VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO

ŽURNALISTIKOS PROGRAMOS (62409S106) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT
OF JOURNALISM (62409S106)
STUDY PROGRAMME
AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

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Studijų programos pavadinimas	***Žurnalistika***
Valstybinis kodas	62409S106 (naujas kodas - 612P50001)
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Žurnalistika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4), ištęstinė (5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais[1]	160
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Žurnalistikos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997-09-01, atnaujinta 2007-09-01

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

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INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	***Journalism***
State code	62409S106 (new code - 612P50001)
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Journalism
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Level of studies	Bachelor
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (4 years), Part-time (5 years)
Scope of the study programme in national credits	160
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Journalism
Date of registration of the study programme	1997-09-01, renewed 2007-09-01

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

Our Experts Team (ET) was appointed by The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to conduct an Evaluation of the study programme International Communication.

In conducting our evaluation of the Study programme, the Experts Team has applied the methodological guidelines developed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The following analysis is based on the self-evaluation report from the bachelor programme in journalism (Code: 62409S106), plus site visits and interviews with relevant stakeholders conducted in Vilnius on the campus of Vilnius University during the week of 28 November-3 December 2010.

Prior to the site visit by the team, staff from the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education provided team members with electronic copies of the self-evaluation reports. In accordance with the suggestions made by CQAHE staff, at least two team members reviewed and commented upon the programme's SAR. In the case of this programme, as well as that of the other four communications faculty programmes the team evaluated during the same site visit, the two initial readers were selected based upon their especial professional expertise. The comments from these two initial readers were combined by the team leader into a combined preliminary report, which was circulated electronically to all members of the team. The preliminary report contained initial tentative assessments of the various aspects of programme quality, consistent with the methodological guidelines of evaluation, which were also distributed electronically to the team prior to the visit. The preliminary report also contained questions raised by the reading of the SAR and provided a valuable guideline for questions and queries for the entire team to put to the SAR preparation team and other stakeholders during the visit.

Team members found the schedule of meetings to be valuable and as efficiently scheduled as possible, to make maximum use of the limited time the team had to conduct is work. University administrators, teaching staff, students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders were invariably gracious and helpful in answering questions from team members. It is noteworthy that an excellent simultaneous translator was provided for those interviewees who were more comfortable communicating in Lithuanian.

In the case of this programme, and of the other programmes the team evaluated during the same site visit, it must be said that the ET had to cope with some serious problems. First, the programmes overall appear to be in a state of flux, with significant changes in place since the SARs were completed, rendering the information in the SARs much less reliable and thus less useful than would have been the case otherwise. Second, the SARs did not address all criteria in the protocol, leaving team members with too little information as a base from which to begin. A related third problem was that the protocol asks for massive amounts of data, which tends to overwhelm, rather than enhance, genuine programme evaluation. And fourth the team was asked to evaluate five programmes in only four days. Many of the meetings are largely set pieces involving half a dozen or more respondents, plus five team members. Very little truly substantive information can be gleaned in an hour. Overall, the committee of experts had to rely on their judgment to give priority to some criteria at the expense of others. The majority of the team has participated in other, similar evaluations in other countries. CQAHE and university personnel were certainly cooperative, but the task was simply too large for the team to be as confident as it would like to be in some details of the assessment. That said, the ET is wholly convinced that the overall conclusions as to recommendation for re-accreditation are honest, accurate and fair to all concerned.

At the end of the first day of the site visit, the team asked university staff for considerable additional statistical information concerning student-staff ratios, student graduation and dropout rates and so on for this and for the other programmes. The team would especially like to thank and commend Vice Dean Doc. Dr. Renata Matkeviciene for gathering and producing highly useful tabular data on less than 72 hours' notice.

Due to time constraints and language issues, the team did not attend any classes, but team members were given wide-ranging access to the university, its operations and its facilities.

In conducting their evaluation of the study programme, the ET has applied the methodological guidelines developed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to implement provisions of the Order No. ISAK-1652 of 24 July 2009 of the Minister of Education and Science "On the approval of the description of the procedure for the external assessment and accreditation of study programmes" (Official Gazette, 2009, No. 96-4083), following the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania (Official Gazette, 2009, No. 54-2140).

The team would like to thank the staff of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education in Lithuania and, in particular, to the Deputy Director of the Centre, to the Head of the Division for Studies Assessment, and to Evaluation Coordinator Rasa Penkauskienė for the support given before and throughout the visit to Lithuania.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Faculty of Communication for the manner in which we were made welcome and for the manner in which our queries and our exploration of various key issues were addressed in a professional and positive way.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. *Programme aims and learning outcomes*

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

This is not the only journalism programme in Lithuania. Related programmes are provided by Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (a master programme) and Klaipėda University (bachelors of communication and information).

At Vilnius University, potential students partake in a creative competition to ensure the quality of students. Over the last 15 years, the admission quotas to bachelor studies have increased from 35 to 45, responding to the interest in journalism studies at Vilnius University.

The ET is positive about programme need.

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives

The study programme has been designed in compliance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette Valstybės žinios No. 27-715, 2000; No. 16-496, 2001; No. 3-75, No. 71-2968, 2002), the Study Regulations of Vilnius University (12.06.2003), the Regulations of Undergraduate, Special Vocational and Integrated Study Programmes (Order No. ISAK-1551 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania as of 22 July 2005).

The current programme, which was reorganized in 2007, fully complies with the new Law on Higher Education and Research (2009) and the higher education priorities emphasized therein. It complies with and supplements the new Strategic Development Plan of VU Faculty of Communication implemented since 2009, which provides for educating highly qualified, competitive specialists, and ensuring close contacts with the employers' market in Lithuania and, according to the possibilities, in the EU.

The ET is satisfied with the programme's conformity to directives.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

The aim of the undergraduate study programme of journalism is to educate highly qualified communication specialists – journalists/reporters/correspondents, able to creatively and

responsibly work in democratic mass media. The ET evaluates this aim as highly relevant to society.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

A bachelor of journalism is to acquire a basic university education that forms values and a critical attitude to the social development trends, problems and their solutions, and develops the civil spirit and tolerance.

The complexity of implementing learning outcomes and developing competences is determined by the changing mass media system. Programme drafters understand that multimedia and higher requirements for a journalist not only to be aware of the information technologies and the synthesis of genres, but also to creatively apply the "classical" journalism theory in the context of rapid changes are a great challenge for a first-cycle (bachelor) student.

First, bachelor students should be able to select the information of interest to the audience. Therefore, they need not only specialized knowledge of media, but also a general background in politics, culture, and economics. Second, they should develop competences to critically evaluate event related sources. Therefore, they should acquire the basic knowledge that enables them make use of the philosophical, financial and other social "shelves". In addition, they should be able to choose proper experts and suitable information sources.

The ET is positive about the leaning outcomes.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are both general and specific. The ET are positive about the aims and the learning outcomes of the program, but would have liked the report to present a table that systematically connects the learning outcomes to the programme aims. Based on the SAR and our discussions with the teachers during the site visit, however, the ET has no indication that the learning outcomes are inconsistent.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

The current programme was reorganized in 2007. It complies with and supplements the new Strategic Development Plan of VU Faculty of Communication implemented since 2009, which provides for educating highly qualified, competitive specialists, and ensuring close contacts with the employers' market in Lithuania and, according to the possibilities, in the EU.

The disciplines of word, video and audio journalism have been more closely integrated. The special part of the programme has been structured in three modules: "Press journalism (writing module)", "Video journalism (television and Internet module)", and "Spoken journalism (radio module)". The SAR shows high awareness of changing circumstances (e.g. emigration) and the international developments in journalism. The ET is positive about the transformation of outcomes over the years.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The volume of the study programme is 160 credits (6400 hours); 20 credits per semester. This is the average number of credits available under current law. From 2010, this will be the maximum possible number of credits - up to 160 credits. This may lead to review the scope of the program.

The subjects of three units of extramural studies cover 10 semesters. Part-time studies (launched on 1 September 2009) – at the student's choice – cover up to 12 semesters (admission to extramural studies was discontinued in 2009).

The programme structure covers three types of subjects: general subjects – 42 credits (26.3 per cent), core subjects – 63 credits (39.4 per cent), special subjects, including a course paper and the final thesis – 55 credits (34.4 per cent). The full-time study programme covers 8 semesters.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

The programme is composed of obligatory subjects – 109 credits (68.1 per cent), elective subjects – 27 credits (16.9 per cent), freely elected subjects – 10 credits (6.3 per cent), a course paper and the final bachelor thesis – 14 credits (8.8 per cent). The ET notes many subjects that have a limited number of credits. It may be efficient to cluster some subjects.

During the professional internship, students develop the competences of creatively applying theoretical knowledge in practice. In order to consistently acquaint with the mass media system, the professional internship covers two areas: the periodical press and audiovisual journalism. After the first study year, students do a compulsory internship in the periodical press editorial offices of Lithuanian regions. This internship not only provides the opportunity to apply knowledge in practice, but also reveals the features of regional mass media. Students can take a closer look at the economic and social issues of the Lithuanian periphery. After the second study year, students do an internship, where they acquire practical skills of audiovisual mass media. Students can choose between a television, radio or Internet medium. During the interviews, some employers said that the internships (typically one month) are too short. They would prefer 3 months. The ET notes that any measure to prolong internships would need careful consideration because it would have many consequences for the rest of the programme.

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

The content of the studies is in accordance with legislative requirements. The study programme has been designed in compliance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette Valstybės žinios No. 27-715, 2000; No. 16-496, 2001; No. 3-75, No. 71-2968, 2002), the Study Regulations of Vilnius University (12.06.2003), the Regulations of Undergraduate, Special Vocational and Integrated Study Programmes (Order No. ISAK-1551 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania as of 22 July 2005).

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

The study programme of journalism is oriented to the three essential moments – practical skills, general university knowledge and journalist values. This is reflected in the learning outcomes.

The special subjects of the study programme aim to educate a universal journalist, who is able to work in different mass media. They aim to develop a systematic approach to mass media and journalism, evaluate the methods and forms of journalism, understand the causes of problems in society and their potential solutions, encourage to creatively and critically applying knowledge in journalistic work. These subjects constitute about 34.4 per cent of the programme volume.

During the interviews, students expressed satisfaction with both the theoretical and the practical components of the programme. However, some students would like to go deeper in a specific branch of journalism, such as political or economic journalism, than is possible under the current curricular structure. Moreover, the team believe that the administration should undertake a thorough review of the curriculum – starting with an assessment of best-practice journalism education internationally as well as in the Baltic region and design a curriculum that coherently expresses concrete achievable and measureable goals. Since 2007, the Institute has worked with industry in Lithuania and with other higher education institutions in the region, but the process is not complete.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition
The bachelor study programme of journalism engages teachers of the Institute of Journalism of the Faculty of Communication, other teachers from the Faculty of Communication, the Faculty of Economy, the Faculty of Philology, the Faculty of Philosophy, the Faculty of Law and journalist practitioners.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers
Seventy percent of the staff was renewed within the last 2 years. The main problem while selecting staff employees with practical experience was concerned with financial possibilities, which is disadvantageous for a profession-oriented programme such as journalism.

The ET acknowledges the problem of acquiring and keeping teachers with professional experience, particularly given the low salaries available, although all full-time instructors meet legislative requirements for higher education competencies.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme
Five teachers of the teaching staff of the Institute of Journalism have academic degrees; three of them have a pedagogical degree. The majority of the employees are mass media experts with significant experience in professional journalism.

During the meeting with the teachers it was pointed out that many of them have a very heavy workload. In particular, some teachers said their workload is extremely heavy. The annual work load of teachers in the academic years 2003–2008 was as follows: professors taught 9 percent of lectures, whereas associate professors taught about 34 percent of lectures and 22 percent of contact work. The remaining lectures and contact hours were provided by other mass media experts.

The analysis of questionnaires assessing the quality of each subject of the study programme of the Institute of Journalism has shown that students properly attending lecturers tend to give higher evaluations of teachers' work. Students also appreciate teachers' achievements in putting objective marks.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development
Teachers noted that they particularly lack time for research. This is the weakest part of their activities. There were also complaints about the lack of opportunity for internship opportunities. Particularly given the low salaries available to teaching staff, it is crucially important that the dedication and commitment of instructors be rewarded, enhanced and nourished in every way possible.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies
The bachelor study programme of journalism is implemented in the historical buildings of Vilnius University, which have 8 classrooms (about 180 places), out of which two studios (radio and television; there are also two computers with video editing programme are available), and 1 computer class (15 places). All classrooms have Internet connection. One classroom is equipped with a DVD player and a TV set. All the premises of the Institute are equipped with wireless Internet connection.

However, it is clear that the old building has its own disadvantages - particularly a small specialized library and reading room. Radio and television studios are minimal and insufficient by contemporary international standards. The administration said it has a substantial renovation project scheduled for the next two years.

These premises are primarily used by students of the bachelor and master study programmes of journalism (NL, N, I). Practitioners of radio and television subjects also provide students with possibilities of working in studios of the public broadcaster – the Lithuanian National Radio and Television, which is a social partner of the bachelor study programme.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

The costs of the implementation of the study programme (equipment, upgrading of literature funds, and repairs of premises) are covered from the budget of the Faculty of Communication annually planned and approved by the Council of the Faculty of Communication.

Teachers of the Institute of Journalism have equipped and computerized work places as well as a copy equipment. They may use the equipment for the preparation of large volume tasks equipped in the Digital Laboratory in the Faculty of Communication.

Computer software and hardware for student use is seriously outdated. Both should be updated before the next accreditation.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

There is an urgent need for new facilities for the practical work of a journalist. There are only a few outdated television cameras, voice recorders and cameras. ET was told that one of the social partners, the television company, is to donate additional equipment, such as television cameras, literature and so on. This is badly needed.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

Students may also use the services of the electronic library. In 2007, the reading room was transformed into the Information centre of Journalism Studies, which was integrated and became a structural part of the scientific library of Vilnius University. It is very convenient for students to use the funds of the VU scientific library as well as other libraries in the Old Town, which are situated near the VU library. They also may use the services of Saulėtekis Information Centre. It is convenient because the SIC is open on weekends and has an 80-place reading room as well as free and unlimited access to the Internet.

Students and teachers constantly receive information about newly received literature. The library of the Institute of Journalism (the Information centre of Journalism Studies) offers an interactive dialogue – questions and answers via e-mail.

However, the fact that students find literature and books in different buildings is inconvenient for students. Moreover, the Institute's own library has only a few or only one copy of important books. Much of the collection is badly dated.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

The meetings with students and teachers satisfied the ET that student receive ensured that students of teachers not only receive the subject program, but also a list of references, which is constantly updated. ET is satisfied this requirement is met.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The admission to extramural studies is organized in two stages (Prior admission, admission in May and general admission). The admission to journalism studies is related to the public evaluation of the profession of a journalist, also changes in the labor market and economic processes in mass media.

The competitive score during the admission to the bachelor study programme of journalism of the Faculty of Communication comprises assessments for the creative competition (written part and an interview, the weighted coefficient of which is 50), a Lithuanian language test (weighted coefficient is 20), a history examination (weighted coefficient is 14), and the final school marks for the foreign language (weighted coefficient is 7), Lithuanian language (weighted coefficient – 4), history (weighted coefficient – 3), an information technologies (weighted coefficient – 2).

This is a complex formula for admission – quite likely unnecessarily so – but is transparent and meets requirements.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

For the bachelor study programme of journalism at Vilnius University, in 2007 4 students applied to one place as first priority. The first to sixth priority and any priority were chosen respectively by 6 and 7,5 students. There was no extra admission organized, because all the places were filled during the general admission.

ET saw no evidence of active recruiting or of legitimate orientation programmes once students arrive. Students did not complain and, indeed, maintained that they believed their social, non-academic needs were adequately met.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

The study process is formed in order to combine academic and practical aims. Students receive the knowledge necessary for university education as well practical skills for the actual work. The study programme fundamentally reflects the aim of the programme and helps achieve the objectives specified in the programme.

The study programme provides a wide range of subjects for students to choose. After the reorganization of the programme students take six compulsory subjects and one elective in the third semester.

The study programme provides the possibilities of evaluating the system of Lithuanian mass media at the regional and national level as well as the possibility of evaluating it in the context of the studies of the mass media of the European Union.

All journalism curricula everywhere are forever in a state of flux, but this one is less coherent than most. The difficulties are many, to be sure, and ET are impressed with the efforts being made, but a thorough examination of the course offerings would almost certainly produce a more coherent and useful programme.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

Not all students, who entered the full-time bachelor study programme of journalism, manage to graduate from the programme. However, the number of journalism students leaving the programme is not high. In 2004 and 2005 only two students did not graduate with the main flow, because they postponed their final thesis paper for one year due to personal reasons.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Since 1992, mass media researchers of the Institute of Journalism of Vilnius University have developed close relations with partners from the Nordic and the Baltic States, but this cooperation has been insufficient over the last years. Within the framework programme Nordplus of the Baltic and the Nordic States, the Institute of Journalism has been cooperating with partners of journalism schools: representatives of the Institute participate in teachers' consultation

meetings and students' summer camps. Within the last three years, 10 journalism students and one teacher participated in the Erasmus exchange programme. The international cooperation provides students with the possibility of studying in acknowledged progressive schools of higher education in Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Finland and Germany.

Since 2006, the cooperation with regional mass media has been enhanced (the Association of National Regional and urban Newspaper Publishers is a member of the Committee of the Bachelor Study Programme); editorial offices of Lithuanian regions provide favorable conditions for students to undergo professional internship.

Some of the students and teachers told the team that students were allowed and even encouraged to have foreign internships, there was little structural support from the university in finding such internships.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

Having taken into consideration the shortage of original Lithuanian literature on the subject, some teachers pay more attention to a more comprehensive presentation of the material during lectures for students to better perceive the knowledge while reading literature in a foreign language.

The website of the Faculty of Communication (www.kf.vu.lt) provides information on time tables, forms of documents necessary for students, subject themes, appellation procedure, teachers' contact information as well as announces various competitions and other information important for students. In addition, the above website also provides links to Internet websites relevant important for the studies of journalism.

Every academic year, students are informed about the possibilities of studying abroad.

Each teacher provides students with at least 2 hours of individual consultations per week.

First of all, all persons willing to enter the study programme of journalism are familiarized with career possibilities of a journalist during the day of open doors organized in the Faculty.

The Faculty organizes the annual journalism festival "LeŽudi" (May 7), the christening of first year students and an annual advent get-together. All of these are valuable contributors to student support. The team finds this category satisfactory.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

Social support for students is organized at the level of the University. The university provides dormitories, and scholarships. The students said in the interviews that they are satisfied with the social support offered by the university.

The ET concludes from the SAR and the site visit meetings with the students and graduates that the social support is good.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

At the beginning of the semester, students receive clear information about the evaluation criteria. Students find the evaluation fair. The team agrees that this criterion has been met satisfactorily.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

Every year at the end of the semester students completed questionnaires assessing teacher who taught the subject. Some students and teachers note that the formal evaluation is not always effective. Teachers who provide informal interaction on all issues and problems have a clearer picture. The team believes this sub-category has been achieved satisfactorily.

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

Bachelor work consists of two parts: one part - the practical work, the other - theoretical work. This structure makes it possible to assess both the student's practical training and their theoretical knowledge.

The ET concludes that student achievement assessment is satisfactory.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

Some students work in the media to gain practical knowledge and develop practical skills in journalism. Flexible teachers try to work with the students when the work does not preclude the practical learning process. The team concludes that this sub-category is satisfactory, but urge that when a curriculum overhaul is undertaken, this point be examined closely.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

Many students find jobs in mass media before the date of the defense of their theses. Teachers act as mediators in the process of placement of graduates. This is valuable, and the ET approve, but there is little evidence this is done on a systematic way. When the curriculum is overhauled, this and other points of connection with the industry should be addressed comprehensively.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

The programme is implemented by the Institute of Journalism of the Faculty of Communication and the Committee of the Bachelor Study Programme of Journalism in compliance with the procedure established by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania and the Procedure of Administration of VU Studies.

The Committee is comprised from social partners, who constantly provide information on the ways to improve the study process. The programme is formally administered by Faculty employees and the Study Affairs Division of the Faculty of Communication (Vice Dean for Study Affairs of the Faculty of Communication, Coordinator of the Study Affairs Division of the Faculty of Communication, coordinator of the study time table). Coursework needs to be re-aligned to fit coherent, consistent goals, and flexibility of course offerings has to be standardized so students who work outside of their studies can count on being able to get complete their studies in a timely fashion.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

The quality of studies is a domain of a specific study programme committee. The sittings of this committee take place on a regular basis. This is adequate to meet requirements

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

The committees analyze annual student surveys, discuss them with student representatives, i.e. representatives of the Association of Journalism Students, and take decisions regarding the improvement of programmes. The staff of the Institute is familiarized with the results of these surveys and the ways of solving problems. After the staff expresses its opinion on the matter, questions relevant for employers are formulated.

Every year, the Head of the Committee of the Study Programmes meets with teachers from other faculties who teach in the programme of journalism to discuss any problems regarding the quality, content, methods of the teaching process. These meetings are useful while integrating teachers into the programme of journalism studies and focusing them on the aim of the study programme of journalism.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation.

The social partners and employers' representatives are included in the enrollment committees. Employers say that they are satisfied with the students. However, some wish that students would be trained to be universal workers, who can use the various technologies. At the same time, employers emphasize the importance of specialists in a particular area. The administration does have many ties with the industry, which is commendable. These contacts with industry should be formalized and regularized in order to maximize the value to the programme of the insights and expertise that the profession provides.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The evaluation team recommends that the programme create a Board of Visitors to serve as external advisors to the programme. The board would be made up of professionals in the field who would, on perhaps an annual basis, come to the campus and offer advice on curricular and other academic matters, helping the program to better relations with an important source of information about changing needs in the professional environment in which program alumnae will seek employment. Further, such a board would be a ready supply of one-off guest lecturers to augment those already invited to give classroom instruction. Such lectures are almost always very attractive to students and provide an important link to the professional communications world outside the campus. Several of the employers the team spoke to expressed willingness – eagerness, even – to join such a board. Employers the team interviewed also expressed a willingness to provide internships to students in the program.

3.2 Based upon interviews with employers hosting interns, the team recommend expoloring ways to extend the internships from four weeks to at least six, while taking due care to implications for the rest of the programme. Employers were consistent in saying that the four-week internship structure is highly inefficient in that student intern acclimation period consumed too large a proportion of the internship. ET believe that longer internships would greatly increase the value of professional training core to the journalism programme's mission – even if that meant fewer of them could be scheduled. In team members' experience, very few university journalism programmes try to accomplish three internships during a standard-length undergraduate programme.

3.3 The team recommends that the programme administrators consider the introduction of more specialized courses to the curriculum – many students interviewed said they could benefit greatly from more coursework in, for example, business journalism, political journalism and sports journalism. Some said they felt disadvantaged against competitors for scarce jobs without having had access to such specialized courses. Several said the current structure is not adequate.

3.4 The team believes that serious attention needs to be paid to staff development beyond the existing sabbatical arrangement. Some classroom instructors volunteered in interviews that the current procedure, which allows for teaching staff to take a course in staff development, is no longer free, as it once was, which a serious impediment is when teacher pay scales are already perilously low. Administration point out that there are various programmes for

staff development. However, the team was told by members of teaching staff that teaching believe these could stand enhancement and improvement. There are resources free available online for university teaching staff development. The team believes that the university can improve the quality of classroom instruction by putting some attention – money would help, but is not utterly necessary – into this area.

3.5 The evaluation team recommend that that school's administration ensure that workloads for teaching staff be equitable and appear to be equitable. Particularly in an environment in which salaries for teaching staff are extremely low, it is vitally important for morale that teaching staff believe that the work and the rewards are shared equitably. Administration point out that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that the work is shared equitably, and the team do not dispute this. However, teaching staff told the visitors that there is at least the appearance of inequity. Administration need to address this perception.

3.6 The ET believes that a full curriculum analysis is due. The team suggests that programme administration start with core goals and objectives – who are the school's students, what do they know when they arrive, and what do they need to know and know how to do by the time they leave? There will probably be several profiles of incoming students and several career goals at the other end. Then, a curriculum should be designed from scratch, taking into account both international standards and local particulars, such as the widespread need for students to work while going to school. Only then should existing courses and instructors be applied to the matrix of needs. This method – dealing first with, "What do we want to teach" and then "What do we teach now?" and finally, "What do we need to bridge the gaps?" – is difficult, but yields much better pedagogy that continual tinkering with the existing course structure with no clear goals in mind. This observation does not mean to suggest that the administration do not currently seek to know a great deal about the incoming students – they do. This is a difficult task and one that consumes a great deal of administrative time and effort at the best communication programmes the world over. In a sense, this process is never finished.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Journalism* (state code – 61209S106 (new code - 612P50001)) 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	2
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	2
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	2
	Total:	**15**

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

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

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

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

Grupės vadovas: Team Leader:	Prof. Steven Knowlton	
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Dr. Baiba Holma	
	Prof. Peter Neijens	
	Prof. Hans Beentjes	
	Dainius Radzevičius	

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras