GUIDEBOOK III

PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE SECOND CYCLE JOINT STUDY PROGRAMME SOCIAL WORK

VILNIUS, 2014
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Textbook

UAB „BMK Leidykla“
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Textbook

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Introduction

The present methodological publication of the second cycle study programme *Soci-al Work* for teachers generalizes practical aspects of the realization of the programme. The joint study programme has been prepared according to the aim and objectives “Improving the Quality of Lifelong Learning” of the priority “Lifelong Learning” of the Operational Programme for the Development of Human Resources for 2007–2013, implementing the project “Creation and Realization of the Second Cycle Joint Study Programme Social Work in the Collaboration with the University of Ukraine (SOCNET)” No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-069, prepared and realized by Šiauliai University.

It is the third educational textbook that focuses on the peculiarities of practical realization of the joint study programme, the principles and methods of the organization of distant education.

In the publication the administration of the study programme has been discussed and it can be divided into four main groups of processes that are especially important in organizing studies from their beginning to their end purposefully realizing the objectives and ensuring study quality through the satisfaction of students, social partners, teachers and administration staff. The first process is the admission to studies; the second – process of studies; the third – ensuring the quality of studies and the fourth – improvement according to the obtained results. In this part every process has been presented in detail. The work of the administration and teachers of the faculty has been emphasized in giving the access to the Moodle environment to students, where for every study subject the study material in the English language has been prepared with the review of the newest foreign literature, cited original texts by scientists, interesting tasks and various information presented in filmed material, pictures, etc. Students will be able to study this material independently thus gaining much more knowledge and developing their competence.

The internal study quality management system for the ensuring the study quality of the joint study programme *Social Work* in Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” has been presented in the publication. The internal study quality management system of Šiauliai University (hereinafter IS-QMS) is based on the Common Assessment Framework and the requirements of ISO 9001:2008 standard that clearly commit the institution to act effectively and develop the activities of all levels in the results-based approach. ISQMS is defined in the concept, the model, in which the processes of institution and their complementing activities are distinguished. In the ISQMS Handbook on Quality clear responsibilities and accountabilities, the criteria of the assessment of quality are defined.

The second part of the publication is meant for the analysis of the development of the competences of intercultural research and scientific collaboration in the students of the master study programme *Social Work* in the context of intercultural environment. The process of the preparation of scientific work in the joint second cycle study programme logically and consistently combines scientific research practice and the preparation of master thesis that is based on the development and consolidation on intercultural research competences. Obligatory relations of the contents of the master study programme to the opportunities of further third cycle studies have been revealed, because the master’s career opportunities are not only professional activity but also PhD studies.

The third part of the guidebook reveals and specifies the aspects of the assessment of the learning outcomes (knowledge and skills) of students of the master programme. Ten-point grading system and cumulative evaluation scheme are traditionally applied in the study programme. It is important to note that in the programme much attention is focused on learning outcomes, striving for which is a constant process of the collaboration between students and teachers. The final mark consists of testing acquired
knowledge and research skills during the examination, and the assessment of special, social and personal skills, formed in performing individual or group tasks. It should be noted that in the study programme of Social Work examination is obligatory in study subjects that integrate theoretical lectures and workshops as a form of final assessment and influences the final mark. A cumulative assessment system as an element of study supervision and monitoring will not only permit to assess students’ knowledge and skills but also encourage academic staff to discuss the effectiveness of chosen methods of the assessment of learning outcomes. This assessment strategy also creates preconditions to provide constant continuous feedback, which influences the development of the assessment of students’ achievements, teaching and learning.

It should be noted that in the assessment process the constant mutual feedback between a teacher and a student should be maintained both by the method of forming assessment (describing the quality of student’s learning achievements and task performance during the seminars), and by qualitative system (assessing intermediary tasks and examination results at the end of the semester in points). Teachers will provide students with constant oral or written feedback (e.g. presenting comments and assessment conclusions about individual, group, project and other works performed by the students).

For teachers working in the joint study programme it is relevant to remember that study quality is the object of the efforts of all the participants of the study process and its result equally depends on every participant. It must be also emphasized to students that they must participate in surveys and in-depth research so that teachers according to the expressed remarks could correct and improve study subjects. It is also important to attract as many active social partners participating in the programme as possible – only with the same perception of the meaning of the improvement an effective result is possible. The prepared methodological textbook for teachers will allow to realize all these aforementioned objectives and will encourage to constantly develop one’s knowledge and skills thus contributing to the process of the development of the contents and organization of the programme.

Prof. I. Baranauskienė, Editor of the publication
ORDER OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Renata Bilbokaitė

The administration of the study programme Social Work can be divided into four main groups of processes that are especially important in organizing studies from their beginning to their end purposefully realizing the objectives and ensuring study quality through the satisfaction of students, social partners, teachers and administration staff. The first process is the admission to studies; the second – process of studies; the third – ensuring the quality of studies and the fourth – improvement according to the obtained results. In this part every process will be discussed in more detail.

Admission to the study programme

The programme of social work is registered together with other university programmes, therefore those who are willing to study must participate in the admission process. It is intended to admit 25 persons to the study programme Social Work in both higher education institutions (at least 10% of foreign students), having a qualification degree not lower than bachelor’s. In ŠU the admission to master studies takes place according to the rules of the admission to the second and third cycle studies in Lithuanian higher university schools that are announced every year.

Persons who want to study in the programme of Social Work must present the application to study at Šiauliai University and indicate the title of the programme. The applications are filled in online to ensure the admission process to be transparent. There might be a bigger number of applicants than there are places in master studies, therefore the admission grade is necessary. It consists of the sum of the mark of the thesis or the mean of the marks of qualification examinations and the arithmetic mean of the marks of the diploma supplement. In the University of Ukraine the practice is slightly different. In the practice of UU the realization of master study programmes is signed by the rector of the university and approved by the vice-rector for science and education. Applying for master studies in UU, students have to take the examinations of specialty and the English language. Admitting students to master studies in UU, the admission grade consists of the mark of the thesis or the mean of the marks of qualification examinations that cannot be lower than four. According to the practice of the admission to master studies in UU, the applicants who have published an article(s) in a reviewed periodical scientific publication, participated and delivered presentations in scientific conferences, managed educational projects, their activities, financed from structural funds, according to the agreement between universities may be given extra 0.5 point.
In Figure 1 the scheme representing the unity and interaction of the admission process and the processes complementing it has been presented. On the first stage of student’s admission the applicants fill in application forms, they register online, then they participate in official contest together with other applicants, and if their contest mark meets the requirements they are invited to study. Persons who filled in the applications and participated in the contest have to agree not only in oral but also in written form – learning agreement is concluded with them where all essential factors of participation in study process, the order of following them and possible consequences if they are not followed are foreseen.

After concluding the agreement the first process is over. Then the administration of the faculty already works with students themselves and gives them various information. It is necessary to ensure student’s full integration into the process of the study programme, the life of the faculty and university. This master study programme is a joint one, therefore students are also given additional information about the practice abroad so that they could plan their time and foresee the circumstances: the aim of the practice, the possibilities to choose a place are explained, the methods of the realization are foreseen, the very essence of the study programme and its exceptionality are also explained to students. The aims are specified not only in the programme but also in every subject explaining in more detail what competences will be gained by a student if he/she studies consistently and actively. Teachers will introduce new methods that will be applied in the Social Work master study programme.

Constant academic, informational-consultative, methodological and social support is given to the students of ŠU and UU. At the beginning of every semester all students are introduced with academic and non-academic activities, the order of its organization and possibilities of various supports, the information about students’ organizations, art
and sport groups, departments and services of the University is presented. ŠU and UU collaborate with students’ self-government, Maintenance Service in coordinating the issues of the management of students’ hostels. The commission for the distribution of scholarships in its work refers to the regulations on the allocation of scholarships for Šiauliai University students of the first and second study cycle and the description of the order of the allocation and administration of social scholarships for students of higher education institutions. The student’s appeals are reviewed by the commission for solving issues between ŠU administration and students.

It is especially important that the administration of the faculty together with teachers gives the access to the Moodle environment to students, where for every study subject the study material in the English language has been prepared with the review of the newest foreign literature, cited original texts by scientists, interesting tasks and various information presented in filmed material, pictures, etc. Students will be able to study this material independently thus gaining much more knowledge and developing their competences.

Finally, the study schedule is made focusing on students’ opportunities to study full time, it is arranged with teachers and its final version is presented to students. On the further stage studies take place.

Administration of the study process

The biggest attention in the study process is given to studying and testing. The order and process of the assessment of achievements have been described in another chapter, now it is important to discuss only the administrative aspect, i.e. the duration of assessments. It is important for students to account in a way planned until the arranged time, because all assessments according to the order of ŠU are entered to unified databases. It is possible to retake the examinations or take untaken examinations in another time having arranged with a teacher and administration.

Assurance of the study quality

The study quality of the joint study programme (hereinafter SP) is ensured by internal study quality management system of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”. The Internal study quality management system of Šiauliai University (hereinafter ISQMS) is based on the Common Assessment Framework and the requirements of ISO 9001:2008 standard that clearly commit the institution to act effectively and develop the activities at all levels in the results-based approach. The ISQMS is defined in the concept as the model1, in which the processes of institution and their complementing activities are distinguished. In the ISQMS Handbook on Quality clear responsibilities and accountabilities and the criteria of the assessment of quality are defined.

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1 ISQMS concept and model are freely available on the ŠU website
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Figure 2. Concept of the system of quality management in Šiauliai University

According to the joint activities agreement with UU and according to internal documents of both institutions, study quality is a priority, therefore the responsibility for it is accepted on the levels of a university, faculty, department, study programme and teacher. Quality culture, which is set and described in the ISQMS concept (the scheme is presented in Figure 2), will be realized through the involvement of social participants in the constant process of dialogue: meetings will be organized, forms of collaboration, activities of decision taking, recording of feedback and ensuring reaction to it will be foreseen. Namely in the process of dialogue the culture of quality will be developed not only on the level of study programme but also coordinating constantly changing needs on institutional and national levels accounting for the results of activity for the Ministries of Education of Lithuania and Ukraine, foreign and home experts. In Scheme 2 it can be seen that the opinion of students and social partners will be very important in improving the study quality – mass and in-depth surveys will take place. The feedback record must be discussed in more detail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object of study quality</th>
<th>Responsible subjects / objects</th>
<th>Time of activity</th>
<th>Method of monitoring</th>
<th>Subjects/objects that take the decision on the issues of improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aims and contents of study programme</td>
<td>Managers of SP, Department, SPQMG</td>
<td>After the academic year, after the realization of the study programme</td>
<td>Meeting of the commission for quality assurance of the department or institute</td>
<td>Commission for quality assurance, Department, Institute, SP committees of faculties, JSQMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcomes</td>
<td>Vice-deans of faculties</td>
<td>After the semester</td>
<td>Statistical data analysis</td>
<td>Department, Institute, administration of faculties, JSQMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ satisfaction</td>
<td>Study quality management group (diagnostics)</td>
<td>In the middle of autumn semester</td>
<td>Mass survey</td>
<td>Vice-rector for studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study quality centres of the faculties (deepening of the results of diagnostics, qualitative research)</td>
<td>In the middle of spring semester</td>
<td>Interview, Focus group</td>
<td>Deans of the faculties, head of the department, SP supervisor and SP monitoring group, JSQMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department (assessment of the quality of study subject, teachers’ professional and didactical competence)</td>
<td>After the semester, after the realization of the study programme</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni’s satisfaction and integration in the labour market</td>
<td>Career Centre (diagnostics)</td>
<td>After the realization of the study programme</td>
<td>Mass survey</td>
<td>Deans of the faculties, JSQMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction of social partners</td>
<td>Study quality management group (diagnostics)</td>
<td>After the academic year, after the realization of the study programme</td>
<td>Mass survey</td>
<td>Vice-rectors for studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department, supervisor of the study programme (deepening of the results of diagnostics)</td>
<td>Interview, Focus group</td>
<td>Deans of the faculties, head of the department, SP supervisor and SP monitoring group, JSQMG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Table 1 the subdivisions and responsible persons that contribute to the assurance of study quality have been presented. Study quality will be ensured fully and systematically in order not only to implement the criterion but also improve the indicators. Areas, subareas, criteria and indicators for internal quality assessment have been chosen referring to the European and national regulations on ensuring the quality of higher education, during the implementation of which in the faculty/university respective strategies and plans are approved. Perfection of study process, improvement of a study and work friendly environment and perfection of study management system have been chosen as essential directions of quality monitoring and assessment.

On the level of the SP in ŠU there is a committee for the master programme Social Work (PC) and Study Programme Assessment Committee (SPAC), that consist of university teachers whose scientific interests correspond to study programme they are responsible for, a student studying in the study programme, and a social partner, organizes the supervision, monitoring and improvement of the respective study programme. Referring to Regulations of ŠU Study Programme Assessment Committees the aim of the group is to ensure the internal supervision, monitoring and improvement of the quality of the study programme under implementation. The process of the administration of the study programme and quality assurance is regulated by Study Regulations of Šiauliai University and other documents. In order to activate the study process and strengthen the motivation for permanent learning the assessment system of cumulative mark for all study subjects is approved, the factors strengthening students’ motivation are discussed. Striving for study quality every year ŠU and UU teachers will perform self-analysis of their activity (study and scientific/methodological activity) and present it to the head of the department, while the head of the department – to the JSQMG. On the level of the department SP analysis and assessment is performed, particular issues of the organization of study process, material and methodical supply, improvement of study quality, implementation of progressive teaching forms and methods, distribution of teachers’ workload, changing of subjects, preparation and approval of descriptions, etc. are analyzed. At the end of the year the JSQMG, referring to the obtained data, will provide suggestions to the head of the department, the SPQMG and teachers on how it is possible to improve the SP.

Information about the assessment of the quality of the study programme and its results is announced during the meetings of the departments, Dean’s office and the faculty council, the conferences of study programme quality monitoring group, available on
faculty notice boards, faculty/university websites, during organized round table discussions on the issues of study quality. The aforementioned information is available for teachers, students, faculty administration and external social partners.

As it has been mentioned before, the most attention will be paid to satisfaction of the participants of study process with study quality: students will be interviewed on the levels of institution, faculty and subject, while the research results will be discussed and corrected with regard to situation by responsible persons having authorization. It is emphasized that the indicators of quality comprise the level of the involvement of social participants (students, social partners, practice supervisors at places of practice, teachers, students’ parents, public characters, etc.) into the activity, participants’ satisfaction and the aspects of the influence on decision taking in the improvement of activities, therefore it guarantees more versatile development of the SP according to the approved criteria.

**Improvement of the study programme**

The results of the feedback from students, graduates, social partners are discussed in the meetings of the department and Dean’s office. With regard to the assessments presented by students teachers improve the contents of the subject and work organization during classes. It should be noted that students participate in the activity of the Senate, the committees for appeals, Dean’s office and the SPQMG. It permits them to make various suggestions related to the assessment of study quality and to democratically participate in the ŠU life. Collaboration with employers creates the possibility to objectively assess study quality, merits and shortcomings of the study programmes and improve them. It should be emphasized that teachers should record the changes in their subjects and must inform students so that they know that their opinion was important in improving the programme and other subjects. It is also important to make collaboration with employers a consistent and useful process. Thus the opportunities will be created to objectively assess study quality, advantages and disadvantages of the study programmes and improve them.

Social partners should participate in suggesting the graduates the topics for master degree theses (in this case a trilateral agreement on performing scientific research is signed), reading lectures and delivering seminars in the faculty and/or in their educational institution, accepting students to practical placement, assessing their readiness for practical activity and suggesting possibilities for improving practice. All forms and ways of collaboration must be recorded and their efficiency and effectiveness must be analyzed.

For teachers working in the joint study programme it is relevant to remember that study quality is the object of the efforts of all the participants of the study process and its result equally depends on every participant. It must be also emphasized to students that they must participate in surveys, take part in discussions during in-depth research so that teachers according to the expressed remarks could correct and improve the study subjects. It is also important that as many active social partners as possible participate in the programme. Only with unitedly perceiving the meaning of the improvement an effective result is possible.
SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL RESEARCH COMPETENCES IN ANOTHER CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Elvyra Acienė

This chapter of the methodological publication for teachers is meant to develop the competences of intercultural research in social work master students in the context of international academic and scientific collaboration.

The process of the preparation of scientific work in the joint second cycle study programme logically and consistently combines scientific research practice and the preparation of master thesis that is based on the development and consolidation on intercultural research competences. It is a precondition to strengthen the contents of the master study programme because the master’s career opportunities are not only professional activity but also PhD studies. The document Salzburg Recommendations indicating the guidelines of PhD studies in Europe approved by the European University Association (EUA) in 2010 indicates the importance of intercultural cognition in training young researchers and emphasizes the importance of the development of Intercultural Research Competences (EUA CDE News. Implementing the Salzburg principles. December 2010. Issue 10). The aim of the joint master study programme is to train specialists ready for professional practical activity and scientific research on community, national and international levels, be able to act under undefined and complex circumstances, rendering assistance to people in the life process in the situation of congenital, acquired and senior age disability.

Intercultural competences in social work can be assessed on two levels: the level of intercultural communication and the level of intercultural scientific research. Both these levels are interrelated because without the competences of intercultural communication it would be a complicated task to act in another cultural environment when conducting empirical research. Scientific research practice in the process of preparing master’s research work is considered as the expression of scientific collaboration between a teacher (research adviser), student and practician (supervisor), therefore intercultural competences are obligatory. It confirms the theoretical insights by E. Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė (2011, p.70) who suggests to assess learning abroad through cultural dimension. The role of a teacher as a mediator during scientific research practice that will be performed in another cultural environment is to help students organize and manage the process of the preparation of master degree thesis and develop intercultural research competences. According to E. Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė (2011, p.70-71), a student in the study process abroad realizes intellectual/thinking aspirations and experiences, emotions and feelings that in case of every student differently transform into personal comprehension and interpretation of culture. Teachers’ role in this process is important as it empowers a student to strive for positive result from the aspects of both the quality of the degree thesis and modelling of his/her professional career. It let us think that a master student will be able to consolidate intercultural communication and research competences gained in the process of scientific research practice in lifelong learning strategy.

Cultural differences can become the source of creative inspiration or even outbreak. However in the course of the history of humankind we meet various manifestations of the evaluation of culture (ethnocentrism, nationalism, racism). Ethnocentrism is the value system that depreciates other cultures and induces discrimination of people who belong to another culture. Often stereotypes are applied to the people of other nations (Romani people are thieves, etc.). According to V. Pruskus (2011), stereotypes often
cause cultural conflicts in society because they present the phenomena in a distorted light and form too aggressive attitude towards them, negative forms of interpersonal communication are induced that may cause ethnic and intercultural conflicts. Relevant attention to the development and consolidation of intercultural competences (linguistic, cultural and communicative) can become an efficient instrument of the amortisation of intercultural conflicts. Every culture must be evaluated separately and with relevant respect (Liubinienė, 2002, p. 29).

The phenomenon of culture has a multifaceted inner structure. For students of social work it is very important to understand inner cultural differences that have been presented by Liubinienė (2002, p. 40):

- **Subculture.** It is a lifestyle that has much in common with dominating culture, however it distinguishes with specific differences (according to gender, profession, interests, disability, etc.).
- **Deviant subcultures.** The behaviour of the group contradicts to the norms predominant in society (skinheads, hippies, punks, people with non-traditional sexual orientation, etc.).
- **Countercultures.** These cultures deny traditional culture and lifestyle (beatniks of the 1950s; hippies of the 1960-70s; punks of the 1970-80s, joined by music of certain style, clothes, haircuts and the spirit of protest).

Referring to Tomlinson (2002), in analyzing the intercultural space it is important not to look for cultural differences because “cultural activity can condition difference but it is not the same as to state that culture is based on difference” (ibid, p. 77), but to see how culture helps to create the meaning in the life of a person or community.

Globalization has big influence on the comprehension of cultures and on the transformation of their interactions. Referring to Bauman (2007), Tomlinson (2002) and other authoritative researchers, the globalization creates qualitatively new interactions of cultures and new spaces of globalized culture. According to M. Castells (2005), globalization creates the culture of real virtuality, i.e. the integration of various ways of communication into interactive networking that creates interactive society and makes big influence on social, economical, political and cultural life of a society. It is unique, therefore its traditional analysis on the basis of comparison does not permit tracing its phenomenality.

The model of the development of intercultural competences (Fennes, Hapgood, 1997) reveals the competences as certain stages and forms of the development of the interaction with culture: ethnocentrism – a natural situation of a person who has not directly faced other cultures, who assesses the world according to the standards of his/her cultural groups and who is ready to defend them from other groups; the stage of awareness permits to perceive the presence of intercultural differences; the stage of understanding permits to understand the reasons of intercultural differences and their influence on others; in the stage of acceptance and respect one starts to understand cultural variety as a source and value of development; appreciation and valuing – when valuable opportunities that are absent in own culture are encountered; change – when the expression of new attitudes and skills characteristic neither to one’s own nor another culture appears, and finally, intercultural competence – when one learns to act effectively not only preserving one’s identity, but also acknowledging the peculiarities of other cultures (cit. according to Vaičekauskaitė R., Staškūnienė L., 2013).

The forming necessity of intercultural competences in social work also forms the idea of international social work (Haug, 2005, Healy, 2008; Lyons, et al., 2006; Shardlow, Doel, 2002), which respectively projects a new attitude towards social work studies and research.

In the aims of master degree thesis it is expected not only to deepen knowledge and gain scientific research work skills but also to develop social responsibility to serve so-
ciety, relevantly use national and international sources of information, following social work values, confidentiality and ethics. Thus the necessity of intercultural competences both in the process of communication and research necessary in international scientific collaboration is acknowledged.

The scientific research practice expands master student’s abilities in the context of special, social and personal skills and creates possibilities of the development of the professionalization of social work from the aspect of intercultural competences. In the joint master study programme created in the framework of this project this problem is solved innovatively. The scientific research practice in the second cycle studies presupposes the approaches to substantiate the results of empirical research with cultural experience. In this context it is important to evaluate social, political and economical context of Lithuania and Ukraine and create an open educational system joining different learning environments and ensure their interaction. Learning space that is newly created is treated as learning environment, in which students and teachers work under the collaboration of the institutions of different countries on the basis of the development of intercultural competences. Learning environment abroad (in another culture) obliges a teacher to facilitate the understanding of cultural differences. The scientific research practice in the process of empirical research converts the results of the cognition of social reality (social work reality) to conclusions, that reveal the possibility to construct new knowledge and create real models of solving social problems, that establish the preconditions of the change of social work, strengthen intercultural competences and form lifelong learning skills (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1. The Expanse of social reality research in the process of scientific-research practice (according to: Vaičėkauskaitė, Acienė (2007, p.7))](image)

From the position of collaboration intercultural understanding focuses on instru-
ments that permit to organize social networks between students and teachers. To ensure the success of the study process of the joint study programme the MOODLE learning environment is created. Informational culture is considered as a dynamic process that permits to improve intellectual skills, create and develop many and various environments and forms of communication that are necessary in the creation of new knowledge and development of intercultural competences.

Constant interaction of cultures takes place in all times, because any culture is not a closed system. According to Geertz (2005), culture points out people’s aspiration to understand themselves and create their communities. Various cultural differences inevitably exist. An intercultural dialogue in the process of the realization of the programme is one of the most important preconditions of the success in achieving the aim of this project. A dialogue with partners should have a very clear structure, the main elements of which are: cultural differences (getting to know each other, establishing the respective attitude towards each other (communication without pressure, finding a compromise) and predicting interference (social, economical, legal). Having evaluated the intercultural dialogue, the process of scientific research practice should be useful for both sides: cultural-historical similarities (historical past, teaching traditions, communication culture – hospitality, openness); ability to accept variety (the enduring value of the project is unique learning experience in the context of the good experience of another country formed in the process of the research); using students’ professional interests (the motives, possessed experience and adaptation in new environment) are evaluated.

**The first objective of a teacher** – to help a student to understand the contents and expression of intercultural communication.

According to Dž. Baraldsnes (2012) without the estimation of cultural differences there might be misunderstandings in the process of communication. For example, the person A deciphers information in one context, referring to attitudes acceptable to people in his/her culture. The person B deciphers information referring to other attitudes. The person A and the person B decipher the same message in a different way, therefore the effectiveness of the process of their communication is very low (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Context of communication. (Baraldsnes, 2012, p. 72)](image-url)
Baraldsnes (2012, p. 73) comments on the obstacles enlisted by Barna (1996) that interfere with effective intercultural communication:

**Precondition of similarities.** People naively expect that people of other countries are the same like them (or at least similar to them), therefore communication should not be complicated (see Figure 3).

![Diagram](image)

**Legal 1** – laws against driving drunk
**Legal 2** – laws restricting immigration
**Illegal 1** – to constantly use a friend working at an intercity telephone station and make free calls to other countries
**Illegal 2** – to trade drugs

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*Figure 3. Different perceptions of social problems. Source: Lewis, 2002.*

**Linguistic differences.** When communicating in a language that is not appropriately mastered yet, people think that a word, phrase or sentence has the only one meaning – namely the meaning they intend to express (see Figure 4). Japanese will say in words only a small part of what he/she thinks, meanwhile an American says more than he/she has in mind.

![Diagram](image)

**Great Britain**
**Germany**
**Finland**
**France**
**South America**
**Japan**

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*Figure 4. Icebergs of speech and thinking. Source: Lewis, 2002.*
Other criteria cannot be ignored: *Incorrect interpretation of body language, prejudice and stereotypes, evaluation tendencies, big anxiety and stress.*

In the intercultural communication three forms of *adaptation* should be evaluated: psychological, sociocultural and working (Karaliūtė, E.)

*The concept of intercultural competences* becomes even more relevant under the influence of the processes of globalization. According to Bauman (2007), people move even when physically they remain in the same space. Cultural identity cannot be identified to the territory of the country or geographical territory anymore.

The intercultural competence is person’s ability to communicate and interact with the representatives of another culture, group or community, therefore it cannot be explained as an isolated phenomenon. The intercultural competences are an integral part of general competences, general activity of a social worker in the community (see Figure 5)

![Diagram](image)

Figure 5. Essential competences of a social worker to act in the community. Source Sadauskas, Leliūgienė, 2010, p. 59.

**The second objective of a teacher** is to help a student to understand the specifics of the intercultural research.

To explain the intercultural competences in the research context *constructivist approach* that does not oblige to look for absolute definition of a competence is convenient. A constructivist paradigm emphasizes learning in natural social activity: communicating and solving problems (Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė, 2011). Therefore a holistic approach towards competences as an overall potential of a person is forming (Lepaitė, 2003).

Byram (1997) in the model of intercultural competence distinguishes the following dimensions (cit. according to Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė, 2011, p.47): attitudes, knowledge, interpretation and relation skills, discovery and interaction skills, cultural consciousness (critical cultural consciousness/political education). E. Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė (2011, p. 44), referring to foreign authors (Williams, 2005, 2009; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey and Wiseman, 1991; Grunzweig and Rinehart, 1998; Deardorf, 2004), focuses on a three-dimensional model of intercultural competence where the following components are distinguished: cognitive (knowledge about cultural differences), emotional (motivation and willingness to act in intercultural situations) and behavioural (skills and abilities related to intercultural situations). It would be difficult and meaningless to distinguish the main elements characteristic to intercultural competence in this structure because a competence is a person’s ability to perform a certain activity referring to the possessed knowledge, skills, personal features and experience. “Competence means the sum total of necessary knowledge, skills, values, personal features and experience” (Studento praktikos vadovas, 2011, p. 24).

The expression of the structure of intercultural competences can be revealed referring to the concept suggested by R. Laužackas (2005). The bigger part of the inter-
cultural competence is made up of, according to R. Laužackas (2005), “known but not formalized part of competence” and “possessed part of competence, but a person is unaware of it” (Figure 6).

A teacher could help a student to recognize these segments of intercultural competence using supervision and approaches of reflectivity. According to A. Barzelis, L Barcytė (2009), one of the innovative experiential education methods that can be applied in the process of the development of the intercultural competence is Service Learning. This method of education supposes that learning and reflection joins academic plane of education to meaningful serving the community. As educational methodology it belongs to the category of experiential education. It also corresponds to the concept of social work studies.

Teacher’s role in the process of the intercultural communication is of dualistic character: to help a student abroad (mediator, teacher, enabler, consultant) and internationalization at home (ability to organize the process of sharing experience using such methods as distance learning, problem-based learning, service learning, case studies, etc.). Therefore a teacher always raises the question to students: What are the components of the contents of intercultural competences acting in another cultural environment, in the process of cultural communication and scientific research?
System of Learning Outcomes Assessment

Kristina Rūdytė

The system and order of the assessment of learning outcomes of Social Work as it is regulated in the bilateral agreement of the joint study programme (2013 m. birželio 27 d. Nr. 06-25-B-55) are based on the following principles: validity (assessment measures the level of the achievement of the results); impartiality (assessment results are objective and do not depend on the change of an assessor); suitability of assessment methods for all the assessed; clarity (assessment system is informative, understandable for assessors and the assessed); usefulness (assessment helps to strive for the study programme aims and learning outcomes).

The learning outcomes (knowledge and skills) of master students are assessed applying ten-point grading system and cumulative evaluation scheme. Cumulative system of study assessment is represented by the order of the cumulating of the final mark (point) of the study subject at the beginning of the semester set by a teacher and discussed with students, when the final point consists of several components that a student receives in the study process of the subject performing intermediary self-study tasks (Šiaulių universiteto studijų nuostatai, 2011). A teacher of every subject establishes the order and at the beginning of the semester informs students about the influence of every component in per cent on the final assessment and presents the criteria of the assessment of every intermediary task. The final mark consists of testing acquired knowledge and research skills during the examination, and the assessment of special, social and personal skills, formed in performing individual or group tasks. It should be noted that in the study programme of Social Work examination is obligatory in study subjects that integrate theoretical lectures and workshops as a form of final assessment and influences the final mark. If a student does not get the transition mark, he/she may not be allowed taking the examination (defending the project, practice report, etc.). Students’ possibilities to restudy the subjects and retake examinations are regulated by the order set by both higher education institutions, laws of higher education and studies. Student will have a possibility to retake examinations 2 times.

The number of the assessment of examination and intermediary tasks and the weight of components depend on the specifics of the study subject: scope in study credits, the character of the aim of the subject and expected learning outcomes – focus on the development of knowledge and comprehension, special and/or social and personal skills. The strategy of cumulative assessment should be specified in the description/programme of every study subject seen to students in ŠU academic information system that is available for every student at <https://uais.cr.ktu.lt/suis/stp_prisijungimas> (using your log in password).

Teachers will present the aforementioned information about the study subject at the beginning of every semester during the first lecture of the subject verbally or using handouts. The assessment strategy and other information relevant to the subject studies (aim of the study subject, learning outcomes expected in the subject, study methods, the content of the course, the list of literature necessary for studies, etc.) is presented at the beginning of the subject studies during the first lecture (verbally, using presentations or handouts). Thus the responsibility for the study process is delegated to students (to more purposefully distribute their time, accumulate efforts for performing particular tasks, etc.).

Generalizing it should be noted that the cumulative assessment strategy in Social Work studies has been chosen in order to ensure active students’ work throughout the semester and objective assessment of learning outcomes (Ketinamos vykdyti Šiaulių universiteto ir Atviro tarptautinio žmogiškosios plėtros universiteto „Ukraina“ jungti-nės magistro studijų programos Socialinis darbas dvišalė sutartis, 2013). Cumulative
assessment system as the element of study supervision and monitoring will not only permit to assess students’ knowledge and skills but also encourage teachers to discuss the effectiveness of chosen methods of the learning outcomes assessment (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašas, 2013). This assessment strategy also creates preconditions to render constant continuous feedback, which influences the assessment of students’ achievements, the development of teaching and learning. Mutual feedback (teacher – student) realized in the assessment process gives a possibility to constantly observe (investigate and reflect) the effectiveness of the collaboration between a student and a teacher in the study process and foresee the perspectives of the process development.

**Structure of assessment point in the studies of Social Work.** The structure is regulated in the bilateral agreement of the joint study programme Social Work (27 June, 2013, No. 06-25-B-55). In higher education institutions of Ukraine a five-point grading system is approved, however Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” next to a five-point grading system according to the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of 16 October, 2009, No. 943 “On the Introduction of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System to Higher Education Institutions of Ukraine” (№ 943 «О введении в высших учебных заведениях Украины Европейской кредитно-трансферной системы») is ready and able to apply European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). It means that in assessing learning outcomes (students’ knowledge and skills) UU teachers will write two marks, calculating the mean of marks in a five-point system and a cumulative mark according to the standards of ECTS system. In fact the order of the assessment of study achievements in UU thus permits to test students’ research, special, social and personal skills and how they deepen their knowledge. In Šiauliai University learning outcomes are assessed in a ten-point system (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 2008-07-24 No. 2194 “On the Approval of Assessment System of Learning Outcomes” (Žin., 2008, No. 86-34-37); ŠU Study Regulations (2011).

**Assessment methods and criteria of learning outcomes of the study subject.** As it has been mentioned, the assessment of learning outcomes consists of the assessment of knowledge, comprehension and skills. The assessment criteria of knowledge and skills of study subjects are determined by every teacher of the subject (Šiaulių universiteto studijų nuostatai, 2011; Order of the Ministry of Science, Education, Youth and Sports of Ukraine “Наказ Міністерства освіти і науки, молоді та спорту України ВІД“ 29 March, 2012 No. 384, Form No. Н-5.01).

**Assessment criteria** are features showing whether the quality of study subject, programme or student’s activity corresponds to set requirements (Aiškinamasis su studijomis susijusių terminų žodynas, 2010).

Following the concept of Social Work studies, in the formulation of assessment criteria the achievements of the threshold level are indicated that describe the minimal obligatory result and allow giving a minimal positive mark to a student (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašas, 2013). Striving for the impartiality of assessment it is important to formulate clear quantitative and qualitative criteria of performing every intermediary task that would permit students to understand: “in what level measured in per cent the task was performed”, “what means to perform the task well”, etc. (Kraujutaitė, Pečkaitis, 2003, p. 134).

For example, in the description/programme of the study subject Modelling of Vocational Rehabilitation Processes it is indicated that “ten-point grading system and cumulative evaluation scheme are applied. Self-study assignments of the semester, the evaluation criteria of which are presented during the first meeting with the students are evaluated with a mark, during the examination session the final mark is calculated multiplying separate marks by the leverage coefficient and summing up the products”
(Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašo 5 priedas, 2013, p. 52). To assess study achievements the following assessment methods/tasks are foreseen: individual work, group task, examination (written test), where group task makes up 20% of the final assessment, individual work – 20%, examination (written test) – 60%. Assessment system of learning outcomes in the subject description is specified, indicating the assessment criteria of every task (in the relation to learning outcomes), distinguishing the aspects of knowledge, comprehension and skills (see Table 1).

**Example of assessment criteria**

(Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašo 5 priedas, 2013, p. 52–53)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of assessment / Task for assessment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
<th>Assessment criteria (relations to learning outcomes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group task</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Applying the method of service learning and referring to the paradigm of problem-based learning will perform a group work and present it according to a chosen topic: vocational-professional activity as a determinant of the social adaptation of the personality and social processes; development of the effectiveness of people’s Self with disability as a variable of social and vocational rehabilitation; models of vocational rehabilitation of people with disability; relation between value and mediation. Students will perform a group work in the social partner institutions, collaborate with the specialists working in these institutions, clients, other interdepartmental institutions in organizing the activities of preparation, realization and future monitoring of the process of vocational rehabilitation. Students’ ability to identify the problem, perform its complex analysis, substantiate the system of the applied vocational rehabilitation with regard to socioeconomical and educational environments and client’s individual features is evaluated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual work</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Individual work referring to the method of case analysis will be assessed with regard to student’s ability to systemically analyze social problems and their expression in interinstitutional environment, following the principles of ethics and reflecting new knowledge of social work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination (written test)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Written test consists of 35 open type questions. The test provides comprehensive and full evaluation of the results foreseen in the programme of the subject, covers the contents of the learning material. The tasks of the test make up the representative sample of the area of knowledge and skills under evaluation.</td>
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</table>

Assessment criteria as the features of the achievement of the learning outcomes presuppose the assessment ways and methods, the application of which depend on the specifics of the study subject and expected outcomes. For example, in assessing learning outcomes representing knowledge and comprehension and the ability to apply knowledge tests of different character, writing assignments, reports are used, etc. To assess value attitudes reflective methods (diary, etc.) are the most suitable. Methods that are used to assess the skills gained in practical studies include the performance of problem-based tasks integrating the application of knowledge and skills in real life situations, tasks of the reflection of activity and learning.

Consequently assessment methods/tasks are closely related to the learning outcomes expected in the subject studies that can be focused on the ability to apply knowledge, conduct research and/or special, social and personal skills. Therefore the assessment sys-
tem of the learning outcomes of Social Work includes different assessment methods that permit to observe respective student’s achievements (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašas, 2013). In the studies to test knowledge and understanding such intermediary tests as colloquium, verbal presentation, project, and examination – individual written test, test with open and closed type questions are applied. Students’ special skills are assessed after the performance of the assigned tasks: written assignment, non-traditional task (e.g. case analysis, CLIL task, and problem-based learning task), defence of the project, defence and argumentation of the research design; other tasks of the study subjects and practical placements: individual tasks integrated in subjects, practice report, etc. It is also important to encourage the students to participate in conferences where they will publicly present prepared projects and performed research.

In performing the tasks of practical placements and subject studies, students will practically apply theoretical knowledge, the assessment of individual and group tasks will be applied (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašas, 2013). During the subject studies the methods of reflections and practice supervisions (self-assessment, peer-review, etc.) will be applied in order to assess and encourage students to assess their personal and social skills – to reflectively and critically analyze and assess their cooperative learning, professional activity during practical placements, professional growth, to perceive the attitudes of lifelong learning and social work values.

It should be noted that in the assessment process the constant mutual feedback between a teacher and a student should be maintained both by the method of forming assessment (qualitatively describing the quality of student’s learning achievements and task performance during the seminars), and by qualitative system (assessing intermediary tasks and examination results at the end of the semester in points). Teachers will provide students with constant oral or written feedback (e.g. presenting comments and assessment conclusions about individual, group, project and other works performed by the students).

The practice shows that students often perceive the assessment system as rather biased, sometimes as not objective. Student’s self-assessment criteria often differ from the criteria applied by a teacher as an external assessor. Therefore in Social Work studies it is expedient to use the elements of peer-review when striving to develop students’ skills of self-analysis during the assessment of individual and group tasks the possibility is created for students to assess their colleagues’ knowledge and skills.

Assessment of the master thesis: methods and criteria. Students who have accounted for the whole study programme have a right to defend master degree thesis (having successfully passed the examinations foreseen in the study programme, having defended project works). The delivery of the joint second cycle study programme Social Work of ŠU and UU is finished with the defence of the graduate’s master degree thesis, where students should demonstrate skills and competences gained during studies: “to notice a social problem, to substantiate scientific and practical relevance of the topic of the thesis, to critically evaluate theoretical and practical current issues of the chosen field of research, to give methodological argumentation of the empiric research and the analysis of its results, to formulate reasoned conclusions corresponding to the research aims, objectives and particular social or educational suggestions to provide recommendations” (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašas, 2013, p. 33–34).

The assessment of the master thesis will be performed in several stages 1) two months before the defence of thesis students and their research advisers in the open meeting of the department assess the preparation and completeness of student’s thesis and the possibility to defend it (or postpone the procedure of the defence until the following year) is previewed; 2) student’s research adviser writes a report about how the thesis meets the requirements set for the master degree thesis, assesses student’s thesis and its quality, the appointed reviewer assesses the master degree thesis (student has a right to get acquainted with the review before the defence); 3) master degree thesis is assessed during the defence, in a closed meeting of the commission for the defence of theses.
It should be noted that for the **assessment of master degree thesis ten-point grading system** is applied and cumulative evaluation scheme is not applied, because in this case the result is assessed, i.e. the overall level of learning study subjects (ŠU studijų nuostatai, 2011). For the final assessment of master degree theses the qualification commission will be organized that will consist of two representatives of each higher education institutions that award a joint qualification degree (ŠU and UU). All the members of the qualification commission will assess the student’s thesis and its defence in ten-point scale according to the criteria presented in the Faculty (see Table 2). The content and structure of master degree thesis must correspond to the methodological and formal (language, technical formatting, etc.) requirements set for such type of works.

### Table 2

**Criteria and requirements of the master degree thesis assessment**

(Kaffemanienė, 2006; Kaffemanienė, 2013-10-20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is assessed</th>
<th>Assessment criteria</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Title of the topic**           | Scientific character of the formulation, clarity, laconic style, correspondence between topic and contents | • The title corresponds to the research object, research aim, objectives, and contents of theoretical and practical part, problem under investigation.  
• In the title the concepts corresponding to the area and field of science are used.  
• Brief, informative, simple formulation of the essence of the research. The title of the topic should not exceed 10 words.  
• The contents of the work correspond to the topic of the research. |
| **Introduction**                 | Formulation of the problem of scientific research                                   | • Reasoned formulation of the problem under investigation.  
• Distinguishing the main parameters of the problem:  
  - it is indicated what is investigated (internal structure of the phenomenon under investigation, relations between structural components, relations of cause and consequence...);  
  - in what aspect it is investigated (psychological, pedagogical, historical, etc.);  
  - level of the investigation of the phenomenon (not too complicated, not global, researchable). |
| **Substantiation of the relevance of the problem** | Importance of the research for science is described, it is explained by what new data theory is supplemented, how it will be useful for practice (social work, etc.). | 
| **Hypothesis**                   |                                                                                      | • Formulation of a hypothesis is unambiguous, concrete, proved (or denied) with chosen research methods.  
• Hypothesis is related to research problem (problem research object, aim, objectives). |
| **Research object**              |                                                                                      | • Clear unambiguous research object corresponding to the topic under investigation, problem, and aim.  
• Measurable indicators defining the research object are chosen. |
| **Aim and objectives of the research** |                                                                                     | • The research aim corresponds to the topic, problem, hypothesis, and object.  
• The research aim is related to the hypothesis; the contents of the hypothesis correspond to the contents of the aim which is to verify theoretical hypothesis.  
• The formulation of the aim permits to identify the participants of the research, variables, and their possible interrelations.  
• The objectives in the notional approach closely related to the research aim reveal the essence of the problem investigation.  
• The research objectives correspond to the contents, research results of master degree thesis and vice versa – the research results correspond to the research objectives.  
• The research aim and objectives are formulated in verbs describing the research procedures: to find, to analyze, to reveal, to prove... |
| **Introduction** | Choice of the research methods | • Chosen research methods correspond to the type of the research indicated in the introduction (theoretical, empirical, qualitative, quantitative, etc.).  
• The research methods correspond to the research object, research aim and objectives.  
• Theoretical methodological concept, referring to which the research is performed is substantiated; the essence of theoretical concept related to the problem of investigation is described. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research sample</td>
<td>Concise and concrete presentation of the participants of the research: how many, who; where and when the research was performed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Glossary of main concepts and abbreviations | • The descriptions of the main definitions, theoretical concepts referring to the definitions and descriptions found in scientific works that are used in master thesis are presented, corresponding to the ideas and methodological approaches of the master thesis.  
• It is obligatory to indicate the name of the author of the definition and the year of publication and indicate the precise data of the publication in the list of references at the end of the thesis.  
• If abbreviations are used in master thesis, at the end of the glossary the meanings of the abbreviations are used. | |
| Theoretical part | • Adequacy of chosen scientific literature for the analyzed topic.  
• Particularity and consistency of theoretical analysis of the problem.  
• Problematicity and criticality of theoretical analysis | • The main concepts are interpreted, the meaning they are used in the master thesis is explained.  
• Essential researches of this field, scientific resources are analyzed.  
• The reference is made not only to national but also to foreign scientific literature.  
• Scientific literature is analyzed, systemized, statements are critically evaluated.  
• There is analytical review and critical reflection.  
• At the end of the theoretical part generalizing conclusions are presented, referring to which the research aim and objectives were formulated, theoretical preconditions of the research conducted by the student were revealed and the methods of empirical research were chosen. |
| Empirical part   | Methods and organization of the research | • Exact and clear description of chosen research methods.  
• The relevance of the method to the research is briefly substantiated.  
• The structure of the prepared research instrument is presented in detail.  
• The procedures of the organization of the research, the peculiarities of data collection and processing are described.  
• Research methods are applied following the set methodological requirements. |
| Research sample  | • The size of the research sample meets the requirements set for quantitative (statistical) and/or qualitative research.  
• Research sample is described in detail: the criteria and ways of sampling (probability, non-probability, etc.); units of observation (organizations, respondents); volume and geography of the sample; the type of the research are indicated.  
• Presentation of the criteria of sampling, arguments.  
• Detailed presentation of the research participants: how many, who (e.g. social workers, people with disability, etc); where (in what type of institutions) and when the research was performed.  
• The main demographical data especially those that are related to the analysis of the research data are presented: age, gender, education. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is assessed</th>
<th>Assessment criteria</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of the research data.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of the research results, supporting statements with arguments, relations to other research.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The data of the empirical research are suitably processed in qualitative and quantitative ways (grouping, systematization, continuity, consistency).</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct calculations are made. In Master thesis it is advisable to use the methods of statistical analysis.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research data are clearly illustrated in tables and figures.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The analysis of the data of the empirical research corresponding to research objectives is presented.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research data are interpreted.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is related and compared with the research performed by other authors, the obtained results, conclusions.</td>
<td>1) Conclusions correspond to the research aim and objectives, the hypothesis is proved/denied with facts. 2) Conclusions are concise, clear, and complete, they generalize the performed research. 3) Conclusions are reasoned, substantiated with factual research material.</td>
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Striving for the objectivity of the master degree thesis assessment a collegial assessment is applied, i.e. in assessing the remarks and assessments suggested by a reviewer (30%), the members of the commission of the master theses defence (70%) are taken into account. The final assessment of the master thesis will consist of the mean of the assessments suggested by the members of the commission of the master theses defence (Ketinamos vykdyti magistrantūros studijų programos Socialinis darbas aprašo 5 prie- das, 2013; Kaffemanienė, 2013-10-20).

The preparation of master degree theses and their correspondence to the requirements for master degree theses in both higher education institutions will be reviewed and specified in the departments that administrate the programme.
TEACHER AND STUDENT MOBILITY AND PRACTICE

Liuda Radzevičienė, Valdas Rimkus

In recent years the study process more and more often moves to virtual space, a new model of higher education is being created. In the space of higher education the MOOC (Massive open online course) has already consolidated, however next to the MOOC another model of distance education – in Europe it is called “virtual mobility” – the COIL (collaborative online international learning) is making its way.

If the MOOC study form mostly refers to a traditional study model (lecture, tests, etc.) using globally accessible form of delivery, the COIL uses technologies that help to create a more common interactive study model, especially emphasizing the internationality of study programmes (Hans de Wit, 2013). Another feature of the COIL learning system is related to non-commercial international higher education.

Academic mobility is defined as the category of international collaboration in science and education describing international exchange of students, teachers and scientists (Švietimo ir mokslo terminų žodynas, 2012). The European Education Council in 1987 approved “Erasmus” programme, and academic mobility was acknowledged as an instrument of the higher education quality improvement and the dissemination of respective academic and social experience in Europe. That is when the focal principles of two cycle study system, degree comparison and academic mobility appeared, which were later presented in detail in the documents of the Bologna Process. The tendencies of international development of higher education are best reflected by constantly increasing demand for higher education and increasing international academic mobility as its result (Švietimo ir mokslo terminų žodynas, 2012).

Academic mobility is one of the most supported activities of international education by which it is aimed to ensure “circulation of minds” and to attract talents. Academic mobility creates opportunities for scientists and researchers of different countries to transfer their academic experience and knowledge and to become a visible country (Nacionalinė Aukštojo mokslo tarptautiškumo skatinimo 2011–2012 metų programa, 2011 m. vasario 2 d. Nr. V-178).

Virtual mobility that has been promoted in recent years in higher education is performed in many European institutions including higher education institutions. Virtual mobility means not only such forms of mobility as student exchange or international study programmes but also the internationality of studies “sitting at home”, i.e. it is attempted to make international study programmes available for bigger number of students implementing an interactive international study model. The concept “collaborative online international learning” covers three dimensions of virtual mobility: it is collaborative work of teachers and students using internet technologies, internationality and integration in the learning process.

When applying virtual mobility international studies become accessible to students who do not want or do not have possibility to come out for long-term or short-term studies abroad but want to acquire international higher education. Communicating with teachers and students from other countries in virtual space they have a possibility to gain knowledge about the subjects they study from various perspectives. Thus specific national and cultural attitude towards a study subject and the peculiarities of its delivery in every country are also revealed.

Studies or their part performed in form of mobility create conditions for students of science and educational institutions to spend an integrated study period in another country and get a document confirming the qualification. The aforementioned activity permits to acquire the knowledge of studies, language and culture, stimulates the collaboration between institutions and enriches the educational environment of the insti-
tutions that receive students, permits to develop the base of future specialists who have gained experience abroad, foresees the transfer of credits and acknowledgement of studies abroad applying the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) or another respective credit system (Virtualus mobilumas universitetinėse studijose, 2011). The prepared second cycle joint study programme Social Work namely corresponds to the concept of virtual mobility combining it with academic mobility. The teacher and student mobility foreseen in the programme corresponds to the modern process of the creation of the European higher education common field and its current issues: to strengthen the aspect of the internationalization of higher education, teacher and student mobility, international collaboration, expansion of international scientific research and projects and development of foreign language competences. These objectives correspond to the strategic aims of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”, i.e. to collaborate with other higher education institutions and research institutes within the country and abroad.

The joint master study programme Social Work of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” has been prepared according to the project “Creation and Realization of the Second Cycle Joint Study Programme Social Work in the Collaboration with the University of Ukraine (SOCNET)”, (Code No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-069, Agreement No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-069) and the strategy of education of the EU. The purpose of the joint study programme is to create possibilities for the students to gain more knowledge, skills and experience than the programme realized by one institution is able to provide (LR ŠMM įsakymas, 2011). The programme encourages teacher and student mobility, encourages interinstitutional and interdisciplinary collaboration, expands the graduates’ employment opportunities in Lithuania and abroad, facilitates the procedures of the acknowledgement of diplomas. In the process of the joint study programme implementation the usefulness of teacher and student mobility in exchanging social work practice and academic culture is emphasized. It should be noted that in Ukraine there is institutional infrastructure of social work, meanwhile in Lithuania it is more flexible, taking good practice existing in various EU countries. Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” has long term experience in working with homeless people, with people having various disabilities. Therefore the joint study programme, on the one hand would permit to share the experience of social work practice, on the other hand – academic experience related to the approaches of the application of methods, ethical principles, lifelong learning and other attitudes predominant in the EU.

The joint second cycle study programme will be realized only in fulltime study form. In Šiauliai University at least 10% of foreign students will study in the Social Work programme. During the first two semesters the students from Lithuania and Ukraine will study the programme of social work in their countries, during the third semester they will perform practice in the partner university. Consequently the studies in the form of academic and virtual mobility are relevant for students.

The expected contents of teacher and student mobility will contribute to training qualified specialists in social work that would help to implement priority aims of the development strategies of both countries, expanding the accessibility of high quality social services in Lithuania and Ukraine for people in the situation of disability. In the study subjects of the master programme of Social Work that are planned to be delivered by means of mobility, the main strategy of the aim formation was to join two important components of social work as practical activity and as a study and science field:

- deepening and improvement of the competence of a social worker; this block is also relatively divided into fundamental theoretical subjects corresponding to the field of social work and subjects that are meant to develop the professional competence of a social worker (to develop the professional competence of a social worker 31 credits
are allocated which makes up to 34% of the programme scope in credits) and the block of fundamental theoretical knowledge of the study programme is allocated 12 credits (13%);

- consolidation and development of the social work competence – scientific research work and master degree thesis that is allocated 30 credits (34%).

Both in the first study block that consists of theoretical subjects of the study field developing professional activity and in the second study block meant for the consolidation of the competences of scientific research work the subjects delivered by means of mobility are planned.

On the basis of academic mobility 40% of the joint master study programme Social Work will be delivered, out of which 10% will be delivered by means of virtual mobility. Subjects delivered by means of academic mobility and their scopes correspond to the requirements for second cycle study programmes, highlighting the international comparative aspect of master degree thesis. Four subjects of the Social Work programme are planned to be delivered by means of academic mobility (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study subject</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Scope in ECTS credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking of Social Work</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>7 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didactics and Psychology of Higher Education</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Research Practice of Social Work</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>7 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subjects planned to be delivered during the first and second semesters are related to theoretical knowledge of the study field developing professional activity and its consolidation. The third semester is meant for the subject Scientific Research Practice of Social Work. The study subject Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research will be delivered by means of virtual mobility. It means that virtual environments will be used in studies. Lectures will be delivered by using a virtual conference and the Moodle environment. Seven credits are allocated to the Scientific Research Practice of Social Work that is meant for comparative reflection of theory and (empirical) scientific research realizing the tasks of master degree thesis according to the joint study programme, which consolidates internationality. The Scientific Research Practice of Social Work will be performed in the partner university. It will create conditions for fluent transition to the last stage of the preparation of Master Degree Thesis (18 credits), in which a working hypothesis is already tested, theoretical interpretation of results is performed, international comparative aspect of the thesis is emphasized.

Teacher academic and virtual mobility is intended to be implemented delivering 5 subjects of the study programme that will be delivered by the teachers from both Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”, estimating working experience of the teachers of both higher education institutions in teaching in particular fields of social work, highlighting the strongest and exceptional experience of higher education institutions. By means of academic mobility ŠU teachers for students of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” will deliver the subject “Networking of Social Work” (7 credits, semester I), by means of virtual mobility – “Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research” (6 credits, semester I); by means of academic mobility the teachers of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” for ŠU students will deliver the subject
“Didactics and Psychology of Higher Education” (6 credits, semester I).

In performing academic mobility teachers of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” will deliver lectures for the students of the partner university. During the first lectures of the study subject the learning outcomes of the subject, tasks, assessment criteria and the character of self-study will be presented. Scientific literature necessary for studies will be indicated for students, the study material presented in the Moodle environment will be discussed. The aims and contents of study subjects delivered by means of academic mobility, study methods and the assessment of students’ achievements are based on the aims of the study programme and expected learning outcomes. In the study programme the methods of teaching and learning, traditional (lecture, seminar) and innovative study forms will be combined.

A teacher arranges the time and contents of consultations with students. Consultations can take place in the Moodle environment or via email and Skype. Later students study the subject independently using scientific literature indicated by a teacher or chosen independently. During the semester according to the study plan of the subject intermediary tests and a presentation of the performed tasks (projects, case analysis, course projects, etc.) take place. The final assessment of the study subject takes place during the meeting of the teacher and students in the partner university if the cumulative point of a subject is generalized by the examination.

Both teachers of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” have experience in the field of international academic mobility. In Šiauliai University in recent two years (2012 – 2013) 11 subjects have been delivered in a foreign language, 17 lectors from foreign countries have delivered lectures in the group of the subjects of the field of education and training; 31 Šiauliai University teachers of this field have delivered lectures in the universities of foreign countries.

The teachers of the Institute of Social Technologies of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” (the partner in the realization of the joint master study programme) also have quite rich experience in mobility and internationality of studies.

When studying a subject in virtual environment a teacher delivers lectures in the conference environment, together with students analyzes and discusses problem questions, meanwhile students having received the tasks prepare for another virtual session. The students of the subject Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research that will be delivered by means of virtual mobility will develop the skills of scientific research applying the methods of theoretical analysis and empirical (quantitative and qualitative research, analysis and interpretation of the research data) methods and will prepare for writing a master degree thesis. The character of the subject requires constant and dynamic contacts between a student and a teacher, therefore virtual study environment will be used for tests, presentation of the performed tasks, discussions, consultations, etc. Time for virtual lectures is arranged according to the schedule convenient for students of both higher educational institutions.

Student mobility will be performed when studying the subject Scientific Research Practice of Social Work (7 ECTS credits, semester III). The practice based on mobility will be organized following the order coordinated by both higher education institutions, where requirements for practical placement, tasks, expected results and the system of the assessment of achievements, support for a student during practical placement and assessment criteria will be determined. Studying the subject of Scientific Research Practice of Social Work the students of the joint study programme go for the period of 2,5 months to the institutions of the partner country (students studying in Šiauliai University go to Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”, and students of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” go for practice to Šiauliai University). Practices will be performed in the institutions of social
partners of the partner universities that render social work services. Both higher education institutions have sufficient network of partners – institutions rendering social services (Faculty of Social Welfare and Disability Studies – 28 collaboration agreements, UU – over 50 collaboration agreements), that ensures the quality of students’ practical placement. Scientific Research Practice of Social Work in ŠU will be performed in: Organization of Caregivers of People with Alzheimer’s Disease, Health Centre “Sveikatos sala”, Community of People with Disability of Šiauliai Town, Public Institution Šiauliai Rehabilitation Centre, etc. Scientific Research Practice of Social Work in Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” will be performed in: Children’s Health Improving Ecological Centre, Centre of Homeless Citizens, Ukrainian Union of War Participants No. 199, and other institutions rendering social service.

Coming in for practice every student will have already performed the research (accounted for the study subject “Master Thesis 2”, 6 credits, semester II) in their country, in a chosen institution, therefore they choose a similar target group for the research in the partner country and the institution (rendering the same social services), and during practice they perform another research. The aim of the practice is preparation for a master degree thesis where a comparative analysis of the researches conducted in both countries will be performed.

In the receiving institution and partner university the practice supervisors (in Lithuania ŠU teachers will be supervisors, in Ukraine the teachers of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” will supervise the practice) organize practical activity and consult students and render also other methodological or organizational assistance. In both universities practice supervisors will be assisted by mentors, whose functions will be discussed below. Students coming in for practice will also be rendered support for adaptation to the new cultural and social environment by mentors, members of students’ self-government, the teachers participating in the programme, the administration of the faculty. After Scientific Research Practice of Social Work every student presents the report oriented towards theoretical and methodological aspects of solving social problems of people in the situation of disability for the practice supervisor.

The joint second cycle study programme will be delivered in the English language. The learning material in the Moodle environment, obligatory and recommended scientific literature for studies, tasks are presented in English. The subjects of the study programme that are studied at the university of own country can be delivered in students’ native language, but the subjects delivered by means of academic and virtual mobility are delivered in English. However with regard to situation referring to the bilateral agreements between universities the language of the study programme can be modified. Students who wish to improve their knowledge of a foreign language should do it independently, however in the study programme Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method will be applied, during which students will also have opportunity to deepen the professional knowledge of a foreign language.

An important role in performing student mobility in the studies of the subject of Scientific Research Practice of Social Work will be given to a mentor. Mentors who are competent specialists in their field and have high qualification degrees will be responsible for the supervision of a student who is accepted to the place of the practice, giving special knowledge and information, assistance in performing scientific research practice. At the beginning of the practice mentors together with students will discuss the process and tasks of scientific research practice. Mentors will help to develop students’ skills, to successfully perform the tasks presented for practice, will give suggestions to students on how to improve skills, will help to recognize things that have to be improved, will be the consultants of scientific research practice activities. In case of need they will help a student as interpreters when communicating in places of practice with clients, administration, staff, clients’ families, representatives of other institutions. Be-
fore the practice mentors will discuss the organization and process of student’s practice, the activities that a student will have to perform in preparing the practice report. Before students’ coming from partner university the mentor arranges the issues of accommodation in advance, during the first days helps a student to get acquainted with the university (library, faculty), introduces with important institutions of the city. The mentor accompanies the student to the place of the practice and together with the director of the institution discusses the process of the practice. During the whole period of the practice the mentor maintains close relations with the student not only on the issues of practice activity but also helps in case of everyday problems.

In the implementation of the second cycle study programme Social Work the character of mobility, the scope in credits, duration, and arrangement in credits can be modified according to the situation with regard to the bilateral agreement between universities (2013 m. birželio 27 d. Nr. 06-25-B-55).

Special attention in the study programme is given to practice. Practice is a learning process that creates opportunities to consolidate theoretical knowledge and develop the skills of its application. Without testing theoretical knowledge in practical activity it is difficult for students to understand how theoretical knowledge gained during studies can be applied in professional activity. However the practice in master studies it is not only the application of knowledge in practice but also the space to organize and conduct empirical research. As social work in Lithuania is consolidating not only as a practical activity but also science, it is becoming relevant to search for scientific explanation and substantiation of social problems. Thus social work research enriches the scientific-applied field of social work and becomes a stimulus for positive change. The scientific research practice of social work is one of the ways to turn the results of empirical research into actual practical solutions.

In the second cycle study programme of Social Work of Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” scientific research practice of social work is based on reflective cognition of the reality of social work emphasizing the interactions of student’s values, knowledge and skills. The most important principles defining philosophical-value basis of the practice are the aspiration to involve students into complicated environment of social work characterized by cultural and social variety, ensuring the collaboration between students, the practice institution and the university as well as permanent relation and emphasis on critical and reflective thinking. The practice is closely related to master’s graduation work and is meant for comparative reflection of theory and scientific research, creation of new knowledge, analysis of the opportunities of the social reality change in the context of solving social problems. The practice takes places in parallel with the last stage of the master thesis preparation: conducting empirical research, theoretical interpretation of the research data, highlighting of international comparative aspect.

In the context of the Social Work programme the content of scientific work and scientific research practice is oriented towards solving everyday problems in the community when a person is in the situation of disability, accentuating the assurance of health and welfare of people with disability, estimating the possibilities of the process of social integration of these groups and strengthening of the stability of their life quality substantiating problem solving strategies with the applied scientific research.

As it is indicated in the description of the subject Scientific Research Practice of Social Work it is expected that after the course a student will be able:

- to perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, that work with people in the situation of disability;
- to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients’ needs;
- to organize and render social assistance, perform comparative analysis of social
services on national and international level;
• to create and initiate innovations in his/her practical activity referring to scientific research and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods.

Critical reflection of one’s activity as one of the focal components of the scientific research practice is more and more consolidating in social work studies as an important instrument for giving sense to the relations between knowledge and practical activity. Reflection is turning back, looking back to oneself, self-consideration, giving sense to thinking contents and preconditions, a way to analyze one’s actions, decisions and results of activity (Psichologijos žodynas, 1993; Jovaiša, 2007). Reflection is an important stage of the development of activity. It helps to look at the process of social work studies from many sides, develop creativity and critical thinking. The paradigm of reflection that has become popular through the works by D. Schön emphasizes the collaboration between social workers and service receivers, reflection and dialogue as an instrument to improve practical skills and the process of reflection. These processes become the space for the creation of new knowledge and empower students to initiate changes and act in complicated and undefined situations (Noble, 2001).

The process of reflection is inseparable from critical thinking skills. In the second cycle study programme presented in this publication the application of innovative study methods including critical thinking is emphasized. Critical thinking is not only rational consistent solving of a problem but also a systemic application of critical thinking skills in real everyday situations. All this can be learned only in the process of practical activity. Critical thinking, as well as critical practice, encourages to avoid mechanical procedural social work, stimulates to take the variety of clients and their environment into account and take sensitive decisions concerning the client and his/her environment. A critically thinking social worker should assess his/her practice from the following four perspectives:

![Figure 1. Assessment perspectives of social work practice (Herz, Johansson, 2011)](image)

The attention to these four perspectives helps to avoid stereotypical approach towards gender and ethnicity and still increasing social workers’ tendency towards psychological methods. It enhances systemic approach, the attention to society, not only to a personality, expands the perception of social context.

Consequently scientific research practice of social work is the space where organically, in a constant closed cycle the training of the reflection skills, critical thinking and
practical activity is related. In this case social constructivist approach that accepts the limitation of knowledge, its constant change and instability becomes relevant. It is a completely different process than learning to apply theoretical knowledge that is uncritically considered as universal and unchangeably right in practice. Therefore certain level of creativity that would help to prepare for contradiction and uncertainty of social reality is necessary for students (Gibbons, Gray, 2004).

According to I. Dirgėlienė and A. Kiaunytė (2008) the main principles of the reflective social work practice based on critical thinking are as follows:

- students get actively involved into performing of the task perceiving the importance of the task but not complying to given regulations;
- tasks are prepared so that the student has the freedom of choice thus encouraging responsibility for his/her choices;
- events should be unpredictable so that students in performing the task could name what they did not expect;
- students are provoked to re-evaluate their experience;
- students are encouraged to be interested in and manage their own study process, at the same time they feel responsibility for their learning;
- students are encouraged to relate a new learning model to the possessed learning experience and analyze their abilities and perception.

In the second cycle study programme of Social Work the process of training a social worker can be presented referring to a slightly modified model of reflective education by D. Schön (cit. Wallace, 1991) (see Figure 2). This model highlights the aforementioned permanent change of knowledge, relations between practice and theory and the importance of the process of reflection in the study process. Extant knowledge in this case is the knowledge gained by students in the study process, while experience-based knowledge is the knowledge gained during practical activity. In case of an international joint study programme, the final aim of reflective education, in comparison with Schön’s model, is complemented with intercultural competence, however it is the second cycle study programme, therefore the final aim could be expanded more and perceived not only as gaining particular competences, but also more widely, as the creation of new knowledge necessary for scientific activity and the interpretation of research results.

![Figure 2. Reflective education model](image)

In order to explain the process of the creation of theoretical knowledge in the context of the performed empirical research we will refer to the concept of Layder’s adaptive...
theory (Layder, 1998). The basis of the adaptive theory is the use of the extant theories and the obtained research data to create new theoretical knowledge. Namely new theoretical knowledge adapted in the process of the synthesis of the research data and extant theories is called the adaptive theory. According to the author, adaptive theory forms and is formed itself by the empirical data. The most important sources of this theory, according to D. Layder, are twofold, as it is presented in Figure 3.

![Figure 3. Sources of adaptive theory (Layder, 1998).](image)

The adaptive theory emphasizes and acknowledges many-sided interaction of persons, social activity and social institutes in a complicated multifaceted social world. This theory is relevant for the social work because it rather focuses on the fields of social system and interpersonal relations but not on more abstract and wider social phenomena.

Teacher’s role in the process of the scientific research practice is important from the aspect that a teacher becomes not a co-author of the research, not a prompter, not a transmitter of knowledge but a creator of the environment that encourages independence and learning, where a student critically reflects searches for practical and scientific solutions and creates new knowledge. Encouraging student’s individual responsibility, motivation of scientific cognition and self-reflection are the components turning the scientific research practice into the environment that empowers to study.

Teaching/learning based on critical reflection is so far not dominating in social work studies both in Lithuania and Ukraine, therefore students and teachers might lack experience and feel unsure. Students often expect advice and explanations from teachers and supervisors because they are used to being constantly taught instead of searching for answers independently. On the other hand, teachers must have critical thinking and reflection skills themselves, because only then they will be able to provoke the students and allow being provoked by them themselves.

Another important component of the scientific research practice is ensuring the collaboration and constant relation of the student with the practice institution and the university. L. Sajienė, referring to C. Bailey and S. French, distinguishes the following aims of the collaboration between higher education and practice institutions:

- **Information sharing.** It is an essential aim of collaboration, important in order to thoroughly analyze the problems and strive for common aims.
- **Development of democratic principles.** It is important in ensuring transparency, validity, impartiality, equal rights and accountability, following the principles of the code of social work ethics during practice.
- **Community relation.** It is important in enhancing the confidence of community members in each other, reducing interpersonal conflicts, revealing different approaches, developing collaboration culture between a higher education institution and its social partners.
- **Structurality of taking decisions.** It is quality of taken decisions and the results of students’ practice (Bailey, French, 2008, cit. Sajienė, 2011).
Purposeful striving for these collaboration aims creates possibilities to learn about the problems of social reality on various levels, combining the approaches of different individuals and institutions and thus creating preconditions for their successful solving. A teacher together with colleagues and administration staff should strive to involve social partners, representatives of practice institutions into the activity of the community of the university because it is a very important precondition for improving the quality of practice and students’ employment opportunities.

Figure 4. Collaboration between university, students and social partners (Sajienė, 2011)

It is desirable that a teacher who supervises practice, a student and a practice supervisor in the institution meet at least several times during the practice to discuss the process of the practice. Occurring problems, student’s achievements and difficulties, further proceedings of the practice are discussed during these coordinative meetings. The most important components of the activity of a student, a teacher and a practice supervisor in the institution during the practice have been presented in Table 1:

Table 1
Roles of a teacher, student and practice supervisor during scientific research practice (according to: Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher’s roles</th>
<th>Student’s roles</th>
<th>Practice supervisor’s roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To organize preparatory work, to instruct students about the practice;</td>
<td>To follow practice regulations, work safety requirements, to realize the plan of the practice;</td>
<td>To introduce a student with the organization, its structure, functions, documents;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To organize coordinative meetings;</td>
<td>To participate in coordinative meetings;</td>
<td>To participate in coordinative meetings;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To regularly discuss the process of the practice during the meetings with students (or perform the supervision of the group);</td>
<td>To participate in the discussions on the practice (or supervisions); In practical activity not only strive for learning aims but also take the interests of the institution into account, participate in its activity, contribute to achieving its aims;</td>
<td>To consult a student at the place of practice;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To regularly get acquainted with the performance of tasks appointed to a student and to assess them;</td>
<td>To follow the requirements of ethics of a social worker; To reflectively analyze one’s practical activity, take responsibility for one’s learning;</td>
<td>To create a possibility for a student to gain desired skills; to inform the university about the problems occurring in practice;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To visit student’s practice place;</td>
<td>To collect material to conduct empirical research, to prepare for critical interpretation of the research data.</td>
<td>To render assistance and feedback to a student about the tasks performed by him/her;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide consultations for practice supervisors and students (if needed);</td>
<td></td>
<td>To create the conditions for a student to conduct empirical research;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To observe and assess the process of the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge of a student.</td>
<td></td>
<td>To help a student to relate theoretical knowledge to practical activity, develop the skills of critical reflection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the practice students get involved into the activity organized by the practice institution, collect material for empirical research and prepare a practice report (its
The innovative study methods of problem-based learning, critical thinking applied in the second cycle study programme of social work and social work itself, as a profession of helping people, where the decisions can have very weighty consequences also require constant reflective consideration of one’s activity. It reveals the polyfunctionality of scientific research practice of social work, emphasizes the ability to act under undefined and complex circumstances rendering assistance to people in the life process in the situation of congenital, acquired and senior age disability, which is obligatory for social workers. Consequently when organizing and implementing students’ practice encourage them to turn back to themselves, consider and estimate their actions, stimulate them to speak about their feelings and emotions because it will help them to become better social workers and you, as teachers, will be able to achieve good results, experience and professional plenitude.
PRESENTATION OF THEORETICAL MATERIAL FOR STUDENTS IN DISTANT EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

Darius Gerulaitis, Odeta Šapelytė, Aistė Valaikienė

DISTANCE EDUCATION; DEFINITION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Rapid development of ICT (information communication technologies) in higher education system, the need for the modernization of the study process, implementation of innovative study methods in the study process, development of interdisciplinary and international research is not incidentally related to the need for and development of virtual learning.

Often in methodological publications, scientific and practical discussions various concepts that define the application of information technologies in learning are used. They are: virtual learning, distance learning, e-learning, online learning, etc.

The terms of virtual learning, i.e. the terms of education and e-learning are related to the application of information technologies in learning process enhancing the effectiveness of distance education, implementing open learning policy and striving to more flexibly organize learning activities. Distance learning is the form of learning that is characterized by transferring of the contact between a teacher and a student to virtual space without a real physical contact on a particular time. It means that learning is possible without a real physical contact between a teacher and a student not determined by the dimensions of time and space. Using more instruments of information and communication technologies distance learning comes closer to e-learning and virtual learning (when learning process is transferred to a virtual space) (Targamadžė, Petrauskienė, 2008).


• availability and flexibility of learning,
• individual learning approach and pace,
• ability to actively learn in communication and collaboration,
• ability to share experience,
• to study in a convenient place and time,
• to study in individual pace, not withdrawing from the workplace, etc.

2 http://distance.ktu.lt/livun/frame1.html
Distance learning is not treated as an innovation in the higher education system in Lithuania anymore. In all higher institutions of the country there are fully prepared and accredited courses of distance learning that are becoming more and more attractive for students. It has been recently perceived as a perfect motive to study not withdrawing from the workplace and the commitments of everyday life (e.g. family). Higher education institutions also dispose with partially prepared distance courses when a teacher delivers his/her subject in a mixed way, i.e. combining traditional learning in the classroom with distance learning environments or their elements. Sankauskienė, Kasperiūnienė (2012) have presented the generalized guidelines of lectures delivered in traditional, mixed and distance way (see Table 1):

Table 1
Comparison of different types of studies (according to Sankauskienė, Kasperiūnienė, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of lectures</th>
<th>Traditional studies</th>
<th>Mixed type of studies</th>
<th>Distance education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational factors of a lecture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Lectures are organized in the arranged time according to the study schedule.</td>
<td>Traditional lecture cycles delivered in the classroom and distance learning sessions.</td>
<td>Anytime according to the demand, provided there is internet connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Lectures are organized in the arranged place (classroom) according to the schedule.</td>
<td>Learning takes place in a classroom and/or virtual classroom.</td>
<td>Studies in any place where there is internet connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of learning process</td>
<td>Learning pace, content consistency and learning process is organized and controlled by a teacher.</td>
<td>Control of learning process, content consistency and learning pace partially depend on a student. Responsibility for the organization of learning is shared by a student and a teacher.</td>
<td>Learning pace, content consistency and the control of learning process depend on student’s inner motivation. If learning takes place with a teacher, a teacher can control the learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining interactive relation</td>
<td>In order to perform tasks or other activities communication only with a teacher is sufficient.</td>
<td>To perform tasks or other activities peer communication is recommendable.</td>
<td>To perform tasks or other activities peer communication and collaboration is obligatory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing the challenges of the organization of distance education and their advantages in comparison with traditional study methods it is important to emphasize several factors of the study process that can also be treated as challenges. According to Kraujutaitytė, Pečkaitis (2003) essential difference between distance and traditional studies is the specifics of the communication between a teacher and a student (see Table 2). Communication and interaction in study process is treated as one of the important components of studies having clear relations both to the organization of the process itself and the study content.

Direct-indirect communication as one of the essential differences between traditional and distance education (according to Kraujutaitytė, Pečkaitis, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors of study process</th>
<th>Distance education</th>
<th>Traditional studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Indirect communication – or limited possibilities of direct communication.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students learn independently, and they usually communicate with peers and teachers through the distance, which makes more difficult to notice learning challenges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Delivering lectures in distance form does not create a possibility to observe listeners’ reactions and change the content of the lectures, to organize discussions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct interaction is made more complicated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct communication with students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct observation how learning takes place, problems are solved, what induces interest, what causes difficulties, etc., what creates the basis to develop the study subject, combine the factors of teaching, learning and successful learning outcomes, meet students’ needs.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constant direct interaction takes place.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

According to Targamadzė, Volungevičienė (2008) some still think that the quality of distance education will not reach the quality of traditional lectures namely because of the lack of communication between students and teachers, however according to the authors, the contrary opinion is also relevant because there are cases when impossible interaction is replaced by possible communication namely in distance form (e.g. because of emigration, illness, etc.).

Principles and challenges of the organization of distance education.

It is evident that controversial opinions regarding distance education, the demand for this kind of learning and already existing supply presuppose the dilemma of the quality of learning. According to Targamadzė and Petrauskienė (2008), still too little attention is paid to the aspects of the quality of distance education, however on the other hand, in their opinion, what is said about the study quality of higher education in general could be related to distance education, too. According to Savickienė, Pukelis (2004), the study quality is perceived as the creation of suitable conditions to develop self-education and gain qualification in higher education institution. However as a frequent case in scientific discussion, certain dispersion of opinions towards the study quality is relatable to the perspective of a student. Ehlers (2004, cit. from Targamadzė, Petrauskienė, 2008) point out the relations of study quality to meeting student’s expectations. However there are opinions that contradict to the identification of quality to the satisfaction of students (as
users). The study quality is relatable to effectiveness – *a phenomenon is effective if it meets expectations and responds to set aims* (Westerheijden, 2005, cit. from Targamadžė, Petrauskiennė, 2008).

McMahon, Thakore (2008) define the essential principles of good teaching on the internet referring to a research based guide (see Table 3):

**Table 3**  
**Principles of good teaching on the internet** (McMahon, Thakore, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Challenges/requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Establishing suitable academic load that would seem achievable during the arranged time | • Material is presented in separate parts/topics  
• Accessibility of material without technological interference. | Reliability in students’ computer literacy, i.e. the ability to use hardware and software is important (without any additional time for learning to use it). Therefore virtual environment should be well prepared, it is necessary to train students to use virtual study environment to orient in it. |
| 2. Elimination of the surplus of information | Clear presentation of relevant comprehensible information (no unnecessary information, the amount is not too big, etc.) (“signal-noise relation”), i.e. action focusing on the analysis of information | 1. Precise instructions what is to be done further are ensured (“noise reduction”);  
2. To relate sources of information to the study topic and sort according to their importance (“signal increase”);  
3. Use of link systems in order to show the relations of the sources of information to respective study objects (especially with assessed activities) (“noise reduction”)  
4. To train students to use active search engines, especially meant for academic activities (“noise reduction”) |
| 3. Clear and comprehensible requirements | Clear presentation of study requirements: the participants of studies must know precisely what is expected from them | 1. Detailed information about learning outcomes, schedule, assessment criteria and order, tasks, number of messages per week, month or semester, terms, possibilities to consult with teachers;  
2. Stability – it is not recommended to initiate changes in the study process  
3. Information about plans in unpredicted cases that would be applied if used equipment did not function.  
4. Students’ preparation for work in small groups clearly formulating tasks and distributing roles;  
5. Sending weekly messages (newest information about changes if there are any or other issues);  
6. Information about other methods of the communication with a teacher when there is no possibility to use internet (e.g. telephone number);  
7. Highlighting – using signals (highlighting of an important concept, current topic);  
8. Possibility to use study material in advance |
| 4. **Ensuring higher level of studies and thinking in the assessment order** | Encouragement for higher level studies (so-called *dynamic online discussion*) | It is suggested to consistently apply three assessable tasks that will finish with the final group project, at the same time initiating 3 types of online discussions:
1. Flexible discussions among students *(they are asked to answer the questions in the discussion forum, where everyone must comment at least one peer’s answer. Possible initiation of students’ questions, etc.)*
2. Subject-related discussions are defined *(problem-based learning – students are given questions related to a final task and they are asked to answer them in a given time. Discussion is possible. On the arranged time the answers are presented that must be commented by other students (at least 2 for each). The responses and comments to the presented can be generalized and integrated in the master thesis).*
3. General discussions on the task *(the group prepares a final work – project, where constant discussions on the topic of the final work take place).* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5. **Requirement of active participation** | Encouragement of active participation perceived not only as the involvement in the learning community but also of the commitments to this community. | The authors define the essential challenges relating them to the principles of active participation defined by Hynes and Pearl (2004):
1. Interaction with contents
2. Interaction with a teacher
3. Interaction with peers
4. Interaction with oneself
It is suggested to organize active participation in virtual environment in 3 stages:
1. Finding knowledge *(student is asked to find additional material on the studied topic or present his/her knowledge related to the analyzed topic)*
2. Checking the validity of knowledge *(encouragement to assess one’s own and peers’ input in the process of finding/adding knowledge)*
3. Selection of knowledge *(selection of main concepts defining knowledge in databases presented in their study environments)* |
6. Ensuring of the opportunities of the choice

Choice – as an important motivating factor related to self-esteem (the status of an adult is acknowledged) and self-control (reduced feeling of external control). Attention is focused on the opportunities of the choice not of a separate person but of the whole group (Thus it is likely to ensure the communication in the group and creation of collaborative relations).

7. Ensuring of rational feedback

Ensuring rational feedback is treated as an incentive for learning in future. Feedback is effective when:
1. Feedback is related to the set assessment criteria that are known to a student;
2. It is quickly received;
3. It covers concrete advice only on what is to be changed;
4. It is not too long;
5. It clearly indicates the priorities of student’s actions and their order according to the importance.

The principles listed in the table can also be perceived as the sources of motivation for students, because specified principles are more oriented toward students and meeting their needs, i.e. based on student’s perspective. According to Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė (2012), four principles realized during distance learning should be taken into account that are interactivity and communication, development of metacognitive competences, time management, and non-traditional assessment focused on the paradigm of learning and the development of competences (see Table 4). The realization of the analyzed principles is also relatable to the encouragement of students’ motivation, partially reflecting the aforementioned principles of good teaching on the internet, however these principles have been implemented in our cultural environment (implementing ŠU ARIADNE project).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactivity and communication</strong></td>
<td>Presentation of the sources of information for self-study is perceived as ensuring of the interaction between a teacher and a student and among students themselves. Ensuring feedback permitting to evaluate practical usefulness of the presented tasks, the efficiency of selecting topics (using “forums”).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Principle of the development of metacognitive competences** | Information presented in distance environment is meant to better perceive the aims of the course, expected results, developed competences.  
• Students are suggested filling in the competence portfolio, reflection journal where the level of possessed competences and learning strategies are evaluated. Diaries are meant to evaluate the progress and identify the gaps in knowledge. |
| Principle of time management | Distance education requires the development of student’s responsibility and self-study management skills.  
• Concise presentation of the course structure is emphasized (how much time is meant for learning, what the number of topics is, etc.). In creating subjects it is recommendable to follow the principle of adequate distribution of time: learning topics and performing tasks from the aspect of time is combined with the scope of the course. |
| Principle of non-traditional assessment focused on the paradigm of learning and the development of competences | Assessment is based on feedback and egalitarian relations between a student and a teacher (subject relations).  
• Self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolio assessment reflecting the progress of competences is used. |

Generalizing it is important to emphasize that essential challenges in the process of distance education are partially relatable to the aspects of interaction and communication. The lack of direct communication can be counterweighed with other aforementioned principles stimulating student’s activeness, clear requirements and quite big teachers’ activeness in the process of distance education.

**LOGGING IN THE MOODLE ENVIRONMENT**

The Moodle (Modular Object Oriented Distance Learning Environment) or the “open code” distance learning system has been created and developed since 1998 (Giedrimas, Giedrimienė, 2007).

Before starting to work in the Moodle system, in the browser address field the address of the Moodle website is entered. The address of the Moodle environment of the second cycle study programme Social Work is as follows:

http://socnet.distance.su.lt/

This virtual learning environment (VLE) of the SOCNET project is a direct access to the descriptions of obligatory study subjects and electives of the Social Work study programme where the abstracts of the subjects, learning outcomes, topics of the subjects and lecture material prepared according to the topics of the subject are presented.

A teacher or a student chooses a respective study subject and by clicking on it connect to a chosen learning environment where the window for registered and unregistered users opens.
Teachers or students registered in the system have their own usernames and passwords. Teachers log in the chosen environment in the same way as in other environments (see Table 1):

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username: name.surname (Latin, lowercase, no Lithuanian characters. E.g. liuda.vandene).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Password surname (Latin, lowercase, no Lithuanian characters. E.g. vandene).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having forgotten username or password in the environment it is necessary to activate the link (Forgotten your username or password? Yes, help me log in) and follow the instructions. Your username and password will be sent at your email address. It is important to indicate the same email address that was used during the registration.

For nonregistered users. In this case a user has two possibilities: to work as a guest or to register (Giedrimas, Giedrimienė, 2007):

- **working as a guest** – it is possible to work by clicking log in as a guest (in this case it is not possible to make posts or comments in forums, perform tests and be assessed, it is only possible to study material (enrolment key is usually necessary)
- **working as a registered user** – in order to register it is necessary to follow clear instructions having clicked the button start by creating your username (it is necessary to present information about oneself (name, surname) and the group, insert email address (2 times), the username and password are chosen. Having inserted all necessary information click the button – create a new username. When a system informs that the email will be sent, click the button continue. Having received the email with the link click on the link. This is the way a new user is registered.

When a teacher logs in the Moodle system, the list of the courses (lectures) is presented. Having clicked on the course title on the home page the window of study environment opens with the blocks on both sides and a middle section where the parts of the course are indicated.
On the right top of the field there is a language indicator where it is possible to switch between Lithuanian and English (see Figure 1).

**Creation of the learning course.** The courses of the second cycle joint study programme Social Work have been already uploaded to the Moodle system. Improving the joint study programme in future not only filling in and development of the lecture conspectuses will be faced but also the creation of new modules of subjects, therefore in this chapter it is expedient to discuss the peculiarities of the learning course creation.

To create a course one should be logged in as an administrator. In order to create a new learning course in the Moodle system it is necessary to create a basis of a course, giving it a title, format and other features. Giedrimas, Giedrimienė (2007) compares the basis of a Moodle course with a framework where other elements are added: learning material, assignments, tests, communication means, etc. The basis of a Moodle course is created one time.

In order to create a course a card should be filled in. It opens on the main page of the Moodle environment by clicking on the link of the form of requesting a new distance education course (for teachers) (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Home page](image)

When a card opens it is necessary to insert full title and the summary of the course (see Figure 2), in the field **Enrolment key** a teacher can indicate a password that will be given to students who have access to the study environment.

Clicking on **Request a course** a learning course will be created. The Moodle system will show the study environment the way it will be seen by students. The course will be complemented by a teacher with theoretical lectures, tasks, etc.
Choosing features of a learning course. Having created the learning course the card Edit course settings should be filled in. In the Administration block of the Moodle you should click the button Settings and fill in the required fields (see Figure 3). In the field Full name the full title of the course is entered, and the abbreviation is entered in the field below. In Summary it is possible to indicate the aims, the main topics of the course, etc. The participants of the Moodle system will see on the home page what is inserted in the summary.

In the field Format it is possible to choose the variants of organized learning: weekly, subject-based or social. The main difference between formats is that in a weekly format one field equals to one week and the schedule must be followed, in the subject-based format one field corresponds to one topic, only there is no need to follow the strict schedule. Social learning process is based on open questions that give the beginning to the discussion (Giedrimas, Giedrimienė, 2007). Social format suits for organizing practices.

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In the field Number of weeks/topics it is necessary to indicate the number of topics or lectures. Course start date indicates when the lectures start. In the field Enrolment duration it is possible to enter the period when students must enrol.

In the field Hidden sections it is possible to indicate the way of hiding unfinished elements, whether the elements will be invisible or shown in collapsed form. This field
is used when a teacher wants to hide a course that has not been finished yet. In the field \textit{Show grades} it is possible to choose whether to show grades to students.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image1}
\end{center}

\textbf{Figure 3. Choosing course features}

In the window of choosing settings of the course the field \textit{Group mode} is also shown that means the type of activity. Having indicated \textit{No groups} students will not be grouped, \textit{Separate groups} – every group member will only see the members of his/her group and learning material, \textit{Visible groups} – students will be grouped, but they will see other groups, too.

In the field \textit{Enrolment key} a special word is indicated, the students will have to enter it in order to register in the Moodle system.

In the field \textit{Guest Access} it is possible to indicate whether to give access to an unregistered student.

\textbf{Study environment.} The system administrator can change the interface of the home page of the Moodle. The home pages of the Moodle system implemented in different institutions are usually different, however each of them contains two main elements: login instruments and the list of courses (Giedrimas, Giedrimienė, 2007). On the virtual home page of the second cycle study programme of Šiauliai University when you click on a chosen course you get into the main study environment of a chosen course (see Figure 4), where on the right side of the window the following action groups are located (Kaklauskas, 2006):

- \textit{Participants} – in this group you can see the list of the students who study the course. Clicking on \textit{Course participants}, the list of all the teachers and students of the course and information about them is expanded.
- \textit{Activities} – here the study instruments of the course planned and grouped by the
teachers are presented that show all possible activities of the course the students can do in the internal environment of the course.

- **Search Forums** – you can enter a key word or phrase and search for a relevant thread or a word in the forums;
- **Administration** – you can see the results of student’s work, various reports.
- **My courses** – the courses where the student has enrolled are shown.

On the right side there are the following groups (Kaklauskas, 2006):

- **Latest news** – the newest information published in the course. It is a block that informs about the material recently uploaded by a teacher and new messages in the forum. More detailed information about the news can be found after clicking on the title of the news.
- **Upcoming events** – works that must be done by the student are indicated, the students are warned about upcoming tests. The data of the event can be seen next to it, i.e. the precise date of the event, when the event starts and finishes. Clicking on the link the event calendar opens.
- **Calendar** – shows the calendar of the respective month and important dates of the events of study subjects. To know more detailed information about the event you can click on the chosen date.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pradžia</th>
<th>Savaitinis tvarkaraštis</th>
<th>Paskutinė naujinės</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolegos</td>
<td><strong>Naujienų forumas</strong></td>
<td>Pridėti naują temą...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Naujienų nėra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Užsiėmimai</td>
<td><strong>Forumai</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nėra įvykių</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resursai</td>
<td><strong>Resursas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pereiti į kalendorį...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Užduotys</td>
<td><strong>Resursas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Naujas įvykis...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Forums</td>
<td><strong>Resursas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skip Paskutinės veiksmai</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ieškoti</td>
<td><strong>Resursas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skip Paskutiniai veiksmai</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced search</td>
<td><strong>Resursas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Paskutiniai veiksmai</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Task 1**

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I. DEVELOPMENT OF DIDACTICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBALIZATION (1)

1. Higher Education and Globalization

2. The environment of the university in the twenty-first century

2.1. What these contextual changes mean for all universities?

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I. DEVELOPMENT OF DIDACTICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBALIZATION (2)

---

**Task 1**

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Užsiėmimas nuo Šeštadienis, 2013 gruodžio 28, 20:12

**Full report of recent activity...**

Nieko naujo nuo paskutinio prisijungimo
Figure 4. Working environment of the distance course

A teacher in the study environment can see the same view as students do. However clicking on the link Turn editing on additional options that allow creation and correction of the course material will appear (see Figure 4).

Settings – it is possible to modify the course itself, its title and enrolment key. In the field Settings a teacher can change everything, the title of the lecture cycle, the start date of the lectures.

Backup – it is possible to make a backup of the course. After clicking on Backup a window opens, where it is possible to choose what elements of the learning course must be backed up. Clicking the button Next, the window opens, in the field Name of which it is necessary to insert the name of the file where the course will be saved. Having clicked the button Next the system informs that the data have been successfully copied. Clicking Next once more the list of all the backups of the course is shown.

Restore – it permits to restore the course from a backup copy. Having clicked on the button Restore the list of backups is shown. If there is no backup in the list yet it is necessary to click the button Send the file. When a file appears on the list, click the button Restore. Having clicked Yes, the window opens where the information about the content of a backup is presented. Having clicked Next the window opens that permits to choose what particularly should be restored. The dropdown list Restore to is very important. Having chosen New course a new course will be created. Other options permit to upload information in the backup instead of the information in the Moodle system. Having clicked the button Restore the course
now the data restoring operation will be performed. Clicking the button *Next*, a teacher gets to the restored course.

- **Grades** – the marks of all students of the course are shown.
- Having switched on the editing additional alternatives on the blocks are shown (Baziukaitė, Vaira, Gorbunovas, 2008).
- - clicking on the “eye” it will open or close. When the eye is open the element or block is seen by a teacher and a student. When the eye is closed the block will be seen only by a teacher.
- - the arrows permit to move the blocks up or down. Having clicked the arrow to the right or left, the block will move to the right or left part of the window.
- - permits to edit the element and change its settings.
- - having clicked the cross, the block or element is deleted. This function should be used very carefully because in the Moodle system deleted elements cannot be restored.
- - the course element becomes visible for everyone, groups are ignored. However clicking on the figure of one person, the figure of two people appears that means the element is inaccessible to other groups. Clicking on the figure once more a new symbol appears that gives access to the element to the members of other groups, too.

In this chapter monitoring of the activeness of the course participants – students – should also be discussed. Having clicked the button *Participants* in the administration block the window will open in which it will be possible to view the activeness of the participants (Figure 5).

![Figure 5. Activeness of participants](image)
In the field *My courses* having chosen the respective meaning students’ activity in chosen lectures can be seen, *Select period* – according to time interval, *User list* – opportunities of the specification of the list. Students’ activity can be viewed according to name and/or surname. Having selected the users it is possible to perform actions with the group of users using the option *With selected users*.

**Uploading theoretical material to the Moodle system.** In the courses delivered in the Moodle system students can see the information of different character. In working environment of the distance course the list of theoretical topics of the course is presented. According to the format chosen by the administrator a learning course is presented in topics. Clicking on the link of a chosen topic students can view the material of the lectures. If this link is a file, a browser asks whether a student wants to open this file in the browser environment or to download it. A teacher can present the files in various formats: *pdf*, *Microsoft Word*, *Microsoft Power Point*, *Microsoft Excel* and *Microsoft Office*.

**Inserting simple and rich text.** Lecture material can be presented as a simple text. However this instrument is more suitable for the presentation of the small amount of theoretical material, because a simple text does not attract students’ attention as much as illustrations. In literature it is recommended to present up to 6 pages, preferably 1-3 paragraphs. In order to present a part of learning material in simple text choose and click *Compose a text page* in the list of static elements (see Figure 6).

![Figure 6. Inserting text](image)

When the window (see Figure 7) opens, in the field *Summary* insert a short comment of the text. Students will see it before reading the paragraph. In the field *Full text* the text itself is inserted.

In the Moodle system to insert rich text with formatting marks (tables, images), click *Compose a web page*. When the window opens in the field *Name* the name of the paragraph is inserted, in another field the summary is inserted and in the field *Full text* rich text is inserted. Rich text will be saved by clicking the button *Save changes*. 

---

### Didactics and Psychology of Higher Education

#### Weekly outline

- **Development of reactions of higher education from the perspective of globalization**
  - Higher education and globalization
  - The environment of the university in the twenty-first century
  - Historical and sociocultural changes in higher education

- **01.01.2023**
  - Higher education and globalization
  - The environment of the university in the twenty-first century
  - Historical and sociocultural changes in higher education

---

#### Search forms

- **Advanced search**
  - Time
  - Title
  - Authors
  - Keywords

---

#### Administration

- **Current user**
  - Login
  - Administrator
  - Settings
  - Groups

---

#### Latest news

- **Activity log**
  - Recent activity
  - Announcements
  - News
  - Recent add
  - Activity log settings
  - Asynchronous
  - New event
  - Recent activity
  - Recent add

---

**Figure 6. Inserting text**

When the window (see Figure 7) opens, in the field *Summary* insert a short comment of the text. Students will see it before reading the paragraph. In the field *Full text* the text itself is inserted.
Figure 7. Text creation window

Rich text in the field can be edited in a similar way as in the MS Word window. On its top part there are two toolbars from which the following icons should be mentioned:

- Used in creating a text with links. Creates an invisible spacer in the text.
- Creates and deletes links.
- Inserts a picture.
- Meant for inserting symbols in the text that are not on the keyboard.
- Inserts a table.

In the Moodle system it is possible to insert a text or upload it from other electronic sources by performing the same actions as in MS Word. However having uploaded the text in the Moodle system the distortions may occur: different font from the original text or different line spacing. In this case the button for deleting unnecessary information should be clicked.

It is possible to copy and paste text and tables from the text editing programme, however there is no possibility to paste pictures.

**Inserting images.** In order to insert an image in the text, it is necessary to place the cursor where you want to place the image. Then the button of inserting image is clicked. When the window of inserting an image opens on the left side the list of pictures known to the Moodle system is shown (see Figure 8). Clicking on a chosen image on the right side of the window the image itself appears, in the field **Image URL** – the description of the Moodle system. A short comment must be inserted in the field **Alternate text**. This comment will be seen by a student if there are no possibilities to show the image. Then the button **Yes** is clicked and the image is inserted.
If there is no needed picture in the window of inserting image, then in the window of inserting image you need to click the button *Browse*, and in the opening window the file in *gif, jpg* or other format is chosen, the *Open* and *Insert* buttons are clicked. If the file is uploaded successfully the message *File uploaded successfully* appears. The image appears on the window for inserting the image and then all aforementioned actions must be repeated.

If the file exceeds 2 Mb the message *Uploaded file exceeded the maximum size limit set by the form* is shown. Then it is necessary to reduce the size of the image or increase the maximum upload size in the field *Maximum upload size*, on the window of *Edit course settings* (see Figure 3).

**DISCUSSIONS**

**Forums.** In the electronic Moodle environment, having created a new course the forum environment is automatically created as well. A forum is a virtual space for discussions, a place that is meant to exchange thoughts and experience. According to Kaklauskas (2006), forum is an interactive asynchronic (in the forum communication between a teacher and students takes place not in real time) communication instrument meant for discussions on relevant study issues of presented material.

Usually a forum has a particular topic or it is divided into several topics with separate subforums. There it is possible to post discussion topics, which can be read and answered by users (teacher, students and/or other uses registered to the course). As it has been presented in the Moodle guidebook\(^3\), in forums it is possible to discuss, ask questions, receive answers, messages can be presented in various formats, they can have attachments. It is possible to register in the forum and receive messages at the email address that is indicated during the enrolment in the course.

Most often a forum is created in order to present news related to the study subject (topic) uploaded by a teacher (or the author of the course), to solve an urgent question/task (e.g. a student cannot find desired literary courses or information related to the topic presented by the teacher, then in the forum he/she can ask for assistance from classmates or a teacher to indicate particular authors or works on the desired topic) or

\(^3\) Internet access: http://moodle.ktu.lt/file.php/1/Moodle_vadovas.pdf
the forum can be used for the introduction of new participants. According to Daukilas and Kasperiūniene (2011), in the forum teachers perform certain group activities, answer students’ questions and send explanatory messages to students.

In the Moodle environment there are several forms of forums. You can find discussion forums in the list of course activities at the menu section “Add an activity...” (Figure 9)

**Figure 9.** Window of creating the Moodle discussion forum.

In the topic clicking the button “Add an activity...” and choosing “Forum”, a forum is created. In preparing the forum it is important to indicate the type of the forum: 1) standard forum for general use, 2) Q and A forum, 3) a single simple discussion or 4) one person posts one discussion (Figure 10).

**Figure 10.** Forum types in the Moodle environment
Daukilas and Kasperiūnienė (2011, p. 42) indicate that “standard forum for general use permits every course participant (both teachers and students) create new topics or answer to the topics posted by other participants or questions asked in them. Q and A forum is meant for a teacher who wants to answer students’ questions. A single simple discussion forum is usually applied for short discussions, meanwhile each person posts one discussion forum is useful when a task requires that one student initiates one discussion, the comments of which can be read (and answered) by everyone.”

The button Answer on the bottom of a forum window is meant for all users (students and teachers registered in the course), who want to express their opinion on the topic under discussion or answer to particular posted questions. Having clicked this button the window pops up where a text is inserted and posted to the forum.

Messages. In the electronic Moodle environment it is possible to communicate with all course participants using Messages as well. Kaklauskas (2006) indicates that messages are received in a popup window with a text. It is recommended to use such form of virtual communication when you need to share information with a particular person. If a person to whom a message is being sent is online, it is enough to click the letter icon next to the username and the window in which it is possible to write a message opens. If the needed person is offline, on the left side of the window you need to find the username and click on it. Then an analogous window opens where a text (message) is written and it is clicked on “Send message”. When the user the information is being sent to comes online, he/she will be informed about it by a popup window.

The similar function is performed by Chat. This activity permits the participants to communicate in real time on the internet, i.e. synchronic conversations take place. Chat is switched on in a similar way as a forum, only having clicked “Add an activity...” select and click “Chat” (see Figure 9).

ASSIGNMENTS

Often in analyzing the advantages of the Moodle system virtual learning environment it is emphasized that there is a possibility to present Assignments. This activity allows a teacher not only to present assignments for students, but also the performed assignments can be assessed and teachers can prepare (see Figure 11):

1) assignment, performing which students can present the answer to the teacher in several documents (Advanced uploading of files);

2) assignment, the answer to which must be presented by students by means of the virtual learning environment Moodle (Online text). In this case a student will have to present the assignment on the assignment window, text editing using text formatting tools is allowed. A teacher can assess a student’s work and insert comments or make corrections in the work itself;

3) assignment, performing which students have to upload the answer to the teacher in a document format (Upload a single file). A student in performing the assignment will have to upload a file. A teacher can indicate the maximum size of the file or allow resubmitting the file if it has already been uploaded once or informing the teacher about the performed task by email;

4) instruction for students (Offline activity). It means that a student can only see the description of the assignment. It can be the assignment to prepare for the following lecture, the sources of literature that must be read until the following lecture or a student will be tested by a teacher in the classroom.
**Figure 11.** Assignment types in the virtual learning environment Moodle.

All course assignments can be seen by students not only in the course topic but also in the Activities block on the main page of the course. The title of a particular task will be seen in the description of the course topic. Presenting the tasks a teacher can choose the assessment scale, indicate the time when this assignment will be accessible to students, select whether to block late submissions (Prevent late submissions). In preparing the assignment the title of the assignment, its description and the assessment form must be indicated. Moreover it is possible to allow a student to redo the task or divide students into groups, i.e. assign one task to one group and another task to another group.

In preparing the assignment you can set from which date (Available from) until which date (Due date) the assignment will be seen and available to be performed by students. Moreover, as it has been mentioned, students can be allowed to perform the task after the date indicated by the teacher. In this case indicate the permission (Prevent late submissions). Having checked “Due date” Disable, the assignment will be open until the end of the course (see Figure 12).
Assessing tasks. Having created an assignment it can be seen on the right side of the system window. Clicking on the link of the task on a new opening window, the date when the task was performed and the information about the number of students who performed the task is seen. Having clicked on the link on the right side on the top of the screen the detailed information about who performed the task, when the task was performed is also seen, if any documents have been uploaded together with the task it is possible to open and view them. In this window students’ works (tasks) are assessed. Tasks are deleted by clicking the button “X”– Delete that is on the top.

Control assignments. In virtual learning environment there is a possibility to perform self-control and control tasks. Usually they are tests with the questions of various types, having answered them a course participant is assessed. As it has been mentioned in the chapter “Assignments”, the teacher can make the time of taking the test, the number of repetitions, hints for answers, etc., limited or unlimited. Self-control and control tasks can be viewed clicking on the link “Assignments” on the left of the window of the Moodle environment.

The self-control tests are such tests where the number of attempts is not limited. It means that a student having performed a test is shown all correct answers, it is indicated to what questions he/she has answered correctly, or in case of an open question, the text of a correct answer is presented. It should be noted that if a test is meant for intermediary testing or examination it is allowed to perform it only once (its correct answers are not shown even having finished the test, open type questions can be included, the answers to which are later assessed by a teacher). Every time before starting a test a warning notice appears that the test is limited by one attempt and it is asked whether you are sure you want to perform this test.
On the left of the window of the Moodle environment both teacher and student clicking on the link Grades will see a detailed report of solving self-control and/or control tasks. The total number of points that can be obtained having solved all the tasks correctly, grade and other information can be seen here.

**Workshops.** Workshops in the virtual Moodle system are created similar to the forum: in the menu section “Add an activity...” it is possible to click on *Workshop*. As it is indicated in the Moodle guidebook⁴, it is learning in collaboration. It is one of the possibilities to realize the ideas of social constructivism because the points of the final mark are calculated not only for the work presented by a student (the teacher and other students assess it according to the criteria set in advance) but also for the evaluation of the works of other students of the course by the student himself/herself. Workshops are divided into the following stages:

- teacher presents the example of the work and the students assess it,
- students present their works,
- students assess the works of each other,
- teacher assesses students’ works,
- final grade is calculated.

Work in the workshop takes place in stages administered by a teacher. It is Submissions – students see when they have to submit the works – and Assessment.

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GUIDEBOOK III

PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE SECOND CYCLE JOINT STUDY
PROGRAMME SOCIAL WORK

Textbook

Reviewers: Kateryna Kolchenko, Liudmyla Serdiuk
Editor Ingrida Baranauskienė
English language editor Nikita Kobrin
Designer Vismantė Juozénaitė

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