



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO
BOTANIKOS (621C20001)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *BOTANY (621C20001)*
STUDY PROGRAMME
AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Botanika
Valstybinis kodas	621C20001
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Botanika
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	Botanikos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	19-05-1997, Nr. 565

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	Botany
State code	621C20001
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Botany
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 degree in Botany
Date of registration of the study programme	19-05-1997, No. 565

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Vilnius University (VU) is the oldest established University in Lithuania and comprises a large number of academic and non-academic units. The Master Study Programme of Botany is a two-year second cycle programme in the Department of Botany and Genetics, of the Faculty of Natural Sciences (FNS) of the Vilnius University. The Department of Botany and Genetics itself was founded in 1972, and currently it has four research groups, three of which are oriented to Genetics, and one to Botany. This programme of Botany was created in 1995 and was officially registered in 1997. It was evaluated for the first time in 2005 and was accredited through an evaluation organised by the Centre of Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC). This programme is said to be a unique one in Lithuania and in the Baltic states and has been improved and developed since its establishment according to the rules set by the Senate Commission, and also by numerous proposals by the staff and social partners. The evaluation in 2005 produced several recommendations for future action and development.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) indicates that the programme of Botany was created in 1995 by the Department of Botany and Genetics, with the assistance of the Vilnius University Botanical Garden. However, it is not made clear if there was any labour market research involved prior to the establishment of the programme to identify any specific needs, quantitative or qualitative, for such a programme. Yet SER lists several general labour market related aims for the programme, like training specialists to perform scientific, creative, organizational or expert work as botanists, algologists, mycologists, or in the environmental field, or to continue for a PhD. Furthermore, careers as schoolteachers are mentioned, though a Master degree in Botany may not be enough without additional training.

SER appears rather extensive, and it covers relatively well the information needed for this evaluation, and it is in accordance with the Methodology for the evaluation of higher education study programmes.

The evaluation team of experts, assigned by SKVC, made the site visit on 10 October 2013 in the Department of Natural Sciences of VU. The team had earlier met the Dean and the Vice Dean on 9 October. The site visit to the programme of Botany on 10 October then included meetings with the group responsible of the Self-Assessment report, and with members of the teaching staff and students. Furthermore, both alumni representatives and several stakeholders were interviewed. The site visit included also a visit of the premises of the Department, the laboratories, classrooms and other facilities used by the programme. Also, the team was able to see and inspect students' course papers. The team was well received by the Botany programme representatives and by the administrative staff; the final visit schedule was organised by the

Botany programme itself with the good help from SKVC and its coordinator Ms. Dovilė Stonkutė.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

Graduate programmes in Botany and other Biology related areas usually aim at preparing students who hold a first degree, to obtain such competences and skills so that they can undertake professional positions in various agencies, either state-owned or private and also be able to engage in projects in all fields of biological, ecological and agricultural areas.

According to the SER, the aims of the programme are targeted towards preparing graduates who can undertake various professional positions in the fields of biology, horticulture, agriculture or silviculture. Botanists may also be employed in academic and research establishments dealing with environmental and agricultural issues.

The overall aims of the programme along with the stated Learning Outcomes (LO) fit the above aims and objectives. In addition to the basic knowledge of the different fields of Botany, the LOs also include development of cognitive abilities as well as practical skills, which is very appropriate. Naturally at the higher education (HE) level the studies should also produce transferable skills and abilities, as indicated also in SER, which naturally are linked to the skills of critical thinking, and such. At the same time the aims of the programme fit the purpose of providing research skills for those students who wish to continue on to the third cycle studies (PhD), for which several of the interviewed students stated as their aim. The aims and LOs of the Study Programme are well presented on the web of VU, and of the Department of Botany and Genetics.

Even though SER states that the programme is to prepare graduates for all fields of Botany, which is actually a very wide field, the curriculum presents certain limitations and it does not cover all major fields of Botanical science. Therefore, the indicated LOs and career prospects are not exactly balanced with the offered courses in the curriculum. This is of course also limited by the available teacher expertise.

In our competitive and internationalized environment HE graduates must have the knowledge and skills required to compete with peers not only in their own country but also internationally. The importance of practical training in Botany was strongly emphasized by both the students and stakeholders during the evaluation interviews, not only within the field of Botany itself, but also for other general skills like project management, communication, etc.

2. Curriculum design

The structure of the present Botany programme complies with the general norms set for graduate programmes in Lithuanian HE and is in accordance with the Bologna requirements, with 120 ECTS credits for the 4 semesters. The programme structure and contents are focused generally on the knowledge of a wide spectrum of botanical subjects, research and data analysis. The curriculum is composed of both compulsory and elective subjects. It also aims at preparing the graduate for research and communication skills thus preparing them also for the third degree (PhD) studies.

It is an apparent drawback in the teaching of Botany courses that they cover plants, fungi and algae to the exclusion, for instance, of important horticultural species (fruit trees, ornamentals, etc.). SER itself admits this weakness, for which the immediate reason is lack of instructors in these fields after the retirement of staff members who delivered them. It is also not made clear if the present programme offers to its graduates the competences required in order to compete with graduates of other programmes in related fields (Biology, Ecology, Agriculture).

However, and according to SER, the programme contents are being renewed frequently, following changes in the market situation, by external recommendations, etc. The flexibility of introducing new subjects in teaching is a positive element as such, but they also should be liaised with the overall scope of the programme, also taking care of the dynamics of the labour market.

The programme would benefit by providing the students with a greater number of elective courses, partly for the above reasons, but also in some new areas like plant biotechnology and applied botany. These topics are definitely lacking from the existing curriculum, and SER rightly mentions this as a weakness. A variety of electives will provide the programme with more flexibility and will be more responsive to the divergent student needs according to their background and orientations.

At the same time, there is a need for introducing the teaching of at least a few courses in English language, and the students should be required to have some knowledge of this language. It might be worth even considering whether reasonable competence in English should be a kind of requirement for admission to the programme, because graduates should be able to have access and to use international bibliographies and scientific papers, take part in scientific symposia and be able to access information outside the Lithuanian language, actually, for the rest of their lives (life-long learning!) These issues were actually stressed also by the students in the interviews. In general, a broader European dimension needs to be given to this programme. Teaching some of the courses in English and inviting professors/scientists from other countries could strengthen the international orientation of the programme, and be helpful for the student and staff mobility in

general. Students should also be given better opportunity to choose their own themes of interest for their Master theses and not always to be connected with the research and study interests of the supervising staff.

It is useful if this programme in Botany is benchmarked with other European programmes in Botany in other European universities for better perspective for its development. Thus would certainly also support the planning of the mobility process in VU, both for the students and the staff.

3. Staff

The current staff members include 19 teachers, out of which 8 are permanent VU staff, while the rest are from other VU units, such as the Botanical Garden, the Nature Research Centre, and other Faculty of Natural Sciences centres and departments. The inclusion of staff and lecturers from other VU units definitely adds value to the programme because they may also provide contacts between students and their future employers and working environments. Yet a kind of drawback is the relative organizational distance of teaching and research in the Botany programme.

An apparent weakness of the teaching staff is that the majority of them share the same background, having acquired their graduate degrees (PhDs) from the same Lithuanian universities and having had all their working experiences in nearly the same establishments. This creates a shortage of diversity, and a kind of an inbred situation, which is against the provision of an open and diversified education to students.

As stated in SER, there is an ongoing effort towards professional development of staff members, e.g., by their participation in research conferences, seminars, international forums, and other similar events. However their research activities appear rather classical by their topics, and thus their range of coverage should be more expanded, since they are rather limited to the national and near-regional areas only. A greater emphasis should be placed in conducting practical research in a wider spectrum of botanical and biological sciences at large.

The workload of the teaching staff is rather heavy, with 336-400 contact hours, which gives an indication that the common trend of HE in Europe, namely moving away from teaching to learning, is yet to be fully realized. It may also indicate that the learning itself is still based on a rote-learning type process. The heavy workload of the teachers virtually may prevent them

from active research. Yet some of the teachers have been publishing in international journals or serve as editorial boards of scientific journals.

According to SER, during the last five years an average of six (6) students have chosen the Master studies in Botany, though it is assessed that this is sufficient according to the legal requirements. Yet this figure alone creates doubts about the long-term sustainability of the entire Botany programme, also by its sheer cost/benefit ratio.

Another serious drawback is the very limited mobility of staff, though with a few exceptions. No quantitative data are given, but SER lists the lack of staff mobility as a clear weakness. More international contacts are needed, also via international research projects, which could lead to closer partnerships and staff exchanges with other European and international universities and research centres. Motivation for language competences should be encouraged strongly.

The student/teacher ratio is thus 1:1,4 a rather unorthodox ratio, which is also the result of the very small number of students (6 in the second year) who attend the programme in a relatively large Department. As it was mentioned to the committee by the interviewed staff, this is mostly attributed to the limited funding by the Ministry that has provided grants for 5 or 6, though currently 8, positions each year. The number of teaching staff employed in the programme is considered adequate but their specializations ought to be more varied in order to cover a wider area of botanical subjects not only in the traditional Botany but to include also more modern subjects.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The students of the Master Study programme in Botany utilize the premises of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and mainly those of the Department of Botany and Genetics. The committee visited these premises during the site visit and found that classrooms and laboratories were mostly satisfactory for the requirements of the programme. The Herbarium is very extensive also by the numbers of its specimens contained and very adequate for the Botany studies.

Several of the laboratories had up to date equipment for carrying out research projects although many research projects are carried out at the premises of the Nature Research Centre, which the evaluation team did not have the time to visit. Definitely, some laboratories should be supplied with more modern equipment and funds should be provided for the supply of consumables which were reported to be in shortage.

The Library is regularly purchasing textbooks in Botany and Mycology in several languages, in Lithuanian, in English, in German, and in Russian. SER indicates that after the year 2000 some 40 different books have been obtained, but many of them exist in the Library only as single copies. The teaching staff members are however producing various kinds of handouts etc. for the use of their students. The VU library maintains several databases such as *Web of Science*, *Wiley InterScience*, *Science Direct*, etc. Apparently the Library needs updating with modern books and especially with up-to-date journals, though the students also expressed their wish for more literature in Lithuanian language. The use of the international databases may also be limited by possible gaps in the language skills of the students; yet the students also expressed their wish for more information on the use of the library material. All Botany students have wireless access to the Internet within the facilities.

Generally, updating of the laboratories and their equipment has been underway, and many of the auditoria are equipped with modern audio techniques. However, regular updating is required as there are still needs for modern lab equipment and for adequate supply of consumables. The evaluation team was informed, also in SER, that new facilities at Puvociai (Varena district) are under planning and construction especially for research projects, including those in algal biotech, for fungal cultures, etc.

The students in the Botany programme can do practical and research work in several places, which also cover various ecosystems of Lithuania. Several National and Regional Parks are available, and also the VU field training base in Puvociai. Furthermore, the Botanical Garden as well as the facilities of the social partners, including the Institute of Botany of Nature Research Centre, can be used.

5. Study process and student assessment

The admission of students to the programme is clearly documented and explained in SER. The candidates are required to have a bachelor degree in Biomedical Sciences, Biochemistry, Biophysics, Molecular Biology, Geography, or Natural Geography. There are no entrance exams and all the information for admission requirements is available on the website of VU. It might be advisable to take some note of the proficiency of English language as part of the admission procedure. The admission score is based on average marks obtained in Bachelor studies and the mark of the Bachelor thesis. The admission quotas have been on the decrease, from 9 to 7, in a six-year period 2006-2011, and the numbers vary greatly from year to year. Most of the students who take the Botany programme have a BSc degree in Biology or other

related fields. SER indicates that the students who attend this Programme are motivated and the number of applicants is 3-5 times higher than the number of admitted students. Women clearly dominate among the Botany students. The dropout rate is ca. one-third during the study period, and the reasons vary from students' financial difficulties, to the needs for outside jobs, family reasons, etc.

The teaching process includes a variety of methods and there is a satisfactory interaction between students and teaching staff for consulting and communication. Students are involved in committees and other working groups and have the opportunity to express their ideas and to participate in decision-making plans. The curriculum of the programme allows enough flexibility to satisfy the students' needs.

The assessment of the student system is clear. All information about each subject is provided during the first lecture. The students interviewed stated that they are well informed about the evaluation criteria, the number of colloquia, the exam times, and the learning outcomes. They are also informed about the assessment results and they are able to discuss with staff and know the reason for the grades given to them. All subjects are tested by written exams, and credited according to the ECTS system.

Students interviewed expressed a need for more elective/optional courses like English language, Scientific Terminology, and Project Skills Development. It is understood however that due to the small numbers of students in the programme, this might present some difficulties in practice. An option would be for students to participate in courses offered in other MSc programmes. Another major demand expressed by students was the need for more practical training and field experience so that they can get experience in a variety of skills that will allow them to work not only in the Nature Research Centre or in Ministry positions, but also in practical fields with cultivated plants, nurseries and other similar establishments. Other graduates find jobs in national parks, in the forestry sector or in Ministry positions. They can be also employed in private labs, in homeopathic pharmacies, agricultural companies, etc. to list a few. Several of the students expressed their intention to continue their studies towards PhD.

The stakeholders and social partners who were interviewed expressed the need of employing graduates of this Botany programme, but who would be able to do research on the subject, to present their work in international forums, and e.g., be able to represent the Ministry at a European level, and be able to undertake EU competitive programmes. All these aims would also require top-level language skills.

Students may undertake research projects and prepare for their final thesis on the same topic. Student performance is adequately monitored and assessed and the award of the Master's degree is usually achieved with high marks and distinctions. The Master theses, at least those

presented to the evaluation team, were of good quality and well presented with a summary in English. During their studies students are given the opportunity to participate in conferences, and present their theses in posters or publish them mostly in local journals.

Mobility under the Erasmus programme is very low, as only one student has taken part in it so far. Another student has spent an entire semester at Moscow Lomonosov State University. An explanation given by students is the short study period of the Botany programme as students start to write their Master thesis in the first year, and thus they do not want to be away from their work places and discontinue their research project. Another reason is that due to programme incompatibilities, they are concerned that they may lose a year and thus delay their graduation. This might be also related to the relatively 'classical' content of the curriculum in VU.

It is a task to the International Relations Office of VU, that is responsible for the Erasmus programme, to provide more concise and clear information on how the learning agreements signed prior to the mobility of students can secure the recognition of courses and ECTS credits earned abroad, so that the students will not lose their credits but actually gain them, in a new environment and in a new context.

Students have the possibility to live in dormitories, to apply for grants and to receive scholarships. Also, students can participate in other extracurricular activities such as sports, art events, dances etc. Students are advised about career opportunities during special events organized by VU administration, but it was mentioned that most placements are secured after recommendations from the lecturers. The University Career centre posts information about available places for practice, and it also informs students for job opportunities through student e-mails, and offers training seminars on how to seek a job, or to develop one's own personal skills.

6. Programme management

The Master Study Programme in Botany seems to function under a five-level system of internal quality assurance, including the University Senate, the Faculty, the Department, the Committee of the study programme, and also the teaching staff. At the Faculty level, FNS assures implementation of the study programmes and decides on their possible changes, confirm timetables for the class-work and examinations, regulate implementation of interfaculty and international study programmes, and gives propositions to VU Senate concerning study quality.

At the departmental level the management and quality assurance are the responsibility of the Head of the Department of Botany and Genetics together with meetings with the staff. It can

adopt study programme changes and update subject descriptions, organize the study process, provide supply of facilities and learning resources, and be responsible for advertisement of the programme and supervision of the website. This is a short repeat of what is directly indicated in SER.

According to SER, the Committee of the study programme is said to play an important role in programme management. Its main responsibilities are said deal with efficiency of the programme and its learning outcomes, and its role is to adapt the programme to the general regulations of VU. It also deals with the programme implementation, with internal quality monitoring and control, and it works towards updating and subject contents as regards the feedback. The Committee operates following several different regulations and documents, but its efficiency seems to be doubt, also according to SER, since it is lacking a clear mandate for its work and responsibilities. Apparently it also has no say in decisions that involve financial costs. The financial management lies at the level of the Faculty and the Department. The teaching staff is responsible for the quality of the teaching itself and supervision of the students' research work, etc.

According to SER, regular feedback surveys are taken for the internal quality assurance of the study programme, and that involves the students, the alumni and the employers. But the feedback from the students is very weak, and also considering the very small numbers of students enrolled, the information cannot be very representative or accurate. SER also points out shortcomings about textbooks and library services. Furthermore, SER lists the main social partners, primarily the VU Botanical Garden, Institute of Botany of NRC, and various departments of the Ministry of the Environment. This is a rather narrow list of potential partners, also in terms of the labour market, and thus it rather indicates a relatively closed and inbred system in relation with the stakeholders and the outside world.

The overall impression of the management system of the Botany programme is that it seems to be overregulated but also underperforming, with a top-down and heavy management, where the responsibilities appear 'clear' at least on paper, but its real efficiency could be questioned.

The external evaluation of the Botany programme in 2005 gave several recommendations, some of which have been partially realized, but for many others the situation remains to be the same as before.

For instance, improvements in staff mobility and publishing of their research in renowned international journals need to be pursued further as there is little evidence for improvement in this issue though with a few exceptions. For instance, SER indicates that

lecturers were 'encouraged' to publish their research in international journals, but yet the actual measures and management actions to this effect seem to be missing. Publishing in 'good' international journals requires also that the research is of high quality, and tackles the important problems. Student mobility also requires that the partner universities have programmes that are matching by their contents with those in VU, but that may be difficult if the programmes in VU are 'classical'. A certain amount of benchmarking could be useful. But at the same time, it is necessary also to be known to the outside world, through proper marketing, website, etc., but also by active attendance in international conferences and such events. Improvements in the curriculum with additions of appropriate courses/subjects in order to widen botanical substance and approach to up-to-date teaching materials would be also necessary. The overall impression about the management was that most of the day-to-day measures are actually done by the teaching staff, but the overall strategic view is missing.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Programme of Botany, even though it has been running since 1995, and has undergone an external evaluation, still needs to redesign its curriculum incorporating courses that will encompass a fuller botanical spectrum of subjects, including some modern fields outside the classical Botany. It would be useful to do some benchmarking with biology programmes in other European universities.
2. This is a very small and relatively narrow programme and it is useful to look into the possibility of at least partially merging it with other Master programmes of related subjects, as its sustainability, also in terms of cost/benefits, with very small number of students may endanger it. This could also offer the students a wider range of optional studies, including language and other general skills.
3. A substantial effort should be made by the staff to open up to other European partners by establishing collaborations in research and teaching, thus promoting the idea of Internationalization of the University as a whole. It is necessary also to provide for developing appropriate language skills among the staff and the students.
4. A better liaison between research and teaching is necessary in modern HE. Teaching needs to be based on research, and it is a prerequisite for quality education in general. Thus it is important that the staff (and students as well) are encouraged to engage in active research, and possible impediments to it be removed. The heavy teaching load by

the teaching staff can be partially lessened by changing the overall strategy from teaching to learning.

5. To this effect, the promotion of the mobility of both the staff and students requires special efforts, again, and it also requires close liaison with European partner universities so that proper matching partners (programmes, etc.) are recognised. But also this requires a certain development in the curriculum in Botany itself so that mobility becomes possible without harming the careers of the staff or the studies of the students. This should be a regular part of the staff development activities.

IV. SUMMARY

The graduate study programme in Botany reviewed by the evaluation team is the only one in Lithuania and attracts students from various disciplines of Biology and Ecology. The programme offers courses and practical training that aim to prepare graduates for a variety of jobs in the broad field of Botany. An adequate number of experienced teaching staff is employed in this programme but their specializations do not cover all the subject areas a Botany programme should have. More emphasis should be put on research and combine it with the teaching. The facilities and resources utilized by the programme are considered adequate, though continuous care should be directed at the upkeep and modernization of the laboratories and the library. There are clear procedures for student admission, progress, teaching and assessment of subjects and master theses, but, unfortunately low interest for international exchanges and mobility of students and staff.

A special challenge for the programme in Botany is its sustainability, though among the students it looks popular, and there is a need for it in the labour market. The numbers of students is low, the dropout rate is relatively high, but varying from year to year, and its cost/benefit ratio does not look good. It might be useful to combine it or part of it with other related Master programmes in VU.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Botany (state code – 621C20001) at Vilnius 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	2
3.	Staff	2
4.	Material resources	3
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 (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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**VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *BOTANIKA* (VALSTYBINIS
KODAS – 621C20001) 2013-11-27 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-385
IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Botanika* (valstybinis kodas – 621C20001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	2
3.	Personalas	2
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	15

* 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

Botanikos magistro studijų programa, kurią vertino studijų kokybės vertinimo grupė, yra vienintelė tokia Lietuvoje ir pritraukia studentų iš įvairių biologijos ir ekologijos programų. Programos siūlomais kursais ir praktikomis absolventus siekiama parengti įvairiems plataus profilio botanikos srities darbams. Programą dėsto tinkamas prityrusių pedagogų skaičius, tačiau jų specializacija neaprepia visų dalykinių sričių, kurios turėtų įeiti į botanikos programą.

Daugiau dėmesio reikėtų skirti mokslo tyrimams ir apjungti juos su dėstymu. Studijų programos infrastruktūra ir ištekliai laikytini tinkamais, bet ir toliau reikėtų kryptingai rūpintis laboratorijų ir bibliotekos išlaikymu bei modernizavimu. Studentų priėmimo, pažangumo, dalykų dėstymo ir vertinimo, magistrinio darbo vertinimo procedūros yra aiškios, tačiau tenka apgailestauti dėl menko studentų ir dėstytojų domėjimosi tarptautiniais mainais ir judumu.

Nors Botanikos studijų programa atrodo populiari tarp studentų ir paklausi darbo rinkoje, ypatingas jai tenkantis iššūkis yra tvarumas. Studentų skaičius mažas, o nubyrančiųjų procentas, tegu metai iš metų ir keičiasi, vis tiek yra santykinai didelis, tad programos sąnaudų / naudos santykis atrodo ne kaip. Galbūt būtų naudinga šią programą ar dalį jos apjungti su kitomis susijusiomis magistratūros programomis, dėstomomis VU.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Nors Botanikos studijų programa vykdoma nuo 1995 m. ir jau buvo atliktas išorinis jos vertinimas, studijų turinį vis dar reikia pertvarkyti taip, kad jame rastųsi kursų, aprėpiančių platesnį botanikos dalykų spektrą, įtraukiant kai kurias šiuolaikines sritis, nepatenkančias į klasikinę botanikos sąvoką. Būtų naudinga atlikti lyginamąją biologijos programų, dėstomų kituose Europos universitetuose, analizę.
2. Programa yra labai maža ir santykinai siaura, tad būtų naudinga svarstyti galimybę bent iš dalies sujungti ją su kitomis panašių dalykų magistratūros programomis, kadangi dėl labai mažo studentų skaičiaus, vertinant dargi ir sąnaudų / naudos požiūriu, jos tvarumui gali kilti pavojus. Taip studentams būtų pasiūlyta daugiau įvairių laisvai pasirenkamų studijų dalykų, įskaitant kalbas ir kitus bendrųjų įgūdžių suteikiančius kursus.
3. Personalui reikia visomis išgalėmis stengtis atsiverti kitiems europiniams partneriams, megzti bendradarbiavimo partnerystę mokslo tyrimų ir dėstymo srityje, ir taip skatinti Universiteto tarptautiškumo idėją apskritai. Be to, būtina atitinkamai lavinti dėstytojų ir studentų kalbinius įgūdžius.
4. Šiuolaikinei aukštojo mokslo institucijai būtinas glaudesnis mokslo tyrimų ir dėstymo ryšys. Dėstymas turi būti grindžiamas mokslo tyrimais – tai būtina išankstinė kokybiško išsilavinimo prielaida apskritai. Todėl svarbu tiek dėstytojus, tiek studentus skatinti aktyviai dalyvauti mokslinėje tiriamojoje veikloje, o tokiam dalyvavimui galinčius kilti trukdžius – pašalinti. Dėstytojams tenkanti didelė krūvis iš dalies galima sumažinti iš esmės keičiant dėstymo strategiją ir pereinant nuo dėstymo prie mokymosi.
5. Siekiant šio tikslo, ypač būtina stengtis skatinti dėstytojų ir studentų judumą bei palaikyti glaudžius santykius su partneriais Europos universitetais – tai leistų rasti kuo tinkamesnių partnerių (programų ir kt.). Tačiau tam, kad judumas taptų įmanomas be žalos dėstytojų karjerai arba studentų mokslams, reikia ir konkrečių paties botanikos studijų turinio pokyčių. Tokia praktika turėtų tapti neatsiejama personalo tobulinimosi dalimi.

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Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, jog yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso¹ 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė,
parašas)