SKVC

STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus pedagoginio universiteto

PROGRAMOS *FILOSOFIJA* (612V50005, ankstesnis – 61201H101)

VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT

OF *PHILOSOPHY* (612V50005, previous – 61201H101)

STUDY PROGRAMME

at Vilnius Pedagogical University

Grupės vadovas: Team Leader:	Prof. dr. Krister Segerberg
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. dr. Olli Loukola Prof. dr. Tomas Kačerauskas Prof. dr. Anna Estany Dr. Michael Brady Mindaugas Grajauskas

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

Vilnius
2011

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	*Filosofija*
Valstybinis kodas	612V50005 (ankstesnis - 61201H101)
Studijų sritis	Humanitariniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Filosofija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinės ir ištęstinės
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais[1]	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Filosofijos bakalauras, mokytojo profesinė kvalifikacija
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	

[1] – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	*Philosophy*
State code	612V50005 (previous - 61201H101)
Study area	Humanities
Study field	Philosophy
Kind of the study programme	University
Level of studies	First cycle
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time and part-time
Scope of the study programme	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of philosophy, teacher Professional qualification
Date of registration of the study programme	

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

The programme being evaluated is the Bachelors in Philosophy at Vilnius Pedagogical University. The aim of the programme is to educate students in Philosophy at the Bachelors level and to train them for a professional qualification in teaching. The programme of Philosophy is taught by the Department of Philosophy in co-operation with the Departments of Sociology and Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Educational Science, Foreign Languages, and others.

The expert panel met administrators of the Faculty, the authors of the self-assessment report, academic staff, students, and employers. The panel asked questions and received feedback from all of the groups. The self-assessment report provided a suitable basis for the evaluation. The panel members were shown the teaching rooms, computer facilities, and library. The panel would like to thank all involved at VPU for their hospitality and consideration.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The main aim of the programme is to prepare philosophy students to teach the subject in high schools and gymnasiums. This training will also provide students with a suitable understanding of philosophy at the Bachelors level. The panel found that the aims and the intended learning outcomes are clearly stated and well-focused. The programme has a well-thought-out rationale, and meets the needs of both students who wish to study philosophy at Bachelors level, and the needs of the wider educational and social community.

The aims and learning outcomes are based upon both academic requirements and – in particular – on the public need of providing suitably trained expert teachers in philosophy. The aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered. The name of the programme, its learning outcomes and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

Main strengths and weaknesses
+ Very good rationale for programme, and aims and learning outcomes clear and well-defined.
- There were doubts, however, to what extent the students and teachers were aware of the various developments in the fields of philosophical pedagogics and didactics

2. Curriculum design

The panel thought that the curriculum was well designed, and that the ratio of philosophical subjects and subjects related to professional competence is just right.

Main strengths and weaknesses
+ The curriculum is well designed.
+ The ratio of philosophical subjects and subjects related to professional competence is just right.

3. Staff

The study programme is provided by staff meeting legal requirements, and the qualifications of the teaching staff are more than adequate to ensure learning outcomes. Members of staff are

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research active, and many members of staff have considerable experience and expertise in teaching, and in writing and publishing course texts, teaching aids, which are widely used in high schools and gymnasiums. This close relation between research interests/publications and the training of teachers is one of the strengths of the programme. The close link was also reflected in the very good range of teaching materials displayed in the Department, and in very positive feedback from the employers. Here it was clear from input from staff and students that VPU was very important in the development of the national curriculum, and in determining the quality of this. Employers were very positive about the textbooks produced by staff in the department, especially because these were written by people aware of the environment in which they would be used. Indeed, students, employers and graduates are all very satisfied with the quality of teaching in the department, and the value of the training that the potential teachers are getting. The panel did think, however, that more encouragement should be given to staff to adopt new teaching methods and technologies.

The number of teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes, although the panel got the impression that staff are close to being overloaded with work, and that this situation is not sustainable in the long-term. This workload will, if it persists, have a negative effect on the quality of teaching and research. On a related issue, turnover of staff is high, although the Department and administrators are aware of this. At present the high turnover does not seem to have a negative impact upon the adequacy of the teaching, but in the long-run this might create problems. We are confident that the Department and administration are mindful of the potential difficulty.

The University ensures some provision for the professional development of teaching staff. There is a welcome policy of decreased teaching load for research active staff; younger scholars are encouraged to travel and present their research at international conferences; and the University provides some money for this, and financial support for publishing textbooks and other learning resources. However, the panel did think that there might be more in the way of formal structures for professional development, such as sabbatical leave schemes, mentoring systems, and the like. Perhaps the Department and University as a whole might like to think about how best to implement this.

Finally, the panel thought that it would have been good to have more feedback from teaching staff during the visit; perhaps more people could have been encouraged to attend and participate.

> ***Main strengths and weaknesses***
> + Staff are research active, and have considerable experience in teaching.
> + Staff have considerable expertise in publishing teaching materials.
> + Staff have very good reputation with students, graduates and employers.
> - Staff turnover is high.
> - University does not provide enough formal structures for staff development.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies seem to be suitable and adequate for their purposes. The students seem satisfied with the spaces and arrangements on offer. There is sufficient number of lecture rooms and seminar rooms for various kinds of audiences, they are mostly well located, and their quality enables efficient and productive teaching and learning. The facilities are provided with appropriate teaching and presentation equipment, and the computer equipment available is sufficient for all the present teaching purposes. The library is impressive and has spaces reserved for various kinds of literary activities. Its collections seem to be of good European standard, and

the students and staff are provided access to all the central electronic databases and philosophical publications.

The program has the advantage that great many of the textbooks used in Lithuanian schools are prepared by the teachers of VPU. The apparent periodic shortage of textbooks, as expressed by students, might be solved through electronic subscriptions. Given the general circumstances, the program is providing the facilities and resources as well as can be expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

+ The premises, facilities and equipment are suitable and sufficient for the purposes of the program

+ The library collections and electronic databases are adequate, and the library spaces are functional.

+ Many of the textbooks used in Lithuanian schools are prepared by the teachers of VPU, thus offering a unique viewpoint for the studying in VPU.

5. Study process and student assessment

There was very good feedback from employers, graduates and students about the high quality of teaching, and of the student experience in general, at VPU. There was a good representation of students at the meeting, and feedback was very positive. In particular, communication with staff, and flexibility in the study process, were both held to be very good. Students would like more language training, especially in Greek and Latin, and also would like to start practical training earlier. The panel would like the Department to think about both when reviewing the curriculum and study process.

An important point of improvement concerns the student mobility and exchange. The department has only a small number of international exchange universities, and the existing contracts could be utilized more efficiently. The number of exchange visits to both directions could be increased (at the moment it has been approx. one student per year).

After delivering the preliminary report, the panel received a response from VPU, which concentrated in particular on items listed here. On the basis of that response, we are encouraged that the department has changed the programme so that practical training begins earlier, and that they will in future enhance international exchange.

Main strengths and weaknesses

+ The program has a great asset in the support of its employers, graduates and students.

+ Communication between students and teachers seems to be working and efficient.

- Students would like practical training to start earlier; also more language training is requested.

- Improvements are needed within international mobility and exchange.

6. Programme management

The panel thought that this was good. The panel did note that the programme changes quite frequently. But the staff are aware of potential problems here, so we did not regard this as a major worry. The panel did think that students and stakeholders should perhaps be more involved in the process of reviewing and improving the programme.

Main strengths and weaknesses

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+ Monitoring of the implementation of the programme is clearly allocated.

+ Data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analyzed.

+ Very good links with employers.

- The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are not used enough for the improvement of the programme.

- The changes of the programme are not enough motivated.

- The evaluation and improvement process does not involve enough the students and stakeholders.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) The panel thought that there should be more student involvement at all levels of the programme, but especially in the goal-setting and planning stages. Student feedback should be utilized more efficiently in the development of the program.

(2) The Department should think about how to set up more formal structures for staff, which deal with mentoring, sabbatical research schemes, applying for research income, and so forth.

(3) The Department are encouraged to be more aware of, and open to the use of, new teaching methods and technologies. In the discussions, the teachers did not specify such methods or technologies to be in use in VPU, nor were the students able to mention any philosophical pedagogists, when asked. Even though a number of didactic methods are enumerated in the SE-report, apparently the students and teachers are not very well acquainted with them. As a teacher training programme, special focus and concentration on pedagogical and didactive methods at all working levels of the programme is desirable.

(4) The Department should think of ways in which to improve international activities, especially in exchange and mobility, as part of the programme itself but also as a prerequisite for the professional skills of the staff and the teachers.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Philosophy* (state code – 612V50005 (previous code – 61201H101)) 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	4
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	4
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	**20**

*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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