independent public opinion and open public discussion. They also expect the programme to develop the students' abilities to critical scientific and social thinking in solving social problems.

Some of stakeholders stressed that the programme graduates can easily adjust to new working conditions, they are capable of utilising constant self-education techniques to gain missing or new skills or competencies. They are also trained to approach critically different social issues and have good analytical skills. Therefore, we may assume that the programme's learning outcomes are based on genuine academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are clearly separated from the BA-level and correspond to MA-level learning outcomes and meet all MA-level requirements.

Generally, the name of the programme, its leaning outcomes, content and the qualification offered are compatible with each other. However, as it was stated above the programme's name "applied sociology" requires further clarification, which should also consequently influence the definition of its learning outcomes and qualifications.

2. Curriculum design

All requirements for second level programme are adequately fulfilled including the volume of the programme, the number of credits allocated to subjects of study field, the number of credits allocated to elective subjects, the number of subjects allocated to supplementary studies, the number of subjects per semester, the number of credits allocated to independent work and final thesis.

The committee members had reservations about the statement in the self-assessment report that "students are provided with the opportunity to have their non-formally recognised competencies recognised and included in studied subjects" and this recognition might be equal to 25 per cent of all ECTS credits. This question was clarified during the meeting with the programme administration. This rule was never used in practice and it was only very marginal.

The descriptions of the academic courses could easily be improved. The course descriptions included into the self-evaluation report are too simple, and parts of these descriptions were repetitive. Some descriptions were very short, without much concrete information about the topics of lectures and practical lessons. Therefore, it was difficult to estimate the level of the interconnection of the programme aims and learning outcomes. This question was raised during the committee's meeting with the staff who gave a satisfactory answer by assuring the experts' team that students receive in fact much more elaborate course descriptions, some of which are uploaded at the department's intranet system (which was presented to the committee during facilities inspection). The students of the programme

brought up the need to improve and increase the courses on statistics and research methods which they quite rightly considered to be essential to the professional competence of a modern sociologist. On the other hand, the students seemed to be quite satisfied with the theoretical knowledge they had already received at the BA level of their studies.

There is one problem, which the departmental administration should seriously address: according to the programme's plan there are many elective courses that are offered to students, but their possibility to choose is in reality rather limited due to the small number of enrolled students. Due to a reasonable legal requirement that student group should not be smaller than 5 students they cannot freely choose subjects.

In general the content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies. Certain modules are aimed at covering knowledge gaps for students, who received their BA not in Social Sciences but in some other fields, and therefore they might be repetitive and boring to those, who received their BA in Social Sciences. The programme has in fact an in-built dilemma, which causes some inconsistencies in the curricula and content of the programme. Before the last evaluation the programme accepted only students with a BA in social sciences. It was structured as a logical continuation to the bachelor programme in order to give the students a more advanced level of knowledge in sociology. After the last evaluation it was recommended "to open up entrance to the study programme for a more diverse group of applicants (i.e., those with bachelor or equivalent degree in social sciences and humanities instead of only those with bachelor degree in sociology)". Such step attracted applicants from other disciplines and created a more diverse group of students, but unavoidably created also new challenges and has led to the dilemma how to teach more advanced subjects to students, who are not yet competent in the basics in their field. In Applied sociology programme this dilemma becomes visible in particular in the part of the curricula devoted to research methods. As a result, these subjects cover only some basics (there is not enough time allocated to covering all the material). At the same time this need to cover basics prevents them from being really advanced (for those, who received BA in Sociology from the same university these courses probably are repetitive, because they have already had many research methods courses at the BA programme). Some theory-oriented courses are also repetitive due to this reason. On the other hand, inequality issues are declared as important direction of research in the project aims, but they are missing in the MA programme curricula. If this programme is assessed in connection with the BA programme, we can see progressive building of curricula from the basics to the advanced level. If we view it as a separate unit it has some lacunas (inequality, ethnicity, urban studies), which are partly covered by courses from the Social Anthropology study field.

The division of courses into obligatory and optional has its own logic which was not always obvious to an external expert. According to the self-assessment report "the need for academic sociologists and professionals trained in *applied* sociology is conditioned by the rapid changes taking place in national and global/international contexts. First, Lithuania as is undergoing integration into social, economic and political structures of European Community this raises new issues and reveals existing social problems (e.g., fragmentation of the society, discrimination of various social groups, etc.)". It would be advisable to include more courses dealing with these issues.

One additional warning from the side of our committee is the very diffusive interconnection of this MA programme with the Social Anthropology field which is present with 3 courses in the compulsory part and with one course in the elective part directly focusing on anthropology. This sums up to 20% of the whole contents of the programme. A

Course called Issues in Qualitative Research Methods is named as sociological but is anthropological in its content. When students were asked what they think about the interdisciplinary nature of the programme they said that they liked it. At the same time they could hardly differentiate and explain the specifics of each discipline. In our opinion, it is very important to maintain in the students' consciousness the specificity of the sociological approach, sociological theoretization etc. And it is very hard to a student to realize this specificity of the sociological, if the programme contains a lot of social anthropological courses.

3. Staff

The programme fulfils requirements concerning percentage of teachers with scientific degree teaching all study subjects and number of enrolled Professors. It has 8 associated professors and 3 professors. Practically all teachers have their degrees in sociology (according to the administration they make up to 80% of the departmental staff). All lecturers conduct their research in the field of their teaching expertise.

Practically all faculty members actively participate in international research and teacher training programmes (often very prestigious ones). As a result curriculum is up to date and many courses have strong research-based components.

The number of the lecturers is adequate enough not to overload the teaching staff and to give them a possibility to conduct research and to participate in international events/programmes without threatening the integrity of the programme and to ensure its learning outcomes. The turnover of the teaching staff is able to ensure an adequate provisioning of the programme.

The university has strong internal capacities for teachers' professional development including:

- System of sabbaticals (once in five years teachers are eligible to take a sabbatical and can be exempted from pedagogical work (for no longer than 1 year) due to research or scientific, arts or pedagogical qualification improvement).
- The VMU also has special funds to cover teachers' and students' conference fees and travel expenses, scholarships, etc. Teachers can apply for the compensation of expenses related to academic conferences. Faculty also provides support for scientific trips.
- The VMU organizes various seminars and lectures for their teachers (e. g., methodological seminars for scientists, teachers and doctoral students who are implementing research in Social Sciences; "Competence development of consumers' usage of electronic science information sources").

The academic staff members are actively engaged both in international and state-supported research activities. The majority of the Programme teachers are active scholars participating in scientific and applied science projects that analyse relevant problems in contemporary sociology (e. g., social welfare and family, education, health, politics, gender and religion, etc.). During the last five years the Programme teachers supervised, administered, and participated in 56 different projects financed by the Research Council of Lithuania, State Studies Foundation, Ministry of Education and Science, Education Exchanges Support Foundation, European Social Fund. The Programme teachers actively participate in scientific and applied conferences. Over the last five years, teachers presented 190 papers in various conferences. During this period, teachers upgraded their qualification in 20 training seminars of different length (from several hours to a week or more) in Lithuania and abroad.

Analysis of academic mobility proves that Department of Sociology has a developed network of cooperation with other foreign higher educational institutions and research foundations. All their research activities are reflected in courses taught at the Programme. For applied sociology such connection to research is quite crucial.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The committee had an opportunity to visit the VMU's facilities including study rooms, libraries, research units, computer classes and finds them completely satisfactory both in their size and quality.

Students have access to books, textbooks and journals at their library. In addition all necessary teaching material is uploaded into the department's intranet system. Students have also wide and open access to electronic collections of books and journals as well as to the Lithuanian sociological data archive (created and maintained by the KTU).

During the committee's meeting with students they were asked about the level of satisfaction with teaching and learning materials as well as computer equipment. All of them stressed that they do not feel any shortages or problems with access to all the necessary materials/equipment. All computers at the Department's computer room were quipped with necessary professional software (SPSS, ENVIVO).

The committee discussed with the staff and students details of the arrangement of the practice. Experts' group had also a chance to get acquainted with students' reports about their practice. The practice place is typically chosen by the student under supervision of the tutor. The practice location is selected according to its suitability to the student's research interests. A list of institutions which cooperate with the department is also available to students. From students' practice reports experts can assume that students' practice is well organized and they really gain necessary experience and professional training during their practice.

From both the self assessment report and the site visit experts' group could see that the students have access to necessary teaching materials. Experts additionally discussed this issue with students during the site visit and they find all teaching materials and access to them satisfactory. One more point which was checked during the site visit is the level of students' foreign language proficiency, what helped to assess to what extent available resources (part of which are in English) are in fact available to the students. For instance, the lists of books and articles referred to in students' papers and MA theses were checked during the visit and it was found that students are in fact making active use of these materials.

The academic staff prepares handbooks for the students' use as well as writes and publishes scientific monographs.

One critical observation made by the experts' group is that, despite the University's deliberate policy of English language proficiency (entrance requirements and 1 hour of English every day), at least spoken English of students was not as good as we expected.

5. Study process and student assessment

A brand-new admission requirement is a step towards giving priority to students with social science background, which is probably aimed at overcoming the prevalent dilemma of diversity in their educational backgrounds (discussed above). As described by both the administration and teachers the difference between the students with a BA in social sciences and without is quite clear and has its impact on teaching (lecturers have to cope with very diverse group of students). The teaching staff is however more satisfied with the situation now.

As far as the number of students is concerned this is quite a small MA programme. During the five years 35 students have finished the programme. The proportion between the student/teacher-supervisor is excellent. During the site visit the experts' group brought these issues to the attention of the administration and asked about their strategy of future development. The administration indicated several steps that should be made in order to improve this situation of low admission. First, the university is currently reorienting its strategy from growth to quality assurance. Second, they have plans further to develop the interdisciplinary nature of the MA programme to suit the students' needs better. Finally, they are starting a new marketing strategy this year.

The organization of the study process is clear and well founded.

The Department is very active in research therefore the students also have many possibilities to get involved in real academic research projects as assistants. Some students fully use this opportunity to participate in research and applied research activities and even publish articles as co-authors with their lecturers while others did not use this opportunity. For example, only one student from all present at our meeting claimed that she had participated in a research conference. As the students explained it, they are simply not interested. Some students are more oriented toward academic career and others more to practical work (in business or marketing).

One question that worried the experts' group a bit was the question of the publications co-authored by students and their teachers. We see it as a bit problematic. In some countries it is totally forbidden in order to "prevent" the teachers from exploiting student labour power and stealing their students' results.

The content of the student practice was found to be satisfactory, well organized and research oriented.

The students' international mobility is relatively low. But the reason as it was explained by students is not the lack of possibilities (Department has many Erasmus agreements and funding which cover students' conference expenses). Students simply seem not to be interested. Some students are more oriented toward academic careers and others more to practical jobs (in business or marketing). Many of them are working already and do not want to lose their working places since the labour market in Lithuania is very limited now due to economic crisis.

There is lack of funds allocated to student social services but it is not an internal problem of the programme but due to the limited of funds available to all Lithuanian higher educational institutions. This issue was discussed with students during our meeting. Students indicated that they are however quite satisfied. They have a possibility to get a place in a university dormitory, but they are not interested in it. They have also indicated that until the last year they had very high stipends. Since this year the amount has diminished due to state

regulations, but it is still satisfactory. Students also indicated that the atmosphere at the department is very friendly and open, their supervisors and other staff members are very helpful in all cases.

As it looks from the programme's self-assessment report the assessment system of students' performance is clear and publicly adequate. In addition, the experts' group wanted to stress that the grades of the final theses are spread widely enough to assure the quality of evaluation.

During the experts' group meeting with graduates their professional activities were discussed. In general, both graduates and employers were satisfied with professional activities of the graduates. It was stressed that the majority of them managed to find jobs in the field of sociology or closely related fields. The employers stressed that some additional skills should be considered. For those who are planning to work in marketing, business or public opinion research more knowledge of SPSS statistics is required and a deeper understanding of marketing mechanisms (like work with client, marketing of research products, etc.) would be useful.

6. Programme management

University academic units responsible for the Applied Sociology Study Programme implementation are the Faculty of Social Sciences (SSF) and the Department of Sociology (DS). Faculty activities are organised by: the Faculty Council, Dean and Dean's advisory body – Dean's Office. The Faculty Council makes decisions on main Faculty studies' organisation, science-related and other issues; considers and approves study programmes and performs other functions. The Faculty Dean implements decrees accredited by the Senate and Faculty Council, Rector's orders and takes care of study and science organization at the Department of Sociology. The Department of Sociology organizes studies and carries out research; prepares study programme and plans projects, accumulates study and science equipment, etc. DS is lead by the Department Head who organizes Department staffs scientific and pedagogical activity; coordinates science and research work; is responsible for the Department's asset management and use; reports to the Dean and Faculty Council on annual Department's activity. Study Programme Committee (SPC)¹ is the group formed according to the Dean's order, responsible for the Programme supervision, its quality assessment and update. As a whole the programme management is professional and well organized.

The department collects and analyses regularly information on the implementation of the programme.

External measures to ensure the quality of the Programme are: external study programme assessment and accreditation, external scientific activity evaluation, external University assessment and (or) accreditation. The detailed external Applied Sociology Study Programme assessment was performed in 2003. Conclusions from the previous programme quality assessment were made available for the present experts' group. The experts had a possibility to see what amendments were made after the previous programme evaluation and discuss it with the administration and staff members. As it appears all possible changes were made.

The internal measures to ensure the quality of the Programme implementation are quite comprehensive: (1) University internal quality assurance system; (2) Cooperation between the Programme executives and University academic and non-academic subdivisions; (3) Consistent study quality analysis during Departments' meetings; (4) SPC activity; (5) Student, graduate,

¹ VMU Study Regulations "Study programme design, sustainability and renewal", Chapter 7. (in Lithuanian)

teacher and employer surveys and collaboration; (6) Information dissemination.

The experts' group meeting with stakeholders demonstrated that the stakeholders were involved only to a limited extent in the process of programme planning and implementation. They were not included into the procedure of the programme's self-assessment. However, it was stressed that stakeholders have very good personal relations with the department. In informal meetings they had a possibility to express their thoughts about possible changes in the programme, but no official procedure of discussions with stakeholders had been established yet. The Department should pay more attention to this important sphere of quality assurance.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To elaborate more precisely the identity of the Applied sociology programme in order better to tune its learning outcomes and programme content.
2. If programme aims are compared with competences - certain issues mentioned in aims are missing in the description of competences. There is a need to elaborate competences and tune them to stakeholders needs.
3. To take measures and make it possible for students to choose among the elective courses regardless of their number.
4. To take measures to increase the number of students.
5. To compare all courses taught both at BA and MA level and avoid repetitive topics or courses. Namely, such subjects as Post-industrial and information society, Trends in Contemporary Social Theories, Methodology of Social Sciences, Research Trends in Sociology of Culture, Trends in Contemporary Sociology, Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Health.
6. To reconsider what should be the right share of Social Anthropology courses in the programme curriculum and to open it more to other special fields of sociology.
7. To reconsider the allocation of the courses to core or elective parts of the programme.
8. To add more courses on statistical methods.
9. To add more critical approaches and methodological discussion, which are crucial for an applied sociology programme, into the contents of the non-methodological courses.
10. To make Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods courses more advanced in their content.
11. To develop further the university intranet (like MOODLE) system.
12. To develop further students' foreign language proficiency, especially their ability to communicate and write academic texts in English.
13. To encourage students to participate in international exchange programmes and take measures to activate students' participation in conferences and publications.

14. Clear rules are needed in order to regulate and guarantee the students' rights when participating in their teachers' research projects and, in particular, joint publications of scientific publications.
15. To involve more actively stakeholders into the process of programme assessment and alteration.
16. To take measures to guarantee the respective disciplinary identities among the professors coming from separate academic disciplines in their teaching and research practices.

IV. SUMMARY

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualification offered are compatible with each other. The programme's profile is applied sociology. The main negative aspects of the programme are related to the somewhat ambiguous identity of the programme. Its close relation to social anthropology, understandable taking into account the local circumstances at the university, creates also problems to the disciplinary identity of the programme since several courses are simply "borrowed" from anthropology.

2. Curriculum design

All requirements concerning curriculum design for second level programme are adequately met. However, the most serious challenge for the programme in the future is to take serious measures in order to guarantee and increase the number of the students in the programme. Here, a more convincing and systematic programme aims and more realistic perspective of the realization of its outcomes could be of assistance, together with a serious reflection and reconsideration of the importance and place of all the separate study units in the whole profile curriculum. Such measures might, on their part, help making the programme more attractive and competitive in the eyes of both the students and the stakeholders.

3. Staff

The programme has many obvious positive aspects among them a highly qualified and dedicated teaching staff which is big enough to manage the teaching load. The administration creates good opportunities for the teaching staff to promote both its scientific and pedagogical competence. The research record of the academic staff is very good. It is involved in many important research projects.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The teaching facilities, library and access to the computers, data sets and the internet as well as other infrastructure are very good. The students appreciate the open atmosphere of the department and the whole university as well as the willingness of their teachers to help and consult them when needed.

5. Study process and student assessment

The organization of the study process is clear and well founded as well as the organization of the students' practice which was in generally well organized and in line with the study aims. Both graduates and employers are satisfied with professional activities of the graduates. As the Department is very active in research therefore students have many possibilities to get involved in the real academic research projects. In this light it was a bit surprising that the students were not encouraged to participate more in scientific seminars or conferences. The courses are often closely related to the research topics and fields of the teachers.

6. Programme management

The programme management is in general professionally and well organized. However, the stakeholders could be more involved in the process of programme assessment and renewal.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Applied Sociology* (state code – 621L30005, 62605S104) at Vytautas Magnus University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by fields of assessment.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	4
4.	Material resources	4
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	4
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	21

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto studijų programa *Taikomoji sociologija* (valstybinis kodas – 621L30005, 62605S104) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	4
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	21

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

IV. SANTRAUKA

1. Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai

Programos pavadinimas, numatomi studijų rezultatai, turinys ir suteikiama kvalifikacija dera tarpusavyje. Programos profilis yra taikomoji sociologija. Pagrindiniai programos trūkumai susiję su neaiškiu programos tapatumu. Jos artumas Socialinei antropologijai, kuris suprantamas atsižvelgiant į universiteto vidaus aplinkybes, kelia problemų dėl programos dalykų tapatumo, nes kai kurie dalykai yra paprasčiausiai „pasiskolinti“ iš Antropologijos.

2. Programos sandara

Programos sandara atitinka visus antrosios studijų pakopos programos reikalavimus. Vis dėlto didžiausias iššūkis programai ateityje yra imtis rimtų priemonių, siekiant užtikrinti ir didinti studentų skaičių programoje. To pasiekti padėtų įtikinamesni ir sistemingesni programos tikslai bei realistiškesnė numatomų studijų rezultatų realizavimo perspektyva, taip pat reikėtų

atidžiau peržiūrėti ir apsvarstyti atskirų dalykų svarbą ir vietą visoje programos sandaroje. Šios priemonės galėtų padėti padaryti programą patrauklesnę ir konkurencingesnę tiek studentų, tiek socialinių dalininkų atžvilgiu.

3. Personalas

Programoje yra daug akivaizdžiai teigiamų aspektų, tarp jų ir ypač kompetentingų bei atsidavusių dėstytojų kolektyvas, kuris yra pakankamai didelis, kad susidorotų su dėstyto krūviu. Administracija suteikia puikių galimybių dėstytojams kelti savo mokslinę ir pedagoginę kvalifikaciją. Akademinio personalo dalyvavimo tyrimuose rodiklis labai geras. Dėstytojai dalyvauja daugelyje svarbių tyrimų projektų.

4. Materialieji ištekliai

Mokymo bazė, biblioteka, galimybė naudotis kompiuteriais, duomenų bazėmis ir internetu bei kita infrastruktūra yra puikios būklės. Studentai vertina atvirą katedros bei viso universiteto mikroklimatą, taip pat dėstytojų norą padėti ir prireikus teikti konsultacijas.

5. Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas

Studijų eigos organizavimas yra aiškus ir pagrįstas; tą patį galima pasakyti ir apie studentų praktikos organizavimą – apskritai ji puikiai rengiama ir atitinka studijų tikslus. Tiek absolventai, tiek darbdaviai yra patenkinti profesine absolventų veikla. Kadangi katedra aktyviai vykdo tiriamąją veiklą, studentai turi daug galimybių dalyvauti tikruose akademinėse tyrimų projektuose.

6. Programos vadyba

Programos vadyba apskritai profesionaliai ir puikiai organizuota. Tačiau socialiniai dalininkai galėtų būti labiau įtraukti į programos vertinimo ir atnaujinimo procesą.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Tiksliau suformuluoti Taikomosios sociologijos studijų programos tapatumą, siekiant geriau suderinti numatomus studijų rezultatus ir programos turinį.
2. Lyginant programos tikslus su kompetencijomis, pastebima, kad tam tikri tiksluose minimi aspektai neatsispindi kompetencijų aprašyme. Reikėtų detalizuoti kompetencijas, kad jos atitiktų socialinių dalininkų poreikius.
3. Imtis priemonių ir leisti studentams rinktis pasirenkamuosius dalykus, nepaisant studentų skaičiaus.
4. Imtis priemonių studentui skaičiui didinti.
5. Palyginti visus bakalauro ir magistrantūros studijų programų dalykus ir stengtis išvengti pasikartojančių temų ar dalykų. Konkrečiai, peržiūrėti tokius dalykus kaip Poindustrinė ir

informacijos visuomenė, Šiuolaikinės sociologijos teorijų kryptys, Socialinių mokslų metodologija, Kultūros sociologijos tyrimų kryptys, Šiuolaikinės sociologijos kryptys, Lyčių sociologija, Sveikatos sociologija.

6. Apsvarstyti, kokia būtų tinkama Socialinės antropologijos dalykų dalis programoje, ir į programą įtraukti daugiau kitų specialių sociologijos krypties dalykų.
7. Apsvarstyti dalykų suskirstymą į studijų pagrindų ir pasirenkamuosius dalykus.
8. Įtraukti daugiau dalykų apie statistikos metodus.
9. Į nemetodologinių dalykų turinį įtraukti daugiau kritiškų metodų ir metodologinių diskusijų, kurios būtinos Taikomosios sociologijos programai.
10. Šiuolaikiškai atnaujinti Kokybinių tyrimų metodų ir Kiekybinių tyrimų metodų dalykų turinį.
11. Toliau vystyti universiteto intraneto (pvz., MOODLE) sistemą.
12. Toliau tobulinti studentų užsienio kalbos įgūdžius, ypač jų gebėjimą bendrauti ir rašyti akademinius tekstus anglų kalba.
13. Skatinti studentus dalyvauti tarptautinių mainų programose ir imtis priemonių suintensyvinti studentų dalyvavimą konferencijose ir rengiant publikacijas.
14. Reikia įvesti aiškias taisykles, siekiant reglamentuoti ir užtikrinti studentų teises jiems dalyvaujant dėstytojų vykdomuose tyrimų projektuose ir ypač rengiant bendras mokslines publikacijas.
15. Aktyviau įtraukti socialinius dalininkus į programos vertinimo ir keitimo procesą.
16. Imtis priemonių, siekiant atskiras akademines disciplinas dėstantiems ar jų tyrimus vykdančioms dėstytojams užtikrinti atitinkamą studijų dalykų tapatumą.

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