



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus universiteto

**PROGRAMOS *FILOSOFIJA* (612V50001, ankstesnis –
61201H103)**

VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *PHILOSOPHY* (612V50001, previous – 61201H103)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Vilnius University**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Filosofija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612V50001
Studijų sritis	Humanitariniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Filosofija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinės (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais ¹	160 (240 ECTS)
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Filosofijos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1989 09 01

¹ – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Philosophy</i>
State code	612V50001
Study area	Humanities
Study field	Philosophy
Kind of the study programme	University
Level of studies	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full – time (4)
Scope of the study programme in national credits	160 (240 ECT)
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of philosophy
Date of registration of the study programme	01 September 1989

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I. INTRODUCTION

The programme being evaluated is the Bachelors in Philosophy at Vilnius University. The aim of the programme is to educate students in Philosophy at the Bachelors level. The programme of Philosophy is taught by the Department of Philosophy and the Department of History of Philosophy and Logic which are in the Faculty of Philosophy, and it involves the integration of courses from other programmes – such as sociology and psychology.

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 VU for their hospitality and consideration.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims and learning outcomes are clear and publicly accessible. The panel did think that the aim of informing students of the classical heritage and of contemporary philosophical problems was well-defined, and perhaps should be more prominent. This is because the first aim struck some members of the panel as being excessively general: that is, the goal of enabling students to adequately ‘analyze and assess the fundamental trends of the cultural, scientific, informational and social development of modern globalized world’ is rather too broad and too general, and in any case overly optimistic if it implies that students are supposed to address *all* fundamental trends, etc. The panel thought that the intended learning outcomes were very good.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market; the aims and learning outcomes are also consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered. Finally, the panel thought that the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + The aim to inform students of the classical heritage and contemporary problems is very good.
- One of the aims is overly general and broad.

2. Curriculum design

The panel thought that the range and number of optional and minor studies available to the students was very good. The main worry the panel had regarding the curriculum was the fact that it was heavily focused on the history of philosophy; as a result, the panel thought there was something of an imbalance between the historical perspective and more contemporary philosophical subjects. The panel felt that the Department might wish to think some more about achieving a more balanced mix of courses. The panel also felt that philosophy of science should be a compulsory, rather than an optional, course, and that there should be more in the way of student practice.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + The range and number of optional and minor studies available to the students is very good.
- The curriculum is heavily focused on the history of philosophy.

3. Staff

The study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements, and the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes. There are a good number of established and respected teachers and researchers on the staff. The staff are very research active, and this is a major strength of the programme. This means that the teaching staff on the programme are involved in research that is directly related to the study programme. Nevertheless, student feedback suggested that this research strength was sometimes not translated into teaching strengths, and that the pedagogical skills of the some staff could be improved. For instance, students thought that there was too much focus on the texts, and that they were not encouraged to sometimes move away from this and explore the ideas and arguments for themselves. In general, the students thought the teaching rather too historical- and text-focussed. The panel thought that the Department and Faculty should address this issue and consider ways in which students can benefit more from the very good research being done by staff, and on allowing students more room to develop their own ideas. On this issue, although some of the staff seemed to be well-acquainted with teaching methods and technologies, student feedback suggested that others are not. Moreover, students also noted that there was sometimes a failure to provide, or ensure the provision of, all the teaching and research materials. Some students noted that some members of staff do not tell students have to access the relevant materials. The panel thought that the Department might do more here to ensure that any materials students need are made available, and that no text or paper is on a reading list if it is not. Similarly, some students thought that staff could be more accessible: for instance, staff sometimes do not give out their email addresses. This too is something that the Department could rectify. The number of teaching staff seems adequate to ensure learning outcomes.

The panel thought that the University did a good job in providing conditions for the professional development of staff. There were formal mechanisms for staff development in place, such as sabbatical schemes, teacher training schemes, and other forms of support. These were well-advertised and widely-available to staff free of charge. This is all very welcome.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + Staff are very research active.
- + Conditions for professional development are very good.
- The teaching is too focused on history and text, and not enough on the ideas and arguments themselves.
 - The pedagogical skills of some staff need to be improved.
 - There is not enough provision for the development of students' own ideas.
 - Teaching and learning materials should always be accessible for students.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies seem to be suitable and adequate for their purposes, although the prestigious environment, the old and historical buildings of University of Vilnius, does impose limitations on the use and availability of facilities. This is apparent especially in the lack of workspaces for the staff; on the other hand the problem is clearly acknowledged, improvements will be made, and the students and staff have well adapted to the situation. 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 collection, supervised by committed staff, is unique with its historical amenities, yet at the same time it presents good European standards, with the central electronic databases and philosophical publications on offer for the students and staff. Given these circumstances, the program is providing the facilities and resources as well as can be expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + The facilities, premises and equipment are suitable and sufficient for the purposes of the program
- + The library collections and electronic databases are adequate.
- + The programme operates in a unique historical surrounding, with all its pros and cons.

5. Study process and student assessment

The panel thought that the study process and student assessment were on the whole good. It was encouraging to see that students have lots of opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities related to their studies. However, the panel thought that the students are not at present sufficiently involved in determining and planning the goals and content of the programme. This is reflected in the fact that students are not being fully introduced to the study programme's aims and intended learning outcomes. In addition, students would like the teaching to be less text-focused, and would like to have more training in the development of academic writing skills.

An important point of improvement concerns the student mobility and exchange. With a university of this size and reputation, the outgoing number of students is small; and there is no data of any incoming students. Further attention should also be paid to the quality and relevance of the existing exchange universities. This problem, which was already noted in the 2001 evaluation report, is recognized in the SE-report to still persist.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + The study process and student assessment on the whole is good.
- + The students have opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities related to their studies.
 - The students should be more involved in determining and planning the goals and content of the programme, and be better informed of its aims and learning outcomes.
 - More training should be provided on academic writing skills.
 - Improvements are needed within international cooperation, especially in mobility and exchange.

6. Programme management

The panel thought that the programme management was on the whole good. There was regular and straightforward communication between staff and administration, which is praiseworthy. Having said this, the panel thought that there might be more formal mechanisms for feedback from students to the administrators. Furthermore, even though the administration recognises that international cooperation needs to be improved, specific plans have yet to be put in place to remedy this. So the panel would like the Department and Administration to continue to think of ways in which this might be done.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- + Monitoring the implementation of the programme is clearly allocated.
- + Data on the implementation of the programme is regularly collected and analyzed.

- The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are not used enough for the improvement of the programme.
- The evaluation and improvement process does not involve enough the students and stakeholders.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The Department and Administration 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 development of professional skills of the staff and teachers.
- (2) The Department should think of how to have more student involvement at all levels of the programme, but especially in setting of the goals and the planning of the programme. The students at VU seem very active and conscientious, and their input could be utilized more efficiently at Departmental level.
- (3) The Department should think of how the curriculum might be more balanced between the history of philosophy, and contemporary philosophical subjects and topics.
- (4) The Department might want to think about how student practice could be expanded.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Philosophy* (state code – 612V50001, (previous code – 61201H103)) 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	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:	19

*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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