

University of Tuzla

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HARMONIZATION OF THE CURRICULA AND EXPERIENCE IN UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATION

In view of higher education reform and in line with the Bologna Declaration which includes globalization (Europe as a unique trade market with equal level of knowledge acquired, the Bologna Declaration) Higher Education at the University of Tuzla has made a significant step forward. The University of Tuzla is an integrated university, which means that the faculties are no longer legal entities and the deans manage only 20% of the faculties' income, whereas the University and project managers deal with the rest of the funds.

As a part of the project realization a workshop was organized in February 2005. Topics discussed at the workshop were those regarding changes of the curricula and process of applying the ECTS to every subject at every study year since it is based on thorough information on institution (curricula and students' accomplishments), student mobility which ensures legality and security on both parts, and study credits, i.e. student workload. The problem occurred with curricula development because the number of hours needed to be changed and adapted to the Bologna process standards.

The University of Tuzla decided to apply the 4+1+3 system, which means that undergraduate studies last for four years, with the exception of the Faculty of Medicine with six –year undergraduate studies, postgraduate studies last for a year and doctorate studies last for three years. Furthermore, following the instructions all subjects are created so as to last for a semester, with no more than 30 classes of lectures and practice classes per week, because it is estimated that student spends additional 10 classes preparing for classes, studying, etc. which makes up the total workload of 40 classes per week. On the basis of the number of classes per week per subject an ECTS was either given or removed from respective subjects in order to create a 30 ECTS workload per student per semester, i.e. 60 ECTS per academic year, which is equivalent to 240 MA, the basis for study verification abroad.

After these changes numerous meetings were held at certain faculties, since the employees had various questions. The main problem was the unprepared staff and lack of knowledge of the Bologna declaration principles.

The first step that had to be made was to change the awareness of teachers' and associates' and to explain subjective and objective assumptions and the importance of the Bologna process for the University. The University integration was made through abolishing legal entity status that faculties had, creating Office for International Relations, Office for Teaching Process and Students' Issues, and Office for Scientific Research at the University level which were dealing with the Bologna process by providing answers to all questions and solving uncertain issues. Integration led to signing agreements on cooperation with other universities at the international level.

All faculties' and departments' curricula adopted at the Teaching Councils of the faculties at the University of Tuzla were presented at one of the meetings attended by all thirteen faculty vice deans of the University, secretary general's assistants from all faculties, Office for International Relations staff, University Secretary General, and

faculties' administrative staff. In this way we continued with the process of harmonization and coordination of the related subjects and their syllabi included at several faculties. Most of the work concerning coordination, control, additional information and matters related to the Bologna process which is based on the principles of quality and transparency and opening of the higher education towards Europe, was done by the Office for Teaching Process and Students' Issues and Office for International Relations of the University of Tuzla.

The Office for Teaching Process is a data base in charge of the complete teaching process, which means that they deal with information regarding each teacher; each subject at each faculty, including the number of classes regarding each subject, each associate (the subjects they teach, the number of groups they teach), as well as information regarding 'outside' associates, all in line with the number of students per faculty, respective departments and teacher and associate election processes. The reform is a continuous process which includes local community, the University, the Canton and higher levels. The complete system's goal is a society based on the knowledge and coordination and harmonization of the higher education system. After extensive preparation and development of curricula, the University's Senate had started initiative concerning discussion and acceptance of these changes in line with the Bologna principle. The Senate has thirty-six members, and the chairman of the Senate is the Rector.

in addition to Rector, the members of the Senate are vice rectors for teaching process and students' issues, international relations, finances and development and scientific research, deans of the faculties along with representative from each faculty, Senate secretary, student center manager, as well as three student representatives from natural science, social science and technical science group, respectively.

After the curricula were accepted by each faculty, the process of realization of such curricula began. The necessary adjustments concerning organization and changes made were done in the process and were accordingly accepted by the Senate.

At one of the meetings of the Senate it was suggested to conduct equivalency of the old and new curricula which would then be adopted by Teaching Councils of the faculties. The intention was to make it possible to add ECTS to the exams (term exams and/or final exams) students took in the transitional period since they would have to continue their studies with the changed curricula. All of these changes made allow for student mobility – mobility, information package, learning agreement, teachers' mobility.

We have not completed reform, but we have taken a huge step towards it. One of the questions which occurs is 'What are our chances?'. The answer is in the strategy based on economy of knowledge. WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE? Knowledge + invention + innovation + patents = INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL. In other words, B&H has to become 5E- European, Economic, Energetic, Electronic and Effective.

Further on, we expect integration of all of our Universities into EUA in 2010. This obliges us to carry out many other tasks including developing BA - MA Model, Bologna TIM, ECTS – coordinator, Diploma Supplement, University Net. This would all lead to our final goal – diploma validation (the Lisbon Declaration).